

**Kentucky Philosophical Association
2018 Annual Meeting
Saturday, April 14, 2018
Thomas More College**

8:00-8:50	Registration – outside of library in the Academic/Administration building		
8:50-9:00	Welcome		
Session Locations	S416 (inside Academic/Admin building)	S417 (inside Academic/Admin building)	1204 (inside Academic/Admin building)
9:00-9:50 Session 1	<p>“Kant’s Principle of Significance” Simon Gurofsky, <i>University of Chicago</i></p> <p>Commentator: Bob Sandmeyer, <i>University of Kentucky</i></p>	<p>“The Entailment Fallacy” Daniel M. Johnson, <i>Shawnee State University</i></p> <p>Commentator: Luke Golemon, <i>Western Michigan University</i></p>	<p>“An Objective Account of the FLO Principle and a Better FLO Argument” Timothy Kirschenheiter, <i>Wayne State University</i></p> <p>Commentator: Justin Harmon, <i>Southern Oregon University</i></p>
10:00-11:30	<p>KEYNOTE ADDRESS</p> <p>“The American Ideology: Misplaced Universalism and the Attempt to Silence the Voices of the Oppressed” Dr. Arnold Farr <i>University of Kentucky</i></p> <p>Location: Science Lecture Hall (Science building)</p>		
11:40-12:15	<p><i>KPA Annual Undergraduate Student Essay Contest</i> Beau Revlett, <i>University of Kentucky</i></p> <p>“A Kantian Argument Against Population Axiology” Location: Science Lecture Hall (Science building)</p>		
12:15-1:15	Lunch (on campus option – cafeteria in Seiler Commons inside Academic/Admin building)		
1:00-1:35	Business Meeting: to be held in Chancellor’s Room (All registered conference attendees are KPA Members and may attend)		
1:45-2:35 Session 2	<p>“In Favor of Epistemic Reasons for Action” Emily McWilliams, <i>DePauw University</i></p> <p>Commentator: Ben Rossi, <i>University of Texas at El Paso</i></p>	<p>“Moral Perception Orientation” James William Lincoln, <i>University of Kentucky</i></p> <p>Commentator: Rickey Ray, <i>Northeast State Community College</i></p>	
2:45-3:35 Session 3	<p>“Of Protests and Votes: A Defense of Colin Kaepernick as Citizen of the Year” Clint Jones, <i>University of Kentucky</i></p> <p>Commentator: Justin Spinks, <i>Eastern Kentucky University</i></p>	<p>“Why Tolerate Religious Claims of Conscience” Luke Golemon, <i>Western Michigan University</i></p> <p>Commentator: Timothy Kirschenheiter, <i>Wayne State University</i></p>	<p>“Rousseau’s Argument for Civil Religion: Political Stability and Tolerance” Keunchang Oh, <i>Purdue University</i></p> <p>Commentator: James William Lincoln, <i>University of Kentucky</i></p>

<p>3:45-4:35 Session 4</p>	<p>“Internalism, the Agony Argument, and Blindspot Reasons” Ben Rossi, <i>University of Texas at El Paso</i> Commentator: Emily McWilliams, <i>DePauw University</i></p>	<p>“A Taoist Critique of Socrates” Matt Pianalto, <i>Eastern Kentucky University</i> Commentator: Daniel M. Johnson, <i>Shawnee State University</i></p>	<p>“Heteromimetic Formalism in Walter Benjamin’s Theory of Distraction” Justin Harmon, <i>Southern Oregon University</i> Commentator: Clint Jones, <i>University of Kentucky</i></p>

Abstracts of Papers (listed by session)

Session 1 (9:00-9:50)

Kant's Principle of Significance – Simon Gurofsky, University of Chicago

Abstract: Strawson attributes to Kant a principle of significance: “there can be no legitimate, or even meaningful, employment of ideas or concepts which does not relate them to empirical or experiential conditions of their application.” Many today find the attribution implausible because the principle seems positivistic, and thus would either amount to philosophically dubious verificationism (Stroud) or be an anachronistic projection (Westphal, Beiser). But the first Critique is rife with passages that are difficult to read as anything other than endorsements of the principle of significance. Stroud’s arguments fail to show that the principle is or entails verificationism. And the worry about anachronism has an equivocal significance, forcing us to interpret Kant neither through his successors nor through his predecessors and contemporaries, but from within. And then his acceptance of the principle of significance seems inescapable—though that does not prove its consistency with his other commitments.

The Entailment Fallacy – Daniel M. Johnson, Shawnee State University

My goal is to describe a fallacy that appears from time to time in philosophical and theological debates, which I call the Entailment Fallacy. I will offer a careful characterization of the fallacy and a two-part explanation of why fallacious reasoning of this type can be so persuasive (and, as a result, what makes this pattern of reasoning a philosophically important fallacy). In so doing, I will distinguish the entailment fallacy from legitimate patterns of reasoning for which it may be mistaken.

An Objective Account of the FLO Principle and a Better FLO Argument – Timothy Kirschenheiter, Wayne State University

In this paper, I will first offer David Boonin’s interpretation of Don Marquis’s Future Like Ours (FLO) argument, which I will argue is an accurate reading of Marquis. Next, I will offer both Boonin’s criticism of Marquis’s account, as well as Boonin’s understanding of the best version of the FLO argument. Then I will criticize Boonin’s version. Finally, I will offer an improved version that relies not on subjective desires or idealized, dispositional desire (as Marquis and Boonin do, respectively). Rather, I will argue that the best version of the FLO argument relies on the fact that the fetus will have an objectively valuable life as a person in the future. And it is this future life as a person that makes the killing fetuses morally problematic, even if they are not yet persons.

Session 2 (1:45-2:35)

In Favor of Epistemic Reasons for Action – Emily McWilliams, DePauw University

I will challenge the standard view that epistemic reasons are reasons for belief and practical reasons are reasons for action by arguing that there can also be epistemic reasons for action. In particular, I will challenge Conee and Feldman’s evidentialist argument for the standard view. They take evidentialism to imply that epistemic reasons can only license three moves: belief, disbelief, and suspension of judgment. I will argue that given their motivations, they should also think epistemic reasons license a fourth move; namely, *inquiry*. Finally, I will argue that if epistemic reasons can thus license cognitive actions like

thinking about how different parts of my evidence bear on one another, then they can also license bodily actions like going to the library to seek more information.

Moral Perception Orientation – James Lincoln, University of Kentucky

In this paper, I argue for a theory of moral perception which I call Moral Perceptual Orientation (MPO). MPO holds, among other things, that how and if moral features are perceived is dependent on one's cognitive stock of beliefs and affective sensitivities. MPO aims to give an account of how it is that one encounters moral properties in perceptual experience and relies on the notion that moral experiences are cognitively penetrable. As I see it, moral perceptual experiences are perceptually immediate and are a function of one's cognitive stock. As a result, perception should not be considered morally neutral.

Session 3 (2:45-3:35)

Of Protests and Votes: A Defense of Colin Kaepernick as Citizen of the Year – Clint Jones, University of Kentucky

In the wake of Colin Kaepernick's kneeling during the national anthem in protest of racial inequality public opinion divided the country regarding the appropriateness of the act. Though many of Kaepernick's colleagues in the NFL joined in the protests, as did many of his peers throughout the world of sport, the elevation of Kaepernick to Citizen of the Year status by GQ Magazine sparked not only outrage among his detractors, but raised concerns about the choice of Kaepernick generally because he acknowledged not voting in the election that delivered Trump to the White House. My essay investigates the socio-political dimensions surrounding the question, "Does not voting invalidate the sincerity of Kaepernick's protest stance?" That is, are his Citizen of the Year critics correct that he ought not have been awarded such an honor.

Why Tolerate Religious Claims of Conscience – Luke Golemon, Western Michigan University

Leiter's book *Why Tolerate Religion* has generated a lot of controversy, in which Leiter argues that religion should not be allowed to have a special evidential status outside of normal conscience claims. In this paper I argue that Leiter is too hasty in dismissing religious adherents' evidence of claims of conscience as systemically unjust and that his further objections toward most religious claims of conscience getting special treatment and perniciously shift legal burdens miss what actually occurs in contemporary conscience claims. I then outline three solutions, arguing that keeping our current evidential system while researching for a better one is the most just option at this time, contrary to Leiter's claim.

Rousseau's Argument for Civil Religion: Political Stability and Tolerance – Keunchang Oh, Purdue University

The aim of this paper is to investigate the conceptual status of civil religion in Rousseau's political philosophy. Rousseau introduces a heteronomous element of civic virtue through a lawgiver and a civil religion in the Social Contract. It remains an open question whether civil religion can be compatible with Rousseau's emphasis on freedom. In what follows, I first reconstruct the argument for civil religion. Due to the introduction of civil religion, many commentators think the inconsistency threatens the legitimacy of Rousseau's conception of the general will, arguing that civil religion counteracts citizens' independence and thereby work against political legitimacy. I contend that civil religion is not actually totalitarian but rather supplementary, given Rousseau's own anthropological assumptions and moral psychology. In

conclusion, drawing on Rawls's view of the political liberalism, I provide an alternative picture of Rousseau's civil religion as a defense of toleration.

Session 4 (3:45-4:35)

Internalism, the Agony Argument, and Blindspot Reasons – Benjamin Rossi, University of Texas at El Paso

Are reasons for action internal, dependent upon our interests, desires, and goals, or are they external, arising from the outside world? The first view is called "internalism," and it says that necessarily, an agent's normative reasons for action, or her practical reasons, depend upon her existing motivational states. In this paper, I argue that internalism about practical reasons, while intuitively appealing, is not philosophically tenable. Internalism does not capture some fairly commonplace true existential claims about reasons for action. The strategy of arguing for the extensional inadequacy of internalism is a familiar one. One particularly effective deployment of this strategy against internalism is Derek Parfit's "Agony Argument." I argue that internalism is extensionally inadequate, but not on the grounds of the "Agony Argument." I will show that internalism has a plausible answer to the Agony Argument. Where it runs into serious trouble is what I call "blindspot reasons": considerations that are reasons to act, but which could not be truly believed by the agent whose reasons they are. The truth of internalism would entail that these considerations are not reasons to act.

A Taoist Critique of Socrates – Matthew Pianalto, Eastern Kentucky University

Abstract: Although Socrates is often revered for his courage, integrity, and philosophical tenacity, I suggest that from the perspective of Taoist philosophy, there are several problems with Socrates, in particular his famous claim about the examined life and his way of seeking wisdom (and exposing ignorance) through relentless argument. Examining Socrates from this rather different philosophical outlook is instructive in part because Taoists also have some things in common with Socrates. Nevertheless, if we find plausible certain Taoist ideas about virtue, the limitations of argument, and the problem with "contending," then our regard for Socrates and what he stood for (and how he stood for it) should be somewhat tempered.

Heteromimetic Formalism in Walter Benjamin's Theory of Distraction – Justin Harmon, Southern Oregon University

Traditional *idealistic* formalism in aesthetics privileges contemplative attention in its account of authentic aesthetic experience. Drawing on the work of Walter Benjamin, I argue for a rethinking of the role of form in the direction of a *realism* that begins with the style of objects themselves, rather than with *a priori* structures of subjectivity. The character of aesthetic comportment is always ordered by a largely unconscious mimetic attunement to heterogeneous forms that are constantly undergoing processes of destabilization and restabilization. This means that the specific character of many forms of art solicits a kind of "distracted" engagement rather than a robustly self-conscious and contemplative attention. I close by elucidating this theory via a critical account of contemporary violinist Joshua Bell's experiments in unannounced public performance, where the distraction observed in the behavior of passers-by was misinterpreted as an aesthetic and moral failure.

Additional Conference Information:

Registration: Full-Time Faculty: \$30; Part-Time Faculty and Students: \$10. Registration must be paid on the day of the conference, cash or check. Receipts will be provided. Registration fees directly support current and future conference costs.

Location, Campus Parking, and Map: Registration and all presentations will be located in the Academic/Administration building at Thomas More College. Address: 333 Thomas More Parkway, Crestview Hills, KY 41017

Thomas More Campus Map: www.thomasmore.edu/PDFs/campus_map.pdf

Parking: Park in the visitor lot on weekends. No permit needed.

Lunch Suggestions: Seiler Commons (located inside the Academic/Administration building) offers a buffet-style brunch on Saturdays from 11am-1pm (cost: \$7.25 plus tax). There are other nearby lunch locations located off-campus.

Accommodations: These hotels are located 10-15 minutes from campus.

Wingate by Wyndham Cincinnati/Erlanger

Address: 605 Viox Dr, Erlanger, KY 41018

Phone: (859) 905-0747

Country Inn & Suites by Radisson, Erlanger, KY - Cincinnati Airport

Address: 630 Donaldson Hwy, Erlanger, KY 41018

Phone: (859) 727-3400

Holiday Inn Florence

Address: 7905 Freedom Way, Florence, KY 41042

Phone: (859) 980-1700

Contact Information: For any questions about the conference, please contact the KPA President (preferably by email or call/text my cellphone):

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