

Symphony of Reason

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Autobiographies



STUDENT VOICES

Courtney A. Blackwell

I am an English major with a concentration in teaching. My career aspiration is to work in school administration as a principal or superintendent. Some of my favorite philosophers include Confucius, Foucault, Aristotle, and Mary Wollstonecraft. Some political causes that interest me include: safety in public and private schools, equal pay, gender workplace diversity, poverty and homelessness, race relations or racism, and disciplinary policies in education.

Rebecca L. Hasley

I recently just graduated from Purdue University Northwest in May of 2021, with a Bachelor of Science in Psychology and a Minor in Philosophy. I was very much involved on campus and had several leadership positions. Among the most important, I was the President of the Psychology Club, the CHESSE Senator for the Student Government Association, and a member of the Student Advisory Board. My career goals are focused on continuing my education through graduate school to receive a Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology, where I aim to work with foundations of research pertaining to several mental health disorders. In the meantime, I have recently accepted a Research Coordinator position at a Hines VA hospital, where the study focuses on trauma and PTSD. Although my main focus has been pursuing a career in Psychology, I enjoy analyzing theoretical and ethical concepts that apply to modern, everyday life. I feel that the analysis process of Psychology and Philosophy are very similar to each other in many ways, and may even be identical to each other.

Harrison S. A. Hooper

I am studying Biological Sciences with a minor in Nutrition. I'm yet to decide what I want to do with my degree after graduating but I do know that I want to go to graduate school and potentially study physical therapy or medicine. My favorite philosopher is probably Aristotle. Not just because of his ideas in ethics, but also because his knowledge knew no

bounds. The fact that he wrote about physics, biology, psychology, linguistics, logic, ethics, rhetoric, politics, government, music, theatre, poetry, and metaphysics is astonishing. I'm not a big political person. However, some of the political causes I feel most strongly about are definitely the black lives matter movement, abortion rights and gun control in the US.

Daizha M. Hunter

I am a senior studying psychology at PNW and I am currently looking to study Counseling Psychology in graduate school with a focus on child and adolescent treatment next year. Farther into the future, I aspire to become a clinical child psychologist. One of my favorite philosophers I have studied so far is Immanuel Kant because I love learning about the Categorical Imperative and his views on how we should treat one another ethically. My favorite political causes include racial justice and equity in higher education and reducing the poverty rate.

Kathleen M. Nielsen

I'm a senior, but I need another year to get all my classes in. My favorite philosopher is Aristotle. I am an English major (literature), with two minors: psychology and creative writing as a career. I live in Westville and am sad to see it losing its status as a university in its own right, by becoming a branch of the Hammond campus. I'm a member of the Westville Warriors and Sigma Tau Delta, Chapter Alpha Mu Pi. My political causes are voting rights (front and center); criminal justice reform; global warming initiatives; the fight against white supremacy; fighting political corruption; new laws to protect our democracy. My career aspirations are to be a freelance writer and artist.

I can say without hesitation, my favorite philosopher is Aristotle. From Aristotle:

- *"At his best, man is the noblest of all animals; separated from law and justice he is the worst."*
- *"What it lies in our power to do, it lies in our power not to do."*
- *"The energy of the mind is the essence of life."*

I would like to add Aldous Huxley as another favorite philosopher. The Huxley quotes I like are:

- *"Facts do not cease to exist because they are ignored."*
- *"Dictators can always consolidate their tyranny by an appeal to patriotism."*
- *"But the nature of the universe is such that ends can never justify the means. On the contrary, the means always determine the end."*

Christopher H. Pabey

I am currently a sophomore in PNW's School of Nursing. Though rather stark of me to say, I also believe it best that I introduce myself as a type 1 diabetic, diagnosed at the age of 8, as this truly is a large factor in where I am in life today. You see, my experience of being diagnosed was shockingly pleasant – especially thanks to my nurses, whose efforts I credit with sparking my passion for healthcare. Once factored in with my caring and amiable nature, it was no surprise that I was so clearly directed toward studying nursing. With PNW's campus being only some ten minutes away, everything had just fallen into place for me.

As a freshman, I was given the opportunity to take a Humanities elective, and Dr. Detmer's Introduction to Ethics course was exactly what I was looking for. In his course, we discussed many topics of ethical debate, both past and present, and even considered how opinions may vary based on culture. Throughout the semester, I was given multiple opportunities to further explore topics through my writing, but of all the papers that I had done, my work about veganism / vegetarianism simply flowed (more than any other) while writing it. When I then heard from Dr. Detmer that he wanted to share my work, I was beyond honored, and I therefore can only hope that you, the reader, may also find my work just as intriguing.

To offer a bit more about my personal take on philosophy and ethics, I believe it best that I also introduce some of the topics that I find most interesting. The first idea which really took me away was cultural relativism, first introduced to me in Dr. Detmer's course. Cultural relativism is the idea that a person's beliefs should not be judged until first viewed from the aspect of their culture. While this was an idea that subconsciously existed in my mind, being able to thoroughly apply it in class was amongst my favorite parts of the course. A second concept which I truly enjoy pondering is whether humans are naturally good. While there are plenty of ways to look at this question, we were also able to cover the topic in class through what is known as the Prisoner's Dilemma. While I won't get too deep into the topic, the dilemma is essentially a question of how far people will go in hopes of saving themselves as well as somebody to whom they owe nothing. Questions like these, which deeply examine the person as an individual in the world around him or her, are the ones which sparked my interest the most. I truly believe that if we each would reflect on where we hold and share our values, the world may just come one step closer to being a whole again.

Kayla M. Vasilko

I am a first year PNW graduate student pursuing my Master's in Communications, and a graduate teaching assistant for COM 114. I believe that kindness and positivity are directly correlated with success, and I promote these in the work I do for my class, for S.H.I.N.E (students helping ignite needed esteem), for the community, and for my writing. I write to better understand the world, and have written 13 novels, 4,650 poems, and dozens of essays and short stories thus far. I strive to make a positive difference in the world, and hope that I

never stop seeking those who may be standing all alone and moving to stand beside them. Some of my favorite philosophers are Epictetus, Buddha, and Aristotle. I appreciate Aristotle's view of the ergon (work) of a human being, which, he argues, "consists in activity of the rational part of the soul in accordance with virtue."¹



FACULTY VOICES

Dr. Renee M. Conroy

I am an Associate Professor of Philosophy at Purdue University Northwest and a Fulbright Scholar. My current research is focused on topics in philosophy of dance, environmental aesthetics, and issues at the intersection of art and ethics. My published work appears in a variety of anthologies and academic journals, including Midwest Studies in Philosophy, Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism, Contemporary Aesthetics, and Ethics, Place and Environment. The reflection piece included in this volume is a modified excerpt from a longer set of comments presented at the American Philosophical Association Central Division Meeting in February 2020 in which I was honored to participate in an author-meets-critics panel discussing the work of one of my philosophical heroines, Carolyn Korsmeyer.

Dr. Samuel Zinaich, Jr.

I am an associate professor of philosophy at PNW. Apart from my teaching duties, I focus on the moral, political, and legal philosophy of John Locke (1632-1704). In my spare time, I enjoy reading about and tasting wines and I grow several types of hot peppers, including Carolina Reapers, Ghost Peppers, and Armageddon Peppers.



¹ <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/aristotle-ethics/>

FOREWORD

Foreword

Dr. David Detmer

In this issue of *Symphony or Reason*, Purdue University Northwest's philosophy magazine, you will find a great variety of thoughtful, intelligent voices dealing sensitively, imaginatively, and logically with an equally diverse set of compelling issues.

There is something here to interest any intellectually curious reader. Stimulating reflections on the contemporary American social and political climate can be found in the essays of Daizha M. Hunter, on racism, and Kathleen M. Nielsen, on the ways in which the internet and social media tend to bring out the worst in us.

Those whose tastes run more toward the great philosophical classics and canonical works of the past will find much to savor in the work of Courtney A. Blackwell, on Plato's *Allegory of the Cave*, Harrison S. A. Hooper, on St. Augustine's *The Problem of Evil*, and Dr. Samuel Zinaich, Jr., on John Locke's *Two Treatises of Government*.

Ethical and aesthetic issues are addressed provocatively in the works of Christopher H. Pabey, on ethical vegetarianism, Rebecca L. Hasley, on the aesthetic appreciation of nature, and Dr. Renee M. Conroy, on the puzzle of why we value the original "Real Thing" (for example, Mickey Mantle's baseball glove, the first signed copy of the Declaration of Independence, or Picasso's paintbrush) so much more than any copy or forgery, even if it is nearly indistinguishable from the original.

For proof that philosophical ideas can be presented in elegant poetry, as well as prose, one need only read the three poems, and one wide-ranging essay, by Kayla M. Vasilko that are presented here.

One final note. In Kathleen M. Nielsen's reflections on the state of contemporary American discourse, she points out that "news coverage is often an unbearable display of loud, squeaking wheels," with "people screaming and throwing tantrums." If anything unites the disparate pieces published in this issue of *Symphony of Reason*, perhaps it is that each one of them provides a most welcome and refreshing respite from such assaultive, unreasoned verbal noise.

SHORT ESSAYS

The Moral Call to Ending Racism

Daizha M. Hunter

No matter how advanced we become as a society, racism always seems to lurk in the dark crevices of our world. As defined by Merriam-Webster, racism is “a belief that race is a fundamental determinant of human traits and capacities and that racial differences produce an inherent superiority of a particular race.”¹ Blatant forms of racism have occurred more recently through the unfortunate murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and countless others in America. To some, it is a mind warping concept how a human life can be taken away and deemed as unworthy all because of the origins and physical features of one’s being. To others, it is righteously justified and acceptable to regard an individual’s life as inferior due to his or her race. However, there is no question that racism is morally wrong in all forms no matter the situation.

When you diminish someone solely to their physical appearance, you disregard all the inner qualities that make that person human. It is such a superficial way to judge someone based upon the skin he or she is born in. Merely looking at people and deciding how they should be treated, hardly scratches the surface of who they are. You do not get a chance to discover the goodness of their hearts or the qualities they possess. If the pigment of skin were removed the only aspects that would matter most would be the kindness they share with others, their morals, and values. The only determinant of how someone should be treated is how he or she treats you, and even then, everyone is deserving of respect.

Once the outer layer of the body is removed, what remains? All individuals, regardless of color, have the same mechanical makeup of the body: a beating heart, lungs, a liver, and kidneys, to name a few. And once these components that keep a person alive diminish, what is left of them? Every human body, once decomposed, reveals the same skeletal structure. Aside from physicality, the only mark left of a person is intangible – how he or she was to others and what he or she did in life. Racism is an ugly stain in any civilization that decreases the potential of a person to a form of hatred, he or she projects onto the world. Racism is what removes human from humanity.

¹ <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/racism>

Racism divides humanity into social constructs that categorize people as either unworthy or superior to others. It rears its ugly head in the tragic events of war, senseless murder, discrimination, and in many other forms. How can something so destructive and hate-ridden possibly be morally permissible? Simply put, it cannot and never will be. The air does not discriminate whose lungs it breathes life into. Death and sickness do not discriminate whose body they infect. In the same way, we as human beings should not discriminate who we are kind to and who we mistreat, based on race. In the words of Toni Morrison, “There is no such thing as race. None. There is just a human race—scientifically, anthropologically.”²



² See https://www.huffpost.com/entry/toni-morrison-s-most-powerful-quotes-on-racism_n_5d49b529e4b0244052e226ea/amp

Our Higher Self

Kathleen M. Nielsen

“The worst wheel of the cart makes the most noise” (Benjamin Franklin, 1737). That quote preceded the better known, “The wheel that squeaks the loudest is the one that gets the grease,” which is a shortened version of the original (attributed to Cal Stewart circa 1903):

I don't believe in kickin',
It aint apt to bring one peace;
But the wheel what squeaks the loudest
is the one what gets the grease.

“Kickin’” used to be slang for complaining or causing a disturbance.

News coverage is often an unbearable display of loud, squeaking wheels. They get all of the attention, distracting us from the majority of Americans, who are kind, caring, and considerate. Spend a day in the public – shopping, crossing a busy avenue, or relaxing at a bistro – and you will meet them. Total strangers will greet you with a smile as they walk by; they will hit the brakes and wave at you to cross the street in front of them; and, they will compliment you as you try on that new coat – “*It is so you!*” All of those things happened to me in a single day, spanning just a few hours.

The people screaming and throwing tantrums neither represent the best of us nor the majority of us. They also do not represent the best of *themselves*, allowing their lower selves to be in control. It is even worse when these histrionic individuals have access to guns and the internet. Guns are weapons in the traditional sense, and the internet has become a digital weapon in the toolbox of violent individuals and groups. It is true that guns, especially AR-15s, are used in most mass shootings, but we should never discount the internet's role in the ability to destroy lives.

The internet connects people with businesses, entertainment, and a myriad of good ideas, but it also connects bad actors with each other – amplifying their intent and ability to harm others. Election officials, their families, and other perceived enemies of the far-right are routinely sent death threats via email and voicemails. They are even subjected to physical intimidation in front

of their homes. The internet facilitates the gathering of violent people in physical locations. Although most internet users have good intentions, those with nefarious intentions can still reach millions of like-minded individuals. A lone shooter can kill several people per second with his AR-15; a killer or con man can get malleable people to carry out plans that have the potential to affect the entire globe.

Even though the most terrible people among us are the minority, they have proven they can cause mayhem that affects all of us. This is a depressing fact of life in our world today. *Anyone* can weaponize the internet, and *anyone* can buy a gun. Can we take guns or the internet out of the hands of dangerous people? Obviously not.

There must be a way to get people to exhibit their best selves at all times, or at least want to. Religions have tried to do be the solution, but they have failed miserably. Don't get me wrong – people who are religious can be influenced into being their higher selves. Many are, but many are not. How often have we heard about pastors, priests, and parishioners committing murder and molestation (among other crimes)? For the most part, and for a very long time, religious leaders have been able to control the masses and get them to agree on a set of morals, but not all people are willing to conform. More and more people today have decided not to base their belief system on religion, yet most of them still strive to be good people. My point is that religious beliefs are not the deciding factor in whether or not a person can or is trying to be his higher self. The deciding factor lies within what decisions we make as individuals and as a society. Everyone's moral compass should innately point north; we should not have to be prodded towards it. There is abundant evidence throughout history that this is the case, but one can equally argue that there is just as much evidence to the contrary. Maybe the answer to this question is a mixed bag. Perhaps one can be one's higher self when interacting with some people, while being one's lower self when dealing with others.

Deterrence does not seem to determine whether or not someone will choose to be his higher self. We beg, cajole, and try to shame and penalize those who do us harm – but to no effect. Some of these criminals become incarcerated, but many are not. Much depends on who you know, what color your skin is, how much money you have, and the offense. Some crimes are not on the books, such as acts of domestic terrorism. To my knowledge, no one is being explicitly charged for participating in the insurrection at the U.S. Capitol. Other crimes, such as white collar, have such low penalties, there may as well be none at all. Someone who bilks millions of dollars out of

another person (or other entity) may get away with serving probation, while someone who shoplifts a loaf of bread can spend time in jail. Our criminal justice system is so corrupt and so much in need of an overhaul, that much more attention needs to be focused on it.

In the end, we cannot persuade other people to be their higher selves if that is not what they want to be. We can only control ourselves, but I propose we also do this—*be the squeaky wheel!* People who are trying to be good citizens should grab the microphones and control the narrative in this country. More of us need to fight back against injustice in all of its forms. The most important fight we have right now involves voting rights and who controls our elections. Good people are being intimidated out of their jobs, leaving openings for those who favor authoritarianism over democracy. We need to fight against gerrymandering, which, in many states, guarantees seats for Republicans, regardless of how many votes Democrats get. More than just worrisome, state laws have been passed that give partisan hacks the ability to overthrow the election results in their states, thus directly affecting future presidential elections. It is a genuine possibility that the next presidential election will be overthrown due to these state laws. Alarming things are going on in this country that need to be addressed before it is too late. We have to fight for the right to be our higher selves and for the ability to help others do the same.



Law and Loyalty: A Reflective Philosophical Essay

Kayla M. Vasilko



“All that is required to turn a lie into truth is a large group, for reasons all its own, to say that it sees it as fact.”

~ Kayla Vasilko



Selflessness, honesty, loyalty, and dependability: I have unenviably only encountered their opposites in most personal relationships outside of my family. The first time I experienced the betrayal of another person, I tried to make sense of the attacks on my heart. I reasoned it was greed that led this person to be dishonest with me, and greed that also led him to be disloyal. It wasn't until I faced the same pattern in shattering repetition that I learned something new. Disloyalty wasn't causing this, at least not in the way that I had thought. In actuality, the core of the problem lay with me. For, time and time again, I failed to understand that everyone who led these attacks on my heart was first and foremost, loyal to *himself*.

I then understood that it didn't matter that I honored them first, in everything; that I had followed all the “rules” and then some more. Upon this realization, it seemed there was no lawfulness in the personal world at all, at least none that could be governed, none that could be depended on in the fashion of order. Socrates once said, “True wisdom comes to each of us when we realize how little we understand about life, ourselves, and the world around us” (Juma). I did not expect that wisdom could cause so much pain.

At this point, I did not think that the selfishness I had discovered could exist equally unbridled in the professional world. In the workplace, there are rules, schedules, and in turn, order. There are procedures to follow, policies to abide by. Those who honor the rules and their co-workers move

to higher ranks. Yet, I soon experienced another wave of shock. I encountered first-hand, that people could be favored (not because of hard work or honor), that professionals too could turn to bullying and abuse, and that speaking the truth could be at the expense of one's job and the livelihood of one's family.

When reading this, many might not echo the level of astonishment that I felt upon experiencing duplicity. They might label me naïve and say it happens all the time. They might not even remember the *first* time that it happened to them. The injustice in this, lies, not in their dismissal, but in the moment in time when improbity becomes a truism.

I now believe that having to choose between doing the right thing and protecting one's means to survive, or providing for one's family, is the cruelest moral torture that could occur. Plato once said, "Good people do not need laws to tell them to act responsibly, while bad people will find a way around the laws," and "Knowledge without justice ought to be called cunning rather than wisdom" (Juma).

These quotes are edifying. When I experienced personal betrayal, I longed for enforceable rules that prevented people from acting cruelly. I felt safe in the workplace because those rules exist in that environment, but I had not considered that there would be people who could *successfully* navigate around them; that justice would not prevail in the end, only silence; that those that sought what was fair *would be the ones punished*. Going by Plato's definition, laws, on their own, are thus nugatory. People will either evade them or heed them. Thus, it is only those who can will themselves to be repeatedly fair that are most needed in leadership positions in our world.

Aristotle states, "We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit" (Rodenhizer). This is precisely what we need from our leaders. Repeated fair governing. Dependability. But that is not to say that those who gainsay should be excluded; there is great danger in allowing only one voice to speak. According to Aristotle, "It is just that we should be grateful, not only to those with whose views we may agree, but also to those who have expressed more superficial views; for these also contributed something, by developing before us the powers of thought" (Thibodeaux).

Limiting leadership to one voice is impossible without selection, and any selection of one voice over another is impossible without opinion. Of opinion, Bill Bullard states: "Opinion is really the lowest form of human knowledge. It requires no accountability, no understanding. The highest form of knowledge... is empathy, for it requires us to suspend our egos and live in another's world.

It requires profound purpose larger than the self-kind of understanding” (“A Quote by Bill Bullard”).

In the *Sutta Nipata*, the Buddha states: “In whom there is no sympathy for living beings: know him as an outcast” (Real Buddha Quotes). It has been stated that compassion is an application of deep empathy in Buddhism. When acting with compassion, we look outside of ourselves and recognize the suffering of others. We consider that suffering as our own and seek freedom from it (Daley). This quote from the Dalai Lama captures this definition beautifully.

According to Buddhism, compassion is an aspiration, a state of mind, wanting others to be free from suffering. It’s not passive—it’s not empathy alone—but rather an empathetic altruism that actively strives to free others from suffering. Genuine compassion must have both wisdom and loving kindness. That is to say, one must understand the nature of the suffering from which we wish to free others (this is wisdom), and one must experience deep intimacy and empathy with other sentient beings (this is loving kindness). (Daley)

Empathy then, synonymous with fair governing, is imperative in our world and should supersede any other theory of jurisprudence. For, although it is important to honor laws, policies, and procedures, one must be strong-willed enough to recognize and protest morally wrong rules. Perhaps there is a gap in the law that is allowing the selfish to get around it. Perhaps there are laws that were penned with conceited motives. Perhaps only one person was allowed to hold the pen. Perhaps they actually harm the governed instead of bettering society. Maya Angelou wrote: “I think we all have empathy. We may not have enough courage to display it” (“Maya Angelou Quotes”). In this world, in order to have the courage to lead lives with empathy, and to pledge loyalty, not to ourselves or our institutions, but to humanity as a whole, we need leadership at multiple levels – in governing, electing, choosing, working, writing, teaching, and living.

It would be erroneous to end this essay with anything other than a plea for the insistence of loyalty, first and foremost, to morality. Remember the first time in your past that the world decided that wrong was right by majority. Remember and challenge how unremarkable that has become. Remember and understand the courage it will take to question, but know as Aristotle said, “You will never do anything in this world without courage. It is the greatest quality of the mind next to honor” (Juma). Therefore, this great courage (a high virtue) is vital to practice this highest loyalty.

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LONG ESSAYS

The Aesthetic Appreciation of Nature's Environment

Rebecca L. Hasley

A controversial question in the aesthetic world concerns the value of aesthetic appreciation of nature and natural environments. Natural landscapes are typically very diverse, with the suggestion of various emotional stimuli that allow an enhanced state of liberty in selecting, emphasizing, and grouping their elements for the purpose of achieving appropriate aesthetic appreciation. When evaluating typical pieces of artwork, by contrast, there is often very little debate on which parts of the piece should be valued and appreciated; it is often just known based upon common assumptions that have developed within the art world.¹ Many philosophers feel as if the requirements of aesthetic appreciation must exist around the composition of typical art itself, which is developed, created, and composed by humans and further displayed for aesthetically pleasing enjoyment. However, nature is of its own development and creation, which is why its aesthetic values are up for debate (428). So, the question is, given that nature is not of human creation, how is one to consider its aesthetic properties?

When considering human creation within the art world, the separating of art from non-art seems to become rather simple. The value of art comes from the determination and judgment of human evaluation, which has developed from qualities relevant to aesthetic appreciation. Further, aesthetic appreciation and artistic value are thought to express knowledgeable standpoints solely based upon the fact that artwork is composed through human creation, to be viewed and appreciated for its aesthetic values. Given that artwork is thought to provoke some type of stimulus within the human experience, the critic of this statement may say that art must be humanly made, which nature is not (428). Nature stems from the earth and has its own natural values and environment. Although nature is not humanly made, it is still rich in diversity, suggestions, and

¹Allen Carlson, "Aesthetic Appreciation of the Natural Environment," in *Aesthetics: A Reader in Philosophy of the Arts*, eds. David Goldblatt, Lee B. Brown, and Stephanie Patridge. 4th ed. (New York: Routledge, 2018), 427. Any time a number appears in parentheses in the text, this is a reference to a page number from this article.

stimuli, all of which hold plenty of aesthetic properties. The following models give justification to this claim.

One viewpoint that explains the aesthetic appreciation of nature is the *Object of Art Model* (428). This model considers the appreciation of non-representational artwork, such as Constantin Brancusi's abstract sculpture of 1919, *Bird in Space*. To admire this sculpture, it is not necessary for the work to be related to anything besides the significant and self-contained aesthetic qualities of its creation. The sculpture is appreciated as a physical object and is admired for the qualities of color, design, and technique used. The aesthetic qualities of the sculpture are defined and identified through the way the sculpture glistens in the light, resembles balance and grace, and expresses the elegance of flight – all of which are appreciated as ideals of symbolism in the art world (428).

The *Object of Art Model* holds that if an abstract sculpture of a bird can be aesthetically pleasing and be inspired through the qualities of nature, then surely the bird itself can be viewed through the same approach (428). Whether we are referring to a parrot or a peacock, birds are very majestic creatures, and it is very difficult to deny their elegance. When considering their beauty, the vibrant colors of a parrot and the iridescent shimmers of a peacock's feathers are almost always likely to be admired through the human eye. If a sculpture of an animal can be deemed to hold aesthetic properties, then it is only just to assume that the real animal itself can hold identical, if not enhanced, aesthetically pleasing properties.

Further elaborating on the *Object of Art Model*, it is not uncommon for pieces of nature to be removed from their natural habitat and be appreciated for their sensuous and expressive qualities (428). Objects of nature are often repurposed as decorative décor for interior and exterior use. For example, rocks and driftwood are often used as display on mantelpieces or placed in yards as symbolisms of nature. If pieces of nature are removed from their natural habitat and used for viewing pleasures, then it is justified to argue that nature has aesthetically pleasing values. Although the *Object of Art Model* justifies removing pieces of nature from their natural habitat for decorative and viewing purposes, there is a major flaw in the distinction between appreciating nature and appreciating the objects of nature. When appreciation is directly specified to an object of nature, there is no longer a genuine appreciation of nature as a whole (428). Instead, objects or pieces of nature are being appreciated. The separation of an object from nature causes the appreciation of nature's object to become lost in the shuffle of rearrangement. The model argues that by removing objects from their natural environment, the object is no longer associated with

nature as a whole, and it becomes appreciated solely based upon the idea that the object is being used and viewed as aesthetically pleasing.

To elaborate, here are a couple of personal examples. I own several crystals, which can be identified as physical objects that hold expressive qualities. Crystals are thought to be aesthetically pleasing, from the sparkles within them, their smooth and jagged surface, and the holistic tendencies they are thought to have. However, crystals are a force of nature and they are often removed from their natural habitat to be personally collected. The appreciation of natural crystals becomes problematic based upon the fact that they have been removed from their natural surroundings. When removing a crystal from its natural formation, the object itself becomes a readymade art figuration. The *Object of Art Model* argues that the environment of natural creation is aesthetically relevant to natural objects as well as the environment of display. By removing a crystal from its natural environment and using it as a display in my home, I am no longer holding appreciation towards nature itself, but rather towards the object, which in this case is the crystal.

Another example I have focuses on feather earrings that I have made. My feather earrings are made from the feathers of ducks, roosters, chickens, and other small birds. I find the iridescence of their feathers in the sunlight to be aesthetically pleasing and enjoy the fact that they symbolize an animal of nature. These feathers have come from forest preserves, lakes, and hunting. By repurposing the feathers of birds and using them as figurative jewelry, I have transformed the feathers from an object *in* nature to an object *from* nature. I have removed the object from its natural environment and used it to create other terms or conditions. However, the feathers are still being appreciated for their aesthetic value, despite their new surroundings. A feather does not have to be in a natural environment for it to still hold significant beauty. Thus, the *Object of Art Model* is only an appropriate explanation for natural objects that are self-contained and used as aesthetic units, so that their original environment is irrelevant to their aesthetic value (429).

Nature has always deeply enthused me and I personally value the aesthetic properties of the natural world daily. When in nature, I often create rock sculptures using balancing techniques by simply stacking rocks and pebbles on top of each other. In the end, I consider the finished product an artistic creation. The sculpture is admired for its colorful display, textures, and patterns. The way the sun shines upon the sparkles of the rocks enhances the color scheme and broadens the satisfaction of creation. The rock sculpture becomes aesthetically pleasing due to the properties it holds – the color scheme, the glimpse of sparkle in the sunlight, and the delicacy of balance. All

these properties hold relevance to the knowledge of aesthetics through the creation of admiration. The rocks were never removed from their natural habitat and they were used for the creation of an engaging art piece. This standpoint of artistic creation relevant to natural aesthetics is considered the *Aesthetics of Engagement Model*. This model encourages one to replace abstract qualities of art with the engagement of a natural environment and to immerse oneself with the sensory stimuli presented inside of that natural environment (431).

The *Aesthetics of Engagement Model* encourages us to appreciate everything nature has to offer, from the colors in the sky, to the flowers of the earth, the leaves on trees, the rivers and waterfalls, the sand on the beaches, and everything in between. This approach of aesthetic appreciation encourages one to fully experience the physical sensations that nature has to offer through total immersion in the environment (431). I often find myself being mentally present in nature through engaging with the environment by watching the soothing, somber transformation of a sunset, the breeze sway through the trees of a forest, or the water stream down a cliff with an exhilarating sensation. However, none of these experiences can provoke emotion without fully placing myself in a position to be transformed as a participant of nature, not an observer. By placing myself in a position to immerse myself with nature's qualities, I can fully feel and see the aesthetic properties nature has to offer.

Although the *Aesthetics of Engagement* approach encourages one to appreciate every and all aspects of nature, it lacks boundaries as to how to appreciate exactly what one is viewing. If one were to appreciate all aspects of nature, then a single environment would lack meaning or significance (432). Knowledge within the consideration of nature's aesthetics is relevant to know what to appreciate within nature, and how to appreciate the various aspects of an environment. For example, the blossoming of a dogwood tree may hold significance in a community park, but an old pine tree would hold much more significance in the Redwood Forest. A forest preserve in southern Indiana may be filled with wildflowers, forage plants, and small animals, but the Smokey Mountains in Tennessee will have much larger lakes, much taller trees, and much larger animals. Different environments within nature require different acts of inspection and analytical thought, just as typical art does. The knowledge of different environments indicates how to appreciate that said environment. Although a dogwood tree may hold significant beauty to me in a community park, I would not find it to hold significance in a dense forest. Without having the appropriate and relevant knowledge of the two trees, the aesthetic significance of their environment may lack

appropriate boundaries. Precisely, the knowledge of various environments indicates how to appreciate environments in their own and unique way (432). The *Aesthetics of Engagement Model* supports recognizing beauty within all-natural environments; however, the recognition of this beauty must be done with consideration of clear boundaries towards the environment.

In many ways, nature compares to various art forms and is perhaps one of the sole inspirations for many beautiful and magnificent artworks themselves. To elaborate, nature is often the scenery of paintings, bird noises are used in musical compositions, clay sculptures resemble trees or animals, woodwork is used as architecture, and so forth. The symbolism of nature exists in almost every art form, so that it is only just to say that nature holds aesthetic tendencies. Of the many models that defend nature's aesthetic qualities, I believe that the *Object of Art* and *Aesthetics of Engagement* models most clearly emphasize using nature's tendencies to hold aesthetically pleasing values based upon their environmental views. Nature's properties largely depend on how they are viewed and structured, whether their significance relates to their environment or not. A crucial component of nature's aesthetics depends on the location of the object or environment. If an object may be presented as a piece of art that resembles nature's magnificence, then surely the object in nature would hold much more enhanced and supplementary properties. The aesthetic appreciation of nature comes from appreciating its properties for what they truly are, not from what humans compose from it.



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The Question of Vegetarianism: Is it Right?

Christopher H. Pabey

Vegetarianism and veganism have been rising topics in the past few decades, with growing interest (and debate) in the general population day-to-day. It isn't much of a surprise that the topics are more common however, given the now *much* greater portrayal of the truths behind the meat production industry in our media. Upon seeing these cruel truths, many meat eaters tend to feel a sense of guilt for knowing what they have partaken in, and yet most still don't change their diets, thus straying from the truth. Others take it upon themselves to stop eating meat however, and to spread this message and expose the harsh realities of the meat industry. But why is it that something as simple as the food we eat has become a topic of such extreme arguments? Are there truly just reasons for supporting vegetarianism / veganism, or are people simply blowing the situation out of proportion by personifying animals?

Philosopher and author Dr. James Rachels finds vegetarianism to be the most ethically sound solution in regards to the entire situation—so much so that he himself practiced vegetarianism. In his article “The Basic Argument for Vegetarianism,” Rachels breaks down all of his reasoning regarding the ethical defensibility of vegetarianism, making use of what he refers to as “the basic argument for vegetarianism”—hence the name. Rachels reasons that, by making use of this argument, one would be able to provide all of the logic needed to defend vegetarianism, especially thanks to how straightforward yet sound the argument itself is.

Rachels begins his article with an anecdote about author Peter Singer, who in 1973 published an article called “Animal Liberation.” The general population's initial response to Singer's article was rather harsh, given its belief that such a title, comparing the suffering of animals to that of people of color and women, made those issues seem less significant; after all, how could the people be able to take any of those issues seriously if parallels were being drawn between them and animal treatment? But Peter Singer was never discouraged and continued to push his point until he had finally inspired many—including James Rachels—to practice vegetarianism.

With the backstory of Rachels' beliefs now in the open, he proceeds to explain the concepts of this so-called "basic argument for vegetarianism." As he states, "It begins with the principle that it is wrong to cause pain unless there is a good enough reason. The qualification is important, because causing pain is not always wrong."¹ He then offers some examples of instances where causing pain *is* necessary and justified (such as going to the dentist or getting a shot).

This of course is a reasonable statement upon which somebody could build an argument, because unless they are sadists, most people would not want to cause needless pain because they know that they would not want to *feel* needless pain—that is, unless they are masochists. And even in the case of sadists and masochists, these people find a particular pleasure behind this pain. Although some may consider this type of pain unnecessary or even unethical, sadists and masochists *do* believe that there is a good reason behind the pain, and consent tends to be involved as well—something which animals cannot offer. With that being stated, we can then conclude that it is, in fact, reasonable to build an argument off of the idea that we should not cause pain if it is not necessary and justified."

The next step in Rachels' argument is understanding that the treatment of animals in the meat production industry is beyond cruel. Rachels references the works of many researchers and authors which describe in vivid detail just how miserable and agonizing the lives of many of these animals tend to be. Perhaps amongst the most depressing is the following: "About 80 million of the 95 million hogs slaughtered each year in America, according to the National Pork Producers Council, are intensively reared in mass-confinement farms, never once in their time on earth feeling soil or sunshine. Genetically engineered by machines, inseminated by machines, monitored, herded, electrocuted, stabbed, cleaned, cut, and packaged by machines—themselves treated as machines 'from birth to bacon'—these creatures, when eaten, have hardly ever been touched by human hands."² Despite just how heartbreaking a picture this is, there *is* still a great reason for this suffering. Consuming the produced meat nourishes our bodies, which *should* inherently justify this pain which the animals must endure. It does not, however, as there are many other ways for us to receive our nourishment. Because there is an alternative to putting the animals through such

¹ James Rachels, "The Basic Argument for Vegetarianism," in *The Legacy of Socrates*, ed. Stuart Rachels (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 3.

² Matthew Scully, *Dominion: The Power of Man, the Suffering of Animals, and the Call to Mercy* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2002), 29.

needless pain and suffering, we should follow it and become vegetarians without second thought. *This*, then, is the “basic argument for vegetarianism” to which Rachels refers.

This argument *does* happen to have limited application, however, but Rachels isn’t shy about this fact either; on the contrary, he specifically points out that the argument “says nothing about animals raised on old-fashioned family farms or animals killed in hunter-gatherer societies.”³ In most cases, such farms have the time to devote to each animal, and likely wouldn’t treat their animals harshly *even if* they had the machinery that most mass-scale meat producers use. Despite this, Rachels’ argument is targeted toward the general public, which generally lives in modern industrial countries and therefore receives its meat from these mass-scale meat producers, making it a part of this very problem of which we speak.

Beyond this minor limitation then, this argument holds rather strong, with many strengths and very little bias whatsoever. It is founded upon a very core value which almost all humans share—causing unnecessary pain is wrong. Though a generalization, I find it safe to say that such a belief is shared by almost all humans, because we each know that we individually would not like to experience any unnecessary pain. Beyond this, the argument does not rely upon any extravagant claims regarding health, nor upon moral restrictions based on religion, nor does it try to argue the “rights” of animals. The argument is as straightforward as can be, and finding the slightest smidge of bias in the logic or reasoning seems to prove impossible as well.

“The Basic Argument for Vegetarianism” truly is amazing then, as its conclusion is reached so quickly, without having to make any of the hasty generalizations or controversial claims, which tend to follow quickly justified arguments. This argument leads to a reasonable chain of sound conclusions, each being drawn from the prior, without missing or skipping a beat. Anyone examining this argument from a logical standpoint would find very little flaw in it, which inherently makes this argument very strong. Though some people may still struggle to make the switch to vegetarianism simply because they enjoy meat too much—and I speak of myself here too—they simply cannot deny that this argument is as compelling as can be.



³ Rachels, 4.

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REFLECTIONS



Student Voices

Courtney A. Blackwell: Guided Meditation on Plato's *Allegory of the Cave*

The ascent from the cave is a long, eye-opening experience. My "reality" in the cave was the shadows on the wall. I have been chained to the wall in the cave for years upon years. These images were what I assumed to be true. Once the stranger freed me from the chains of this imaginary world, I realized all of this was a facade. Since my childhood, this wall on the cave was all I knew to be true; this would soon all change. When I stood up, sharp pains shivered throughout my body. This terrible glare hurt my eyes. I was in a more real world. These shadows on the wall were not real; they were illusions, not accurate representations of reality. The images on the cave wall were the result of men or "artists" using fire and puppets. I was hesitant to leave my supposed reality, but the stranger assured me that I should not stay in this cave.

I reluctantly moved forward with the stranger guiding my path. At first, I only saw the shadows best, but we kept moving forward. The stranger kept speaking of this ascent to sunlight. When we finally made it out of the cave, the light was overwhelming. Why couldn't I just go back to my safe space in the cave?

Although I could not look directly into the light, I started by looking at the reflections of objects and people in the water. Once my eyes adjusted to the reflections of the water, I was able to directly look at objects. I love looking at the moon and stars and spangled heaven at night time. This is such a beautiful sight. Although the moon and the stars are amazing, no sight compares to the sun. My eyes were once frightened by the blazing rays and sunshine, but now, it is my favorite thing to observe. The ascent outside of the cave both physically and metaphorically opened my eyes. Life outside of the cave is life in the intellectual world. The others in the cave must have their eyes fixed; I have to go back and help the others.

Harry S. A. Hooper on St. Augustine's *The Problem of Evil: 2*

While reading this passage it made me think of the justice system, with jail in particular. In this chapter, St. Augustine details his definitions of the different levels of goodness (supreme good, great good, little good, perfect good, and imperfect good). From supreme good, only possessed by God, to little good, which is good that can be corrupted by evil, St. Augustine highlights the imperfect nature of humanity. But this reading also made me think of the justice system and why we have prisons. Given that

for a being to exist, it must have some good, and cannot be wholly evil, it made me realize that St. Augustine highlighted the fact that your actions don't define entirely who you are. If someone commits a crime, more often than not, he or she is considered a criminal and never seen in any other way. However, what we fail to realize is that as St. Augustine suggests, no human being is wholly evil. For him, evil cannot exist without good, but good can exist without evil. Thus, no matter who one is or what one's past says about a person, one will always still have great good within oneself that is incorruptible by evil.

I believe that this is why the justice system puts convicted persons in prison – because they aren't disposable after having exhibited their evil ways, but more importantly, because they will always have some portion of incorruptible good in them, so long as they exist, a great good that is available to flourish and transform those persons with time and rehabilitation. As such, I believe St. Augustine's teachings can be the premise for prisons and rehabilitation of convicted criminals, instead of sentencing them to death, etc. as they will always still have some form of incorruptible good within them, worth living for.





Faculty Voice

Thoughts on *Things*

Dr. Renee M. Conroy

Why do people make pilgrimages to visit Mickey Mantle's baseball glove or travel the globe to stand amid the ruins at Delphi? What special magnetism do objects and places that show their age possess? Carolyn Korsmeyer's *Things: In Touch with the Past* (Oxford University Press, 2019) is a multi-layered examination of the aesthetic allure of artifacts that beguile in virtue of their histories. Drawing on examples that range from personal mourning brooches to the destroyed Palmyra Arch, Korsmeyer offers the first systematic account of the aesthetics of the Real Thing.

Things is a conceptually nuanced and beautifully written reflection on the property of genuineness, which Korsmeyer notes has overlapping ethical, cognitive, and aesthetic dimensions. A central preoccupation of the book is the oft-overlooked sensory modality of touch, which she argues can anchor our experience of a thing's presence in a way that elicits distinctively aesthetic absorption with the past and our current connections to it. Three claims are essential to her analysis.

First, Korsmeyer argues that genuineness is an objective, but imperceptible, property possessed by some bits of the material world, namely, those that are the Real Thing because they have the histories we believe them to have. Second, she highlights the significance of the fact that people cannot help but be drawn to reach out and touch the genuine, even when they know they should keep their hands in their pockets, as is often the case in art museums. Korsmeyer regards this temptation as the basis of the aesthetic aspect of genuineness; we value being in the physical company of that which is genuine for the sake of the emotional thrill and imaginative swell that attends being in close proximity to a meaningful Real Thing on which we *could* lay hands, even if we do not. Third, she argues that our affection, thus, some part of our aesthetic regard, for objects believed to be genuine is rightfully withdrawn when a case of aesthetic deception is disclosed, as when we discover that we have been taken in by a fake, forgery, or convincing replica. Her

aesthetic account of the Real Thing depends crucially on being able to physically touch something that not only is from the past but that has the *right* past.

There is much of value in Korsmeyer's careful treatment of the complex and slippery property of genuineness, and much to love about her layered approach and engaging style. *Things* has inspired new critical discussion about the importance of touch in our aesthetic encounters with the genuine, adding a refreshing dimension to well-worn debates about the aesthetic value of indiscernibles, which have long focused on visible properties. Korsmeyer foregrounds this sense modality by appeal to what she calls "the transitivity of touch," a relation that grounds a unique connection between us and those who came before. This kind of transitivity is importantly phenomenological, rather than straightforwardly logical.

Suppose John Hancock touched the Declaration of Independence, and I also touched the Declaration. It is not as though I thereby touched John Hancock, even if we signed the document at the same time. If, however, I now touch the same parchment on which Hancock penned his famous surname, I might *feel* as though we occupy "the same space" or, at least, as though my little life has crossed paths with his big one in an ineffable, but tangible, way. As Korsmeyer notes, "Such experiences evoke an impression that gaps of time have been momentarily bridged, bringing the past into the present" (p. 25). Thus, she claims tactile engagement gives rise to a distinctive kind of "thrill, wonder, or awe" that is "hard to describe precisely" (p. 28) but is characteristic of aesthetic encounters with the genuine.

An intriguing aspect of Korsmeyer's argument for the centrality of touch, which grounds her further assertion that a perceptually identical replica can never produce the aesthetic gratification of the genuine article, is that actual palpation is not required. Instead, Korsmeyer asserts that proximity to a revered artifact is often sufficient to generate a sense of the object's *presence*, that is, the way the item embodies its past in the present. Her appeal to implicit touch (p. 41) trades on a counterfactual sense of being in physical contact with something: if conditions were different – for example, there were no security guards or the display case was open – it would be possible for me to lay hands on the object of my attention.

Although I am attracted to many theses defended in *Things*, I have doubts about whether possible or hypothetical touch can really do the affective work of generating an episode of Korsmeyer's aesthetic "Wow" (p. 117). If tactile *sensations* are central to generating the feeling that I have had a significant, though indirect, encounter with others' hands because I have had

genuine contact with their handiwork, then merely imagining how the object of attention might feel *if* touched seems unlikely to do the aesthetic trick.

Furthermore, Korsmeyer defends the aesthetic relevance of touch on two grounds. First, she regards palpation as more reliable than sight because less prone to illusions. To this end, she quotes the old English saying approvingly, “Seeing’s believing, but touching is the truth” (p. 39). Second, she argues that palpation begets affective immediacy; it inspires other physical sensations that have emotional resonance, like “thrills or shivers” (p. 28), as a result of its directness. Tactile *imaginings*, however, do not seem well suited to meet either criterion. I might imagine, based on what I see, that the Declaration is smooth and light only to discover when it is placed in my hands that the parchment has more texture and heft than it appears to have. In addition, if proximity to a Real Thing is all that is required to generate the relevant affect of awe or moment of “Wow” because I can envision what it might feel like to touch it, then it is unclear why a perceptually indistinguishable simulacrum that supports a similar kind of imaginative episode should be regarded as *aesthetically* inferior to the Real Thing.

I also have some reservations about Korsmeyer’s approach to aesthetic deception, a topic that occupies the central chapters of the book but has received little critical attention. First, Korsmeyer considers only the negative aesthetic consequences of a disclosed deception. Second, she exploits affective similarities between valuing persons and valuing genuine objects without attending to crucial differences inherent in our emotional entanglements with beloved people as opposed to beloved things. I introduce these concerns by offering a personal tale of aesthetic deception.

In 2007, I visited Lorenzo Ghiberti’s celebrated *Gates of Paradise* while in Florence. Or I thought I did. Although I studied dutifully preparing to drink in the famous art collections in the city’s museums, I overlooked a key bit of tourist information which, had I read it, would have informed me that the doors I gawked at for nearly an hour outside the Baptistery of San Giovanni were replicas. This is a classic case of aesthetic deception, as defined by Korsmeyer, and her analysis of genuineness makes much of the fact that we often retract aesthetic regard for an object when we learn it is not the Real Thing.

My experience, however, indicates that this kind of revelation can occasion a shift in a positive appreciative direction. The discovery that I had been tricked by a perceptual double markedly enhanced my next aesthetic encounter with the doors I had believed were crafted in the 15th century over a period of twenty-seven years. I could not wait to revisit them once I learned the panels

were not made by the revered Italian master and his many acolytes in a protracted act of painstaking labor, but were less than three decades old and had been fashioned from casts made of the originals in the 1950's. They *looked* so perfectly of a piece with the surrounding architecture, and their details were unbelievably intricate and refined. I was awestruck that these massive panels could be the product of relatively quick 20th century reproductive efforts since they *felt* so appropriately aged and bore the perceptual markers of having been hand-hewn. Furthermore, though I did not visit Ghiberti's doors in person (they have been housed in the nearby Duomo Museum since 1990), I acquired deeper appreciation for *their* artistic and cultural significance upon realizing they warranted fastidious duplicative effort to be kept aesthetically alive in the visible heart of Florence. I offer this as a case in which recognition of something's non-genuine character can facilitate enhanced aesthetic appreciation of both the "knock off" and the original.

My story is in stark contrast to an anecdote Korsmeyer recounts in which she stood before Durham Cathedral, tempted to reach up and use the knocker on the door to "add . . . [her] own knock to the tally" of those made by centuries of pilgrims who had requested sanctuary in this manner. "But," she writes, "reading [a plaque by the door] further, I learned that the original object had been removed to the cathedral museum and the iron knocker now in place was a replica. *My hand fell away*" (p. 137, emphasis mine). This scenario parallels my own; but whereas Korsmeyer's response was deflation, mine was elation. This, I submit, is not a simply matter of idiosyncratic interpersonal differences, but a consequence of Korsmeyer's theory. Experiencing an affective turn-for-the-worse when an aesthetic deception is disclosed is inevitable on her view because, as she argues in Chapter Three, "genuine things are comparable to persons in that they inspire affective responses that are *nonfungible*" (p. 120, emphasis mine). In brief, this means that the relevant emotions are directed at a singular, irreplaceable object. Korsmeyer glosses the distinction as follows: "Emotions that can take any object so long as it is of an appropriate kind are fungible. The ones called 'nonfungible' [following Ronald de Sousa] require exactness with regard to their particular objects" (p. 99).

I do not contest Korsmeyer's claim that discovery of deception in aesthetic contexts typically causes an immediate affective shift. When the object of one's emotion is altered, we should expect an associated adjustment in one's emotional state. If I discover the presumed snake on the path is a squiggly stick, my fear becomes relief or embarrassment. Should I learn the person I regard as a model citizen is a savvy conman, my admiration gives way to admonition. So, too, if I realize

the object of my aesthetic interest is not what I previously believed it to be, the affects that attend my aesthetic engagement undergo rational transformation.

Nonetheless, emotional responses to persons and revered one-of-a-kind artifacts are, and should be, relevantly different in ways that strain the parallel from which Korsmeyer's arguments about aesthetic deception draw intuitive force. In every case of mistaken identity involving a putative loved one – the stock and trade of Shakespearean comedies and other “bed trick” tales she discusses – when the error is revealed, the emotional conversion is negative. This is, in part, because the misidentified person lacks the specific concatenation of qualities possessed by the beloved, which might also be true in many cases of aesthetic deception. For example, in addition to being fashioned by different hands, a replica might be made of different materials or by a different process. Ghiberti's *Gates of Paradise* are the product of the obsolete art of lost-wax casting coupled with meticulous handwork, the replicas a result of modern casting techniques. Perhaps this discovery would come as a legitimate disappointment to many who admire the doors on the Duomo today because the public simulation lacks the features of being patiently gilded and having the patina of natural aging.

However, two important differences should be kept in view. First, in the case of persons, the relevant “deflation” is negatively charged precisely because when the deception is disclosed one becomes aware of both a misapprehension of properties and misplaced *intimacy*. If it is revealed that I have inadvertently poured my heart out to, or shared other kinds of personal exchanges with, my husband's identical twin, it is appropriate for me to feel that my vulnerability has been compromised, if not abused. It is not merely that the twin lacks certain features I love in my husband, such as a distinctively quirky sense of humor or an abiding soft spot for kittens. He also lacks the shared history with me in virtue of which my husband and I, but no one else, currently share intertwined life goals so that many of our identity-constitutive desires refer implicitly or explicitly to one another.

It is uncontroversial that I might love an artifact for its particular history – this was *my grandmother's* brooch or *Picasso's* paintbrush – and regard it as irreplaceable, rendering my emotional attachment to it nonfungible. But there is no significant emotional exposure in such cases. I am never in danger of being harmed by this kind of inimitable item, though I might be very sad to lose it or see it destroyed. And there is no real risk if, by accident or design, I have false beliefs because I have misidentified the thing in my hands. By contrast, an undisclosed case

of mistaken identity with respect to people brings with it a possible breach of respect for *my* unique ends and values. Even worse, it can be a straightforward manipulation of my emotional vulnerabilities. Hence, when such a deception is divulged, it is rational if the affects attending the revelation are predominantly negative in character. This leads to my second point.

In the cases of mistaken identity to which Korsmeyer appeals to buttress her account of aesthetic deception, no *new thing of value* is brought to light as a result of the disclosure. Hence, the valence of the affective shift remains negative because there is nothing positive to counteract it. The emotional episode might be only a deflation, one affectively analogous to the moment of disenchantment when Korsmeyer's hand fell away from the church door knocker. Still, even if the emotional response is relatively benign, it is unfavorable. Furthermore, it is difficult to see how a situation in which I realize I have unwittingly shared intimate secrets with my husband's doppelganger could support *any* kind of positive affect once my error has been revealed.

By contrast, becoming aware that one has been taken in by a well-orchestrated artworld hoax, or by an acknowledged reproduction of a historically important artifact, affords the possibility of having the emotional shift retain a positive valence, although the features of the object that give rise to the modified affect will differ from those that funded the original response. Indeed, some cases of this kind might create an amplified aesthetic presence for both the revealed replica and the original by making us aware of an array of appreciatively relevant features that were not previously on the table for our delectation, including those qualities that track the ingenuity of reproductive techniques and others that pertain to something's being worthy of artistic reverence. This, I believe, is what happened to me in my aesthetic encounter with Not-Ghiberti's doors.

Suppose there are circumstances in which some Real Thing and its simulacrum augment one another's appreciative dimensions by generating new reflexive aesthetic properties. If this is possible, then *pace* Korsmeyer there might be cases in which we have a complex appreciative reason to delight when an aesthetic deception is disclosed. After all, in such circumstances we will automatically have more to consider and admire. And isn't making a replica (or crafting an effective fake or forgery) just an aesthetically replete, if unusual, way of expressing a special kind of regard for the original? This possibility deserves critical analysis because, as Korsmeyer warns readers from the start, "The pursuit of the Real Thing . . . takes a crooked path" (p. 19).



PHILOSOPHICAL POETRY



Enmity

Kayla M. Vasilko

*Hate is the mind's deadliest weapon.
It coils around the heart
like armor, spiked and sharp.
It convinces the mind that the world
is its perpetual opposition.
It nurtures the ego, guides the eyes
to see negative intent from others, always,
compels the heart to argue, battle,
fight, and never cower.
Hate shields a being from criticism.
Protects it from ideas different from its own.
Shelters it from expectations of alliance
until the being itself is nothing but isolation,
and there is no one left
to stop hate from consuming
the being entirely.*





A Change of Seasons

Kayla M. Vasilko

*It's always hard when a season
comes to an end.
Summer to autumn.
Winter after fall.
But, worse yet, when the seasons
change too soon.
When there is no
autumn to break the blow of an icicle
to summer's last blooms.
When there is no soft
spring breeze to ease
the winter's cold into the scorching
heat of summer.
When rushed
into changing, the seasons don't feel right.
The moon is mis-hung.
The sun is too bright.
Snowflakes are misshapen.
The light fades too early in the day,
obscuring nature's plans.
But we must try to remember
Winter rain
will bring more flowers in the springtime.
The summer heat
will bring colors of joy in the fall.
When the sun sets early,
it will bring an even stronger new day.
The seasons will change, and life will grow and heal.*





Potential

Kayla M. Vasilko

*If the world were nothing more than a window
The floor would be uneven behind its panes,
Elevated in some places, lower in others.
The glass would be shattered in fragments, never completely whole,
The image it creates, distorted, lying sharper
Over objects labeled without true belonging.
They don't fit into the cut of the pieces lost,
Giving a harsh appearance to what might be a little bit different,
Making those who look through the window see
Anything but similarity as negativity,
Because of the lenses they were given to view.
If the world were a window,
No curtain could cover all of the sorrow the glass holds in,
Or blanket the destruction.
But all beauty, too, could be missed for focusing on the attempt at blinds.
It is up to the viewer to remove all coverings,
Have everything shown in the light,
And choose to look for the good amidst it all.
When let in, the sun can find a way to nourish life in the deepest valleys.
The most jagged structures can be made homes
When someone takes the time to look inside,
Not ignoring the wrong,
Not focusing on what should be right,
But realizing the potential.*



LONG PAPER

John Locke on the Rights of Sovereign Nations

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In this essay, I will discuss what John Locke (1632-1704) takes to be the rights of sovereign nations in the *Two Treatises of Government*.¹ Such an aim for a paper immediately raises a puzzle. Does Locke ever address this issue in the *Two Treatises*? At first glance, it may be tempting to assert that the answer is no. The reason is that a quick reading of the *Two Treatises* reveals two things. First, Locke's primary concern was with the origins and the internal ordering of political society. Second, Locke includes only one chapter even remotely related to the issue of what rights nations have.² So how is it possible to discuss something that Locke does not seem to talk about? According to Richard H. Cox, although Locke does not discuss this topic directly, he intended for us to see that commonwealths have the same basic rights as individuals in the state of nature.³ Nevertheless, although such an outlook is interesting, how do we argue from the rights that individuals have in the state of nature to the rights of all commonwealths? Cox makes clear that Locke intends for us to reach this conclusion by an analogical argument. In fact, as Cox clarifies, to understand why nations have the same basic rights as individuals, we must follow Locke's analogy of a sovereign nation in a state of nature to individual men in a state of nature.⁴

The strategy for this essay will be as follows. I will proceed by discussing Cox's view of Locke's analogical argument. I will then consider several objections to his view. Next, I will set out my own view of Locke's analogical argument. I will conclude by considering several objections to Locke's argument.

I

Cox's discussion of Locke's analogy occurs in a subsection of his book entitled 'The Natural Equality, Freedom, and Independence of Commonwealths.'⁵ The title is important because it

¹ References to Locke's *Two Treatises* will follow the standard edition, John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, ed. Peter Laslett (Cambridge, 1993).

² For example, see 'Chapter XVI: Of Conquest' (II §§ 175-196).

³ Richard H. Cox, *Locke on War and Peace* (Oxford, 1960), p. xv.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 147.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 147-151.

reveals just what Cox takes to be Locke's analogical inference. What I mean is this. Analogical reasoning begins with the assessment that if two or more items, A and B, have certain properties in common, x and y, and then if one of the items has an additional property (or set of properties), e.g., A has z, we may inductively infer that the other item, B, has the same additional property, z.⁶ In Cox's understanding of Locke, the two items in question are the individuals in a state of nature and sovereign commonwealths, and the additional property in question is the natural equality, freedom, and independence of commonwealths.⁷

Cox's discussion begins roughly with an apology and a qualification. He admits that the analogy between commonwealths and individuals in the state of nature is not meant to be taken too literally. As I understand Cox, to do so would admit a disanalogy because as he points out 'There is nothing in the *Treatises* to suggest that commonwealths are to be considered as real persons.'⁸ But, yet, immediately after this point, he qualifies his view arguing that commonwealths are 'the legal or juridical persons of the natural law of nations' and as such may legitimately be described as a 'public person.'⁹ The introduction of this qualification is a conclusion he brings forward from an earlier chapter.¹⁰ Although I will discuss this qualification later in my critical comments, the immediate relevance of this proviso is not apparent until Cox discusses Locke's analogy. His argument immediately follows this point.

According to Cox, the conclusion of Locke's analogy should be: 'All commonwealths, since they are the persons of the natural law of nations, must by nature be considered as equal, free, and independent.'¹¹ He maintains that 'These fundamental characteristics' (which I take him to mean the characteristics just mentioned) are derivable from 'two related principles.'¹²

The first principle, which is also mentioned several times by Locke, is this: All commonwealths are in a state of nature.¹³ Cox uses this point to construct the argument in this

⁶ Elliot Cohen, *Making Value Judgements: Principles of Sound Reasoning* (Florida, 1985), 60-64.

⁷ By the term 'state of nature' Locke means roughly the following. It refers to the time before the creation of civil societies. It is time when 1. There are no established civil laws. 2. There are no recognized and indifferent judges with the authority to judge between disputes. And 3. There are no common authorities to enforce the civil laws. During this time, *in reference to one another*, all people are in a natural state of freedom and equality. See II §§ 4-6. As we shall see, Locke also uses the term in reference to commonwealths or governments.

⁸ Cox, p. 147.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Cox defends this point in the third chapter of his book, pp. 106-135. The chapter is entitled 'The Sovereign Commonwealth: Its Genesis and Powers.'

¹¹ Cox, pp. 147-8.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 148.

¹³ For example, see II §§ 14, 91, 94, 145, 181, 183, and 184.

way: ‘just as men in a state of nature are equal, so commonwealths in a state of nature are to be considered equal.’¹⁴ The underlying strategy, then, is this. Since, in reference to one another, all commonwealths are in a state of nature, and since all individuals that lived prior to the formation of civil society are in a state of nature, and since all individuals in the state of nature are equal, we may inductively infer that all commonwealths have the same additional property. That is, in reference to one another, all commonwealths in a state of nature are equal. Having established this point, Cox draws the knot of the analogy tighter by making three additional claims related to the notion of equality. For example, he writes: ‘As the “public persons” of the natural law of nations, they are equal in the decisive respect: commonwealths by nature have an equal right to be free from the dominion of any other governments, and to have only the law of nature to govern them in their actions [and] the same rights and duties prescribed by the law of nature.’¹⁵

There is also the matter of the other principle mentioned earlier. Cox writes: ‘[T]here is also the principle that all the powers of the commonwealth are derived from the natural powers which individuals possess in the state of nature.’¹⁶ As he argues, this principle is derivable from two premises. First, ‘all men are by nature equal and possess the same natural powers under the law of nature,’ and second, all men ‘*equally* give up all those natural powers to their respective civil societies to be used for the good of the public.’¹⁷ Immediately after this Cox sketches out what he means. He argues that when individuals give up their powers to the government in order to move out of the state of nature, this makes all nations equal in two respects. For example, he writes: ‘They [i.e., nations] are thus equal not only with respect to the right to be free of the dominion of others, but equal also with respect to the powers conferred on them by the members of the society.’¹⁸

Having spelled out his argument, it seems to me that Cox is rehearsing a different type of argument than the one outlined earlier, one that allegedly supports the same kind of conclusion discussed previously but one that does not take advantage of the analogical support. This is so because even though the conclusion of the second argument is similar to that of the first argument, viz., all commonwealths are equal in the state of nature, it does not proceed in a straightforward

¹⁴ Cox, p. 148.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid. Brackets are mine.

analogical manner like the first argument. What I mean is this. Whereas in the first argument Cox proceeds by arguing that the equality of individuals and commonwealths are linked because they are both persons (in some related sense), and therefore, they are both equal, this argument proceeds without making reference to any analogical support. Instead, the argument appears to be merely a defense of the equality of all commonwealths. But this is the key to understanding this second argument. It is not intended as an alternative defense of the analogy and it is not intended to be used in conjunction with the first one to derive the analogical properties. Instead, it is a defense of the claim that all commonwealths are equal and free.

Before Cox turns to what rights nations have, he makes one additional comment about the second argument. As I understand this move, Cox anticipates a potential problem with Locke's argument thus far (a problem that I will revisit later). The problem is the conclusion that all nations are in a state of natural equality. However, as Cox points out, '[L]ocke certainly does not suggest . . . that commonwealths are equal in all respects. Nor does he believe that inequalities which exist are inconsequential.'¹⁹ Cox assures us of Locke's profound awareness of the basic inequalities of nations, inequalities that have untoward consequences for the continued, uninterrupted existence of nations. Nevertheless, Cox maintains, as I do, that Locke's argument give us the conclusion that the meanest as well as the greatest commonwealth are both equals under the law of nature and both have the same core rights that the law of nature allows.²⁰

Having laid the foundation of the analogy, Cox moves forward with a discussion of what rights nations possess. In good analogical fashion, Cox first cites the rights that individuals have in the state of nature and, then, draws the inference for nations. He begins with what he calls the first and fundamental law of nature: 'all men have the right to be preserved "as much as possible".'²¹ Cox comments that each individual gives up this right upon entering society and 'their original rights of self-preservation are now replaced by the commonwealth's right of self-preservation.'²²

Next, Cox follows Locke by unpacking the concept of self-preservation. He correctly points out that the right to self-preservation implies two other rights. For individuals this means 'the right to appropriate the meat and drink necessary to life and the right to take any measure to protect

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 149.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

one's person and property.'²³ As one might expect, nations also have the same additional rights. However, the application is different. For nations this means 'foreign policy is to be guided by the necessity to protect the territory, the members, the property, and the other interests of the society.'²⁴

So, like all individuals in a state of nature, all nations have a right to preserve their own sovereignty. In addition to the rights mentioned earlier, nations also have two other rights that individuals have in the state of nature: the right to execute the law of nature and the right of reparation. Cox discusses the upshot for the first right. This right includes not only 'the right to judge and punish infractions of the law of nature which any commonwealth or foreigner may commit' but it also 'extends in principle to actions in all the world.' In Cox's thinking, this means that 'any commonwealth has the theoretical right to punish any other for infractions, regardless of who the injured party may be.'²⁵

The other right mentioned earlier is the right of reparation. This is also the same right that individuals in the state of nature have. The application is basically the same. As Cox makes clear, nations have 'the right to exact reparations for damage done to the public property or to the property of any member of the commonwealth by anyone from outside the civil society.'²⁶

Cox ends this discussion with a description of an analogical duty that all nations sometimes acquire. Locke argues that in a state of nature an individual may from time to time acquire the obligation to help preserve the life and property of his neighbors. He describes this duty in terms that we nowadays call a conditional duty. Locke argues that our duty to help others requires the following condition: 'when his own preservation comes not in competition, ought he, as much as he can, to preserve the rest of mankind' (II §6). Cox draws the inference:

Thus the law of nature, in its application to sovereign bodies, forbids wantonly attacking others or taking their lands and other properties, and the compact itself indicates a reciprocal agreement to this effect. Such attacks justly expose the guilty government to punishment by other commonwealths. But the duty to preserve others is, according to Locke's conception of the law of nature, only conditional. . . .²⁷

²³ Ibid., pp. 149-50.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 150.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Cox, p. 151.

II

Despite the perspicuity of Cox's discussion, there are problems in his examination of Locke's analogy as I have reconstructed it. I will now make three objections about his analysis.

First, Cox is mistaken about the conclusion of Locke's analogy. As I pointed out earlier, Cox argues that the conclusion is that all commonwealths must by nature be considered as equal, free, and independent. The reason why this is the wrong conclusion is that Locke actually attributes these characteristics to commonwealths in 'Chapter XIX. Of the Dissolution of Government' (II §§ 211-243). Although there are several examples, I will point out one. Locke argues that a commonwealth is dissolved whenever the prince or the legislative branch of the government delivers its citizens into the subjection of a foreign power. This is so because 'the end why People entered into Society, being to be preserved one entire, free, independent Society, to be governed by its own laws; this is lost, whenever they are given up into the Power of another' (II §217).

Clearly, Locke articulates that commonwealths have these characteristics. But why is this an objection to Cox? What I suggest is this. The point of analogical induction is to create an argument in order to show that since two objects, A and B, share the same characteristics, x and y, and since we know that A has an additional property, z, we may analogical infer that B also has z as well. But now the problem should be apparent. The reason that we would use an analogical argument is that we are not sure if B has the property z. So, Cox fails to correctly understand the conclusion of Locke's analogical argument.

My second objection is this. Cox fails to correctly describe the foundation of the analogy between the individual in the state of nature and the commonwealth in a state of nature. This is so because in order to show object, B, has the additional property, z, it is important to make sure that the characteristic that object A possesses, viz., z, must stand in some sort of relation to the properties, x and y. This is important to ensure that the properties are connected to the conclusion. I maintain that Cox fails to do this. But what exactly does this come to? Apparently to this conclusion: Cox must show us what properties individuals have in the state of nature that warrant the conclusion that all men in a state of nature are by nature equal and free. This he does but only partly. He leaves out an important aspect, which I will discuss momentarily.

Cox is aware of the importance of the point mentioned earlier. He spends several pages defending this view.²⁸ According to Cox, then, how does Locke defend the view that all individuals in the state of nature are by nature equal and free? Before I sum up his view, I would like to make one comment. Cox's discussion is as illuminating as it is complex. As a result he often conflates together concepts in Locke that should be kept separate. This is not so much a criticism as it is confession on my part of the difficulty of interpreting Cox's views. What follows, then, is my attempt to untangle his views for our consideration.

For Locke the properties of equality and freedom that he ascribes to individuals in the state of nature are inextricably tied to the precepts of the law of nature. This means that when Locke's speaks of the natural properties of men he has in mind to connect them to a person's right to execute the law of nature. Cox treats these issues in the same way and collapses them together: 'Men are equal with regard to their right to execute the law of nature—which, stated more candidly, means the right to do whatsoever is judged necessary to the maintenance of one's corporeal being.'²⁹ Cox is correct, but certainly these issues can be kept separate. That is, we can describe Locke's move from the ascription of the properties of equality and freedom of individuals to the rights individuals have because of these properties. At the same time, we can also ask why Locke believes all individuals in the state of nature are equal and free as well. Of course, the answer to the second question is fundamentally important for us to know because it gives us the foundation upon which the rights of persons are based.

Cox is also after the answer to this latter question as well. Unfortunately, as Cox points out, he is well aware of the fact that Locke does not explain what this means. For the sum of his argument, as it appears in the chapter on the state of nature, amounts to this: Men are equal with regard to their right to execute the law of nature—which, stated more candidly, means the right to do whatsoever is judged necessary to the maintenance of one's corporeal being, including the killing of those who are a threat—because they are all 'creatures of the same species and rank, promiscuously born to all the same advantages of nature and the use of the same faculties' This is clearly insufficient. What we want to know is what those 'faculties' are, how they are

²⁸ Cox, pp. 81-88.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 85.

connected to the ‘same advantages of nature.’ Yet practically no argument or explanation on these matters is to be found at this point in the *Second Treatise*.³⁰

What this quotation demonstrates is where Cox understands the answer lies: we must tease from Locke’s mind his meaning behind his use of ‘faculties.’ Once we understand this, we will know why individuals are equal and free and then we will understand the foundation of Locke’s law of nature. I will now turn to Cox’s answer to this question.

Cox’s summarizes two important doctrines that Locke discusses sporadically between both the treatises of the *Two Treatises*.³¹ The doctrines in question are Locke’s reliance upon self-preservation and the instrumental character of the senses and reason. Naturally, Cox concludes that these are the ‘faculties’ mentioned earlier and the foundation of Locke’s law of nature: ‘[T]his conception of the natural primacy of the desire for self-preservation and of the instrumental character of the senses and reason, becomes the foundation, in the *Treatises*, of what Locke chooses to call the ‘law of nature’’.³² I will now attempt to summarize his explanation.

According to Cox, the referent, so to speak, of Locke’s ‘faculties’ is Locke’s commitment to the existence of a strong desire for self-preservation in man and Locke’s commitment to the instrumental character of man’s noetic endowment as a means to the end of self-preservation.³³ But why are these characteristics the basis for his assessment of equality? Again the answer is tied to both aspects of man. The underlying line of thought, in brief, is as follows. All men have in common the basic motive force of human life. That is, all men have in common desires or passions. All men also share a specific desire, viz., a desire for self-preservation. For Locke, this is man’s most important desire. Cox makes this point clear: ‘the desire for self-preservation, which in its most natural form would be the mere spontaneous impulse to continue one’s bare corporeal existence, is primordial, universally operative, and the most powerful of all desires.’³⁴ So, Cox finds in Locke a quality that all men share, a quality that is a necessary component of the equality of all men.

The other aspect is as follows. All men are endowed with senses and reason that, as Cox elaborates, ‘are conceived of essentially as means to the end of preservation, which is to say as

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid., pp. 81-88.

³² Ibid., p. 88.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

derivative of, or intended by nature to serve as instruments for, the gratification of the desires or passions.’³⁵ Together, then, as Cox demonstrates, both act as the basis for Locke’s view of equality.

A careful reader will no doubt understand that although Cox has reasonably illuminated Locke’s notion of equality, he has left out an important aspect. That is, Cox fails to discuss Locke’s use of the notion of freedom. This is a problem because Locke mentions both and the assumption is that both are needed, at least in Locke’s mind, in order to derive the rights and obligations of the law of nature (II §4 and §6). As far as I can tell, although Cox discusses the fact that Locke uses such a notion, he never discusses the foundation of the notion of freedom in Locke’s *Two Treatises*.

This is no doubt, if I am correct, an important oversight by Cox. But, perhaps, my criticism misses the mark because, as Cox or others might argue, Locke’s notion of freedom is not necessary to derive the precepts of the law of nature. And yet such an outlook is mistaken because Locke’s argument includes both: ‘The State of Nature has a Law of Nature to govern it, which obliges every one: And Reason, which is that Law, teaches all Mankind, who will but consult it, that being all equal *and independent*, no one ought to harm another in his Life, Health, Liberty, or Possessions’ (II §6).³⁶ I take Locke here to use the nouns, ‘independent’ and ‘freedom,’ as synonyms.

Perhaps Cox can respond to my objection by admitting that he left this point out because what Locke means is utterly obvious. That is, what Locke means by a state of perfect freedom just means that all people have free will. This will not work either. First, there is no evidence in either his *An Essay concerning Human Understanding* or the *Two Treatises* that Locke articulates freedom of the will.³⁷ In fact, Locke actually argues in the *Essay* that there is no such thing as freedom of the will.³⁸

Second, a close scrutiny of the text in chapter II of the second treatise of the *Two Treatises* reveals that what Locke means is something unrelated to the freedom of the will.³⁹ Here I follow Laslett on this point.⁴⁰ What Locke means is that all people are *born* in a state of freedom. This meaning is also confirmed in a passage later on in the second section of the *Two Treatises* (II §61). In fact, Locke argues that not only are all men born free in the state of nature, he even argues that

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Italics are mine.

³⁷ John Locke, *An Essay concerning Human Understanding*, ed. P. H. Nidditch (Oxford, 1975).

³⁸ Ibid., II. xxi. 10-20.

³⁹ For example, see II § 4.

⁴⁰ Peter Laslett, ‘Introduction’ in Locke, *Two Treatises of Government* (Cambridge, 1993), p. 95.

all people are born free even when they are born in a political society. Although I will discuss Locke's meaning of the phrase 'born free' momentarily, his point is illustrated later in the *Two Treatises*: 'not to be subject to the arbitrary Will of another, but freely to follow his own' (II §57). Nevertheless, the question still remains why Locke argues this, and, as far as I can tell, Cox never discusses this point.

My third objection is this. Analogical reasoning requires that the other object, B, possess both properties, viz., x and y, in order to derive analogically the additional property, z. I maintain that Cox fails to do this as well. This means that he must show that commonwealths have the very same properties that individuals in a state of nature possess so that we may analogically infer that all commonwealths are by nature equal and free as well. However, as I will illustrate, he fails to show this.

As I mentioned earlier, Cox's understanding of Locke's analogy is the following: all commonwealths must by nature be considered as free and equal because they are the persons of the natural law of nations. Here we see the foundation, upon which he draws the inference, that all commonwealths in a state of nature, like all individuals in a state of nature, are free and equal, viz., that commonwealths are persons. Of course, as I pointed out earlier, Cox qualifies his position in such a way to keep us from over hastily disqualifying his point. That is, he points out correctly the fact that there is nothing in the *Two Treatises* to suggest that Locke considers commonwealths to be real persons. Nevertheless, he quickly adds that although commonwealths are not real persons, they are 'public persons' and with this claim he believes that the foundation of the analogy is established. I will now summarize his view and show why it will not work.

Let us begin this discussion by asking what he means and what reasons he has to warrant this claim. Fortunately, Cox makes clear both aspects. Initially, it is not clear that Cox wants us to understand that commonwealths are public persons. Instead, he argues that there is close relationship between a group of individuals creating a political society from a sense of self-preservation and the resulting composite:

The individual's passionate acting upon the natural desire for security leads, in the mere state of nature, to pure anarchy. But the creation of a central, independent power, capable of providing internal umpirage and external defence, can result only from the combining of all individual wills and all individual natural forces into a single 'public will' and a concerted 'public force.'⁴¹

⁴¹ Cox, pp. 122-3.

Later he reiterates this point and draws an important conclusion:

The commonwealth is a sovereign body, created by the consolidation of the natural will and natural force of its individual members. It therefore constitutes an artificial or ‘public’ person existing in its natural state, just as the individual constitutes a natural and private person in a natural state prior to the creation of political society.⁴²

We thus have Cox’s argument in support of the claim that commonwealths are public persons. But is this argument satisfactory? The answer is no. It fails for several reasons. First, there is an important logical problem. That is, it is not clear how we are to move from the claim that commonwealths are created by the consolidation of the will of its members to the conclusion that the commonwealth is a person.

Second, let us suppose for the moment that we can make this move. How are we to understand that commonwealths are persons? On the one hand, what he could mean is that commonwealths are actual persons in the full sense of the term. Certainly, if this were what he meant, then we would be confident that commonwealths possess the same properties that individuals possess. Unfortunately, as I pointed out earlier, he makes clear that there is no such doctrine in the *Two Treatises* and he also argues that such a view would be too literal.

What other ways may we understand what he means? Perhaps what he means is something like this. When a commonwealth is described as a public person, even though the phrase ‘public person’ appears to be a name for an abstract entity, it is really a device enabling us to make a general claim about individual commonwealths. If this is true, what kind of claim is it making? The claim is merely that commonwealths are the political units recognized by the law of nature as the subject of rights and duties. In fact, this comes close to what I think Cox has in mind. But will this work? I do not think so. The reason is that in order for the analogy to work we must be able to say that commonwealths are persons in some sense. Unfortunately, even in this last sense, commonwealths are not really persons in *any* sense of the term. The phrase ‘public person’ is just a metalinguistic device used to make a claim about individual commonwealths. Therefore, Cox fails to make his case that commonwealths possess all the properties that individuals possess.

⁴² Ibid., p. 136.

III

I will now set out what I take to be the correct analysis of Locke's analogy. I will begin with a summary of his argument and attempt to make clear each step.

Our first glimpse of this analogy comes quite early in the second treatise of the *Two Treatises* (II §14). In fact, Locke mentions this point very briefly (almost as an insignificant corollary) and so one might even fail to see the significance of his remark. It can be put as follows.

Like Hobbes, Locke employs the concept of the state of nature to give us an explanation for why political societies form. It is an important tool employed by both because it illustrates quite plausibly why people 'join and unite into a community for their comfortable, safe, and peaceable living' (II §95). The unhappy situation is that there are a lot of worries associated with using the concept because many critics have argued that no such time ever existed. But what exactly does this objection come to? Apparently, to this conclusion: minimally, it takes away the plausibility of Locke's explanation for the creation of civil societies.

Is there any evidence in favor of the existence of the state of nature?⁴³ Locke thought so. His point, in short, is this. The world never was, nor ever will be, without a state of nature because, *in reference to one another*, all independent governments are in a state of nature (II §14 and §183). Of course, one might immediately point out the following objection. How can a state of nature exist between independent countries? Doesn't every country have some sort of alliance with another country? Locke was aware of this objection and he responded in this way: Not every compact or alliance ends the state of nature. A state of nature is ended only when there is a mutual agreement 'to enter into one community, and make one body politic' (II §14).

Later, Locke adds the following point. Not only does a state of nature exist between independent nations, a state of nature exists between a nation and an individual, who is not a member of that society. 'So that under this consideration, the whole community is one body in the state of nature, in respect of all other states or persons out of its community' (II §145). The upshot is that whatever conclusions we may draw from the analogy for the interaction between nations must also apply to the interaction between a nation and a non-citizen of that nation.

According to Locke, then, individuals prior to the formation of civil society and all nations share the same property: both are in a state of nature. The effect of this point is similar to the one discussed about individuals living in a state of nature. So, if it is true that all nations are in a state

⁴³ Cox also discusses this point at length, pp. 94-104.

of nature, then: (1) there are no laws that have been established between *all* nations; (2) there are no recognized and indifferent judges with the authority to hear disputes between nations; and (3) there is no common authority to enforce the laws between nations.

But now we must ask the following question. Do nations share the other property of individuals in the state of nature? That is, in reference to one another, are all nations in a state of freedom and equality? If this is true, then because of their freedom, all nations may order their domestic and foreign policies as they see fit *without the permission of other nations*. Because of their equality, no nation may claim to have any sort of natural superiority over another nation. Although the textual evidence is limited, Locke nevertheless makes this point clear later on. Since I mentioned this point only briefly as an objection to Cox, I will state it again. Locke describes commonwealths in this way in ‘Chapter XIX. Of the Dissolution of Government’ (II § 217).

From an analogical point of view, we may draw the following conclusion about the rights of nations. Even though there exists a state of nature between independent nations, this is not a state of unbridled license. Again, this is so because there is a law of nature to govern all nations. We may formulate it in this way: because all nations in a state of nature are equal and independent, no nation ought to harm another in terms of its life, health, liberty, or possessions, i.e., its sovereignty. Additionally, from the same assumptions, whenever it is possible, one nation may be morally required to preserve the sovereignty of another independent nation. Like Locke’s discussion about individuals in a state of nature, this means that one nation may act either in conjunction with the offended nation against the aggressor or it may act alone against the aggressor.

Since the law of nature among nations makes it immoral for one nation to undermine the sovereignty of another nation, every nation is by analogy given two rights: the right of punishing for restraint and the right of taking reparations. This means that one nation may, as far as calm reason dictates, secure the sovereignty of its own borders, or the borders of another nation, against the aggression of another country and to seek from that offending nation reparation for that which has been taken or destroyed. Again, even though one nation may help punish another nation for its aggression, only the offended nation may claim reparations from the offending nation.

Following Locke’s lead, we may also formulate his first point in this way. All independent nations have two powers. First, an independent nation may do whatever it thinks fit to preserve itself and others within the permission of the law of nature. Second, an independent nation may punish another nation for the crimes committed against that law of nature.

IV

While the conclusions we may draw about the duties and rights of nations are intuitive, we may draw them only if we can reasonably maintain that there *is* an analogy between an individual in the state of nature and a sovereign nation. I will begin my assessment of Locke's view by making several comments. Again, the correct version of Locke's argument may be reconstructed in the following manner:

1. Prior to the origins of civil society, all individual people are in a state of nature. This means that this is time when there are no established civil laws, there are no recognized and indifferent judges with the authority to hear disputes between individuals, and there are no common authorities to enforce the civil laws. Secondly, in reference to one another, all people are in a natural state of freedom and equality. Since all people in a state of nature are free and equal, no one ought to harm another person in his life, health, liberty, or possession.
2. Prior to the origins of a global civil society between sovereign commonwealths, all individual commonwealths are *also* in a state of nature. This means that this is a time when there are no established global civil laws, there are no recognized and indifferent judges with the authority to hear disputes between nations, and there are no common authorities to enforce the global civil laws between nations. Secondly, in reference to one another, all nations are in a natural state of freedom and equality.

Therefore,

3. Since there is an analogy between individuals in a state of nature and commonwealths in a state of nature and since both are in a state of nature and both are naturally equal and free, no one nation ought to harm another nation in its life, health, liberty, or possessions, i.e., its sovereignty.

My first objection is this. In what sense can we maintain that commonwealths in a state of nature are equal in the same sense as individuals in a state of nature? If we assume that Cox's reasoning is basically correct about why Locke maintains that all people in the state of nature are equal, then I am skeptical. The essential reason is this. In order to maintain a basic analogical model between two different objects, we must argue that they have the same properties. This point is clear. But perhaps the next point is more controversial. Suppose again that we have two objects, A and B, and it is claimed that both A and B have property x. Does not the requirement for a sound analogical argument require that the reasons why A has property x be the same as the reasons why B has property x?

To explain why I think that this is true, let me run the following illustration. Suppose that Jim is attempting to decide what brand of tires he should buy for his car.⁴⁴ The last time he bought tires he purchased Radial Brand X. Jim chose Radial Brand X because of its reputation for quality. Now Jim is considering Radial Brand Y. It is also a radial but the same company does not make it. Nevertheless, in his mind, Jim argues that since they are both radials, they should last the same amount of time because he will use them under the same conditions. But now the problem should be apparent. Jim's reasoning is flawed because he has failed to take into account the reasons why Radial Brand X worked so well.

The story illustrates what I take to be the basic flaw of Locke's attempt to maintain the equality of commonwealths in the state of nature and the equality of individuals in the state of nature. Cox elaborates all too well Locke's reasons for the equality of individuals in the state of nature. All individuals are born with a basic drive to preserve themselves and with senses that are intended by nature to serve as instruments for the gratification of the desires or passions. But if we want to maintain that, in reference to one another, all commonwealths are equal, sound analogical reasoning requires, as my earlier example illustrates, that the reasons why individuals are equal must be the same as the reasons why commonwealths are equal. However, in what sense can we maintain that both are equal in the same sense? I don't see how Locke can maintain both views, and therefore, his analogy fails.

But perhaps we can take a different approach. Remember, Cox argues that there are two different arguments for the equality of commonwealths. Perhaps where the first one failed, the second one will work. Again the argument, in brief, is this. Since all men are by nature equal under the law of nature, and since all men equally give up all those natural powers to their respective civil societies to be used for the good of the public, it follows that all nations are equal. Sadly, as I argued earlier, this argument is intended to be used for a different purpose. Therefore, barring any unforeseen arguments that I missed, I conclude that there is no basis to maintain an analogy of equality between individuals in a state of nature and commonwealths in a state of nature.

My second objection is similar to the first objection. In order to maintain the analogy, Locke must also say why both individuals in a state of nature and commonwealths in a state of nature are free. Also, as I maintain in the first objection, the reasons why both are free must be the same for

⁴⁴ I borrow the following example from Cohen, pp. 60-64.

both. However, as I will show momentarily, the reasons why individuals are free cannot be the same as the reasons why commonwealths are free.

I mentioned earlier that Cox fails to discuss why individuals in a state of nature are considered free. Because of his failure to consider this point, he falls short of making his case for Locke's analogy. Nevertheless, this point still needs to be discussed. As a partial attempt to understand this latter point, I also mentioned earlier that what Locke means by the claim that all people are free in the state of nature is that all people in a state of nature are born free. Additionally, as Locke points out, an individual will (partially) lose this freedom only when he consents with others to form a commonwealth (II §112) or if he is born in a political society, he agrees to be a member of a political society at the age of consent (II §199). But still the following question remains: what reasons does Locke have to warrant the claim that all people whether born in a state of nature or born in a political society are born free? I will now turn this point.

I will attempt to respond to this question by discussing two viewpoints that appear to be disconnected in the second section of the *Two Treatises*. In fact, Cox discusses both of these points. So for the purposes of this essay I will rely upon his scholarship. His points, in brief, are these. First, Cox finds in Locke a reliance upon the Christian Scriptures and upon orthodox scholars like Richard Hooker that give his ideas an air of respectability.⁴⁵ Nevertheless, Cox points out that Locke's intentions were much more complex because 'it is impossible to reconcile the conditions and the powers ascribed by Locke to men in the state of nature with what his "authorities" say about the original condition of mankind.'⁴⁶ If Cox is right (and I think there is good evidence for this), what was he up to? Cox writes: 'Locke, yielding indeed to the pressures of religious orthodoxy to the extent of appearing to accept it, in fact cautiously adopts a view which is derived from an earlier philosophic (but therefore 'pagan') teaching, such as that of the ancient Stoics.'⁴⁷

Second, Cox also correctly points out that Locke's law of nature 'bears practically no resemblance, except in name, to what was meant by most of his contemporaries, and certainly can in no way be reconciled with what his seeming authority, Richard Hooker, meant by the natural law.'⁴⁸ I would also add that it certainly bears no resemblance to even Locke's own early 1664

⁴⁵ Richard Hooker, *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, eds. A. S. McGrade and Brian Vickers (New York, 1975).

⁴⁶ Cox, p. 62.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid., pp. 88-9.

views of the law of nature in his *Essays on the Law of Nature*.⁴⁹ Cox argues persuasively that an internal examination of the *Two Treatises* reveals that Locke's commitment to the law of nature is more akin to Thomas Hobbes's view of the law of nature. I agree with this and I might also add that I have elsewhere argued that with respect to Locke's *Essay*, he undermines a traditional view of the law of nature by removing all the metaphysical machinery to support such a view.

I want to argue that if we assume that Cox is right about both of these views there is a way of connecting them both together. Additionally, the answer to how these views are connected is the explanation for why Locke believes that people are born free. Both standpoints are brought together by Locke's commitment to a metaphysical theory called nominalism. Nominalism is roughly the view that there are no universals. There are only particular individuals with particular properties.⁵⁰ Of course, I readily agree that such a theory is not apparent in the *Two Treatises*; however, a careful examination of Locke's *Essay* will reveal his commitment to nominalism.⁵¹

Still, I imagine that such a point is still opaque. In fact, the following question still seems appropriate: how does his commitment to nominalism connect the viewpoints mentioned earlier and how is this the basis for his view of freedom? One answer to both questions, in brief, is as follows.

A commitment to nominalism during the seventeenth-century was tantamount to a commitment to atheism. This is so because it denied many beliefs held true by the Christian church. It denied the existence of innate ideas, including the innate idea of God, and it also denied a deep metaphysical justification for virtue and vice. Scholars before his death accused Locke of both standpoints.⁵² A commitment to nominalism also denied the existence of the law of nature, an independent body of moral precepts contained in the natural order put there by God. If all of this is true of Locke, then he had good reasons to hide the fact that his views were nominalistic. This

⁴⁹ John Locke, *Essays on the Law of Nature*, ed. W. von Leyden (Oxford, 1954). A second translation of the same work has been published. See John Locke, *Questions Concerning the Law of Nature*, eds. Robert Horwitz, Jenny Strauss Clay, and Diskin Clay, trans. Diskin Clay (Ithaca & London, 1992). M. A. Stewart has discussed limitations in the edition of Horwitz, et al. in his 'Critical notice,' *The Locke Newsletter*, 23 (1992), pp. 145-165.

⁵⁰ This is, of course, a specific version of nominalism called trope nominalism. For a discussion of this version and other versions see Michael J. Loux, *Metaphysics: A Contemporary Introduction* (London, 1998), pp. 53-89.

⁵¹ Locke's commitment to nominalism may be easily confirmed in the *Essay*. Also such an outlook is recognized by many scholars, Loux, p. 80; Alan Sidelle, *Necessity, Essence, and Individuation: A Defense of Conventionalism* (Ithaca and London, 1989), pp. 17-24; and D. M. Armstrong, *Universals: An opinionated Introduction* (Colorado, 1989), pp. 5-6.

⁵² See, for example, Thomas Burnet, 'Third remarks upon An Essay concerning Human Understanding,' in Peter A. Schouls (ed.), *Remarks upon An Essay concerning Human Understanding: Five Tracts* (New York, 1984), pp. 6-16.

could be done first by associating himself with recognized religious authorities and associating himself with orthodox doctrines such as the law of nature.

Still, although this explanation goes a long way to reconciling both doctrines, there is still the question of how this is connected to freedom. The connection is this: at least for Locke, his commitment to nominalism was motivated primarily by his allegiance to corpuscularism, a belief he acquired from the Royal Society and Sir Robert Boyle.⁵³ It is the position that the world is ultimately made up of corpuscles or atoms and that a complete explanation of the world begins with a story about corpuscles in motion. Such a point seems innocuous (at least by our own lights); however, it leads to a radical reinterpretation of the status of humans: since all humans that are born are just clusters of spinning corpuscles, there are no primary or secondary qualities that make a human naturally subject to the rule of another. All humans are naturally unrestricted, independent, and autonomous. In other words, all humans are free.

But now we must address our original question. Are commonwealths free in the same sense? Can we maintain that the reason why all individuals in the state of nature are free is the same reason why all commonwealths in a state of nature are free? I do not see how we can maintain both views. I conclude that Locke's analogy fails again.

My third objection is this. Let's suppose for the sake of argument that the analogies hold true between an individual person in a state of nature and an individual commonwealth in a state of nature. We are left with the following argument: Since all commonwealths are in a state of nature, and since all commonwealths are naturally equal and free, it follows that no one commonwealth ought to harm another in its life, health, liberty, or possessions, i.e., its sovereignty.

As I mentioned earlier, Locke maintains something very close to the second premise, viz., all commonwealths are naturally equal and free. As far as I can tell he never really discusses why it is true. Cox, on the other hand, rehearses an argument that Locke may have intended to run but never did: 'Since all men are by nature equal and possess the same natural powers under the law of nature,' and 'since they *equally* give up all those natural powers to their respective civil societies to be used for the good of the public, it follows that all governments must, in the nature of things, receive exactly the same powers relative to external relations.'⁵⁴ Therefore, with reference to one

⁵³ Robert Boyle, *The Origin of Forms and Qualities according to the Corpuscular Philosophy*, in M. A. Stewart (ed.), *Selected Philosophical Papers of Robert Boyle* (Indianapolis, 1991).

⁵⁴ Cox, p. 148.

another, all commonwealths are naturally equal. That is, as Cox further elaborates: ‘They are thus equal not only with respect to the right to be free of the dominion of others, but equal also with respect to the powers conferred on them by the members of the society.’⁵⁵ The question now is whether this argument will work. I will turn to that discussion.

A couple of comments about this line of argument are in order. First, it is important to point out that something close to both the premises of this argument are attributable to Locke. This can be easily documented. Second, it is equally important to understand that even though this may be so, Locke (as far as I can tell) never runs such an argument. In fact, both premises are used in different sorts of arguments. As I mentioned earlier, the first premise is used to derive the conclusion that no one ought to harm another.

The second premise is used for a completely different argument. In short the argument is this. Locke argues that before a true political society can exist and subsist, it must have the power to preserve itself and preserve its citizens. It can only receive this kind of power when ‘every one of the members hath quitted this natural power [and] resigned it up into the hands of the community’ (II §87).⁵⁶

We are now in a position to consider Cox’s argument. My underlying strategy, then, is twofold. First, I want to show that the wording of Cox’s second premise, a premise that he attributes to Locke, is not Locke’s view at all. Second, even if we assume for the sake of argument that both premises are true, the conclusion does not follow. I will begin with the former.

As I just mention, there is a problem with Cox’s second premise. The problem is semantical, but it is not a verbal quibble. Cox emphatically asserts in his premise that all people equally give up all those natural powers to the civil society to be used for the good of the public. However, Locke’s point is slightly different. He never says that this is what everyone in fact does. On the contrary, Locke is all too aware of the history of political societies and the abuses connected with them. Instead he merely argues what I mentioned earlier. That is, he argues that a true political society will not exist or continue to exist *unless* everyone first gives up their powers. I might also add that this forms part of Locke’s criticisms against monarchies, viz., monarchies are not true political societies partly because in such a society the monarch rules by force and not by the voluntary consent of his subjects (II §90).

⁵⁵ Ibid., p.

⁵⁶ Locke also discussed this point in these sections as well: II §§ 88, 127, 131, 133, 136.

The second problem with this argument is much more substantial. Let us assume for the moment that both premises are true for the sake of argument. In most cases we would expect the conclusion to be true as well. Unfortunately, in this case, the premises do not support the truth of the conclusion. Let me try to put it this way. Suppose for any commonwealth we choose and also for any individual within a commonwealth, that each individual gives up all of his natural powers to the government. It does not follow that all governments must receive exactly the same powers, and as a consequence that all governments are to be considered equal under the law of nature, with an equal share of the rights and privileges that it allows. This is so because although all people equally give up all those natural powers, they do not all give up those powers for the same reason.

But what exactly does this come to? Apparently to this simple point. Although some governments are formed from the voluntary consent of its citizens, it is not a far stretch to imagine a government coercing the consent of its citizens by means of fear. Supposing this is true, can we still maintain that this commonwealth, and others like it, which employ militant tactics, has the same status of equality under the law of nature with democratic governments? Of course, as I see it, the answer is obviously no.

Such a conclusion, however, does not rest well with Locke's analogy even though Cox argues something different. He makes two points. First, Cox argues that Locke is aware that certain inequalities exist between different governments. The inequalities that he speaks of here, however, refer to certain practical matters: [Locke] 'is profoundly aware of the practical bearing which inequalities in territory, population, technical skill, natural resources, and military establishment may have.'⁵⁷ Such inequalities, Cox adds, may, in the end, contribute to the ultimate failure of a sovereign commonwealth.

Cox's point seems reasonable as long as we understand that the inequalities spoken of here are inessential; nevertheless, it is his second point that is much more interesting. He attributes to Locke the following view: 'But that fact does not alter the natural right of the meanest as well as the greatest commonwealth to be considered as an equal under the law of nature, and to share in all the rights and privileges that law allows.'⁵⁸

To this view, Cox adds the following justification. He reasons that logic constrains us to accept this standpoint because if we deny the equality of all commonwealths, we must deny the equality

⁵⁷ Cox, p. 149.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

of those individuals in the state of nature. All the same, Cox's enthusiasm for Locke's analogy outstrips Locke's ability to maintain a consistent set of beliefs, at least on this point.

First, Locke seems committed to something like the second premise mentioned earlier. Next, he give us examples of two different forms of government that qualify as commonwealths: governments where the executive powers are kept separate and those that are centralized.⁵⁹ And yet, in Locke's mind, they are unequal because of this fact. I understand his point in the following way.

One of the primary concerns for Locke in the *Two Treatises* concerns the origins of political society. Typically his discussion has both descriptive as well as normative aspects. Locke's analysis of monarchies is a perfect example of this. Not only does he illustrate how and why monarchies exist, but he also discusses why monarchies are not true political societies. Locke reasons that this is so because the legislative and the executive powers are in the hands of one man alone (II §90). This undermines the possibility of a securing relief or redress that may be inflicted by the King because there is no common judge who may fairly and indifferently judge between them (II §91). Locke concludes that 'there those persons are still in the state of nature; and so is every absolute prince, in respect of those who are under his dominion' (II §90) and as a result, all monarchies are 'inconsistent with civil society, and so can be no form of civil government at all' (II §90).

Clearly, what we have here is an important logical problem for Locke. He cannot maintain that all commonwealths are equal and at the same time maintain the inequality of monarchies. For this reason I conclude that Locke fails to justify the claim that no one commonwealth ought to harm another.

V

With this third objection, I conclude my analysis of Locke's analogy for the rights of sovereign nations. I agree with Cox that Locke intended for us to see that commonwealths have the same basic rights as individuals in the state of nature. After my analysis of his argument, however, I wonder whether this does not make sense of the fact that such a discussion is largely ignored and missing in the *Two Treatises*. Locke may have been aware of the problems that such an argument

⁵⁹ Locke defines a commonwealth in this way: 'By commonwealth, I must be understood all along to mean, not a democracy, or any form of government, but any independent community' (§ 133).

created and he was unwilling to dedicate any time to it. Even so, I find the spirit of his argument in ‘Chapter XVI. Of Conquest.’ The discussion is principally dedicated to the topic of what the conqueror in an unjust war or in a just war is entitled to. Locke’s answers are for the most part practical with little theoretical justification (not to mention long and tedious). I imagine that most of what he discusses here was motivated by the civil wars and violence of his own time and context. Perhaps if someone can work out a coherent version of Locke’s argument, the claims in this latter chapter will get the theoretical justification that they deserve. I reserve such a discussion for another day.

So thought the *Author*.⁶⁰



⁶⁰ This paper is a version of an early draft of a paper that was prepared for a conference, Social Philosophy: Changing Perspectives in Political Philosophy, held at the Inter-University Centre in Dobrovnik, Croatia, April 2002. The early drafts benefited from the comments of several individuals: Profs. Joseph Bien, University of Missouri, Columbia, Hauke Brunkhorst, University of Flensburg, Heinz Paetzold, University of Kassel, and Gerard Raulet, Ecole Normale Superieure Paris. This paper also benefited from the comments of Profs. David Rasmussen, Boston College and William Mc Bride, Purdue University, Lafayette.

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