STAAR
ST. ANNE'S ACADEMIC REVIEW

STAAR:

St Anne's Academic Review

**Volume 2
Autumn 2010**

About the Contributors **STAAR 2010**

Dr Nina Alphey was a DPhil student at St Anne's 2005-2009, during which time she set up the Sciences Discussion Group (with which she is still involved). She is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at St Anne's and a postdoc in the Mathematical Ecology Research Group at the Department of Zoology, University of Oxford, modelling genetic strategies for controlling pest insects that damage crops or vector diseases. She is also a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, which gives some clue as to how wide her interests are.

Dr Brian Ball is a Lecturer in Philosophy at St Anne's College. He received his BA at McGill University in 2000, with Honours in Philosophy and a Minor Concentration in Linguistics. Brian arrived at Oxford to study Philosophy in 2001, where he was awarded the BPhil in 2003, and the DPhil in 2008. His research to date has focused on the intersection between metaphysics and the philosophy of language, and in particular on truth, meaning and existence.

Alexander Brown finished his undergraduate degree in Experimental Psychology earlier this year. His favourite course area, lectured by Professor Charles Spence, was the study of the senses, as well as their cross-modal integration and indeed occasional conflict when being processed by the brain. Of particular interest was how an understanding of these interactions could be applied to real-life situations, including road safety, sensory substitution and enhancement of food and drink.
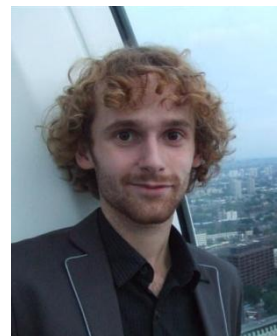
Grace Egan went to school in Wales, then came to study English Literature at St Anne's 2006-2009. She stayed at St Anne's in order to gain her Masters this year. She is passionate about neglected leviathans like '*Clarissa*'.

Eldon Fayers is a 3rd year student reading Music. He is an active Pianist and Composer, having performed in such venues as the Wigmore Hall in London, Holywell Music Rooms and the Sheldonian Theatre. He is currently writing his final year dissertation on philosophical perspectives in the work of Iannis Xenakis, his main academic interest being 20th century music.

Laura Harrison is currently a fourth year undergraduate reading Classics and primarily focusing on philosophy, both ancient and modern. Her main interests lie in the fields of Ancient Philosophy and Ethics, and in particular, in the concept of morality and the ethics of human rights. Once she has completed her undergraduate degree, she hopes to study for a PhD in philosophy, and eventually go on to work in academia.

Karen Heath is a Graduate Development Scholar at St Anne's. She is just going into the final year of her DPhil in Modern History, working with St Anne's very own Dr Gareth Davies. She specialises in modern American political history, writing about the conservative movement and the National Endowment for the Arts from the 1950s - 1980s.

Daria Luchinskaya read Economics and Management as a St Anne's undergraduate. She subsequently branched out, and completed her MPhil in Russian and East European Studies, also at St Anne's, focusing on recent higher education reforms in Russia, while simultaneously starting up STAAR. Although she will be doing her PhD at the University of Warwick, looking into the use of graduate skills in UK small businesses, she will stay involved with St Anne's life as much as possible.

Fangzhe Qiu graduated from Peking University in China as a law student, but his heart was so deeply possessed by the absorbing world of the ancient Celts that he came to Oxford to read for an MPhil degree in Celtic Studies. Now he is in his second year writing a thesis on the relationship between the Otherworld and kingship in early Irish literature and another article on the legal context in Fergus mac Léiti's saga.

Contents

STAAR Editorial Welcome

On behalf of everyone on the Editorial Board, here's a very warm welcome to the second edition of St Anne's Academic Review – STAAR. This issue we have reports on conferences that St Anne's students had attended, numerous fascinating research articles about a wide range of subjects from the JCR, MCR and SCR, as well as some very useful and uplifting advice about writing up a thesis. We hope very much that you will enjoy looking through as much as we enjoyed putting it together!

STAAR is very much in the vein of what makes St Anne's such a great college environment. Subject Family evenings are a wonderful opportunity to come along and listen to the kind of research carried out by our peers in the MCR and SCR, followed by a dinner where we can chat about our interests and share our ideas. Lunchtime Discussion Groups, organised by the MCR, but open to everyone in College, have been a great success (see STAAR 2009 and the appendix in this issue for more information). We invite external speakers from all sorts of fields to come and give a talk about their work, current affairs, recent books, anything, and encourage the audience to engage in discussion over some sandwiches in an informal setting.

STAAR, then, builds on the momentum and success of these events, and includes a lot more than merely research. It attempts to capture the essence of the spirit of the College, to bring its members together and to build a profile of what life is like here. We hope that you enjoy the second issue, and that you, like we, are looking forward to the next one!

★

Daria Luchinskaya
Editor in Chief

St Anne's Conferences

This section is dedicated to reports on conferences and travel funded by College undertaken by St Anne's members.

Report: Research Trip, Austin, Texas, March 2010
Karen Heath

I was fortunate to receive a St Anne's travel grant to support research undertaken at the Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential Library in Austin, Texas. My doctoral thesis, entitled *Pathways to Power? Conservatives and the National Endowment for the Arts, 1965-89*, analyses the limited success of the modern American right through the lens of federal arts policymaking. Chapter three of my thesis focuses on the early years of the National Endowment for the Arts under the first Chairman, Roger L. Stevens (1965-9).

A mock-up of LBJ's Oval Office, Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential Library, Austin, Texas
Photo: Karen Heath

The award provided me with an opportunity to examine memoranda and correspondence between Stevens and the Johnson White House, Congressional critics and supporters, arts lobbyists, and concerned conservatives who campaigned against the agency's grant-making priorities throughout the mid-late 1960s.

Political historians have long characterised the LBJ years as the era of the Great Society; a time of progressive, liberal reform. But in the realm of the arts at least, I found the complete opposite. A persistent conservatism coloured the young Endowment's grant-making policies, for although the agency intended to bring art to the people, definitions of 'art' and 'the people' remained limited. Revisionists have spoken of the conservative 1960s, but instead of a vibrant grassroots movement I found that conservatives were cut out of the policymaking loop and the right campaigned against the Endowment's 'Communistic art' to little avail.

In addition to important sources documenting the political motivations behind the Endowment's early grants and the resultant criticism from conservative arts organisations, I uncovered a wealth of additional materials that illuminated a variety of arts controversies in the 1960s. In short, the trip enabled me to collect a considerable amount of material for a key chapter of my thesis. These primary sources are unavailable in the UK, but essential to my work. The research I undertook in Austin thus significantly strengthened the originality of my thesis and provided me with an insight into the inner workings and political machinations of the agency and the Johnson White House.

During my time away, I also delivered a paper at a graduate history conference at Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas. This paper was based on the fifth chapter of my thesis, and focused on the mid-years of the Endowment under the third Chairman, Livingston L. Biddle Jr. (1977-81). The conference provided me with an excellent opportunity to receive feedback on my work from an American audience and to network with other international scholars working in similar areas. I am especially grateful to Prof. John Lenihan of Texas A&M for his commentary on my paper, and also to graduate student *Jared* Peatman for organising the day.

A mock-up of Lady Bird's Office, Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential Library, Austin, Texas
Photo: Karen Heath

When not working, I spent my time visiting various museums nearby, including the LBJ Ranch in Stonewall, Texas, known as the 'Texas White House'. And I spent an inordinate amount of time in the excellent gift shop at the LBJ Museum, looking over the political memorabilia: I confess, I bought a Barry Goldwater '64 sticker…

I am extremely grateful to St Anne's for the funding that made this trip possible, and also to the staff at the Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential Library for their friendly help and advice throughout the duration of my stay.

★

Report: ECER 2010, University of Helsinki, Finland
Daria Luchinskaya

Helsinki Lutheran Cathedral, Helsinki, Finland
Photo: Daria Luchinskaya

The European Conference on Educational Research (ECER) in 2010 took place at the University of Helsinki, Finland, from the 23rd to the 27th of August. ECER is an annual conference of the European Education Research Association (EERA), which consists of 23 national and regional research associations across Europe. This year's theme was Education and Cultural Change, which emphasised the necessity for higher education institutions (HEIs) to take the cultural context into account when implementing policy, and looked into the ways in which the cultural context has been changing.

I presented some of my MPhil research findings at the Conference and was fortunate enough to receive a St Anne's Conference Grant to support the cost of my trip.

The distinguished keynote speakers attending ECER 2010 were Floya Anthias, Professor of Sociology and Social Justice at Roehampton University, London; Fazal Rizvi, Professor at the Department of Educational Policy Studies, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, US; Lisbeth Lundahl, Professor at the department of Child and Youth Education, Special Education and Counselling at Umeå University; and Marie Verhoeven, Professor in Sociology, Department of Anthropology and Sociology, and senior researcher at GIRSEF (Centre for Interdisciplinary Research on Socialisation, Education and Training), University of Louvain, Belgium.

Conference presentation at the University of Helsinki, Finland
Photo: Daria Luchinskaya

This summer I completed my MPhil in Russian and East European Studies at St Anne's college. My thesis evaluated recent reforms in Russian higher education (HE), tracing the continuity and developments in this area of policymaking since *perestroika.* One of the most recent reforms has been Russia's participation in the Bologna Process and the subsequent changes in the higher education structure. Russian university degrees are being restructured in the Bologna two-cycle fashion – from a five year Soviet Specialist's degree to a four year Bachelor's and a two year Master's.

Earlier this year I carried out fieldwork in Moscow to collect students and staff attitudes to and perceptions about the changes in the HE system, and this research formed a part of my thesis chapter.

My conference paper explicitly considered the way students and staff in Moscow appraised the reforms. All respondents were aware of the changes in the degree structure, but just over half were aware of the Bologna Process per se. The attitudes to the two-cycle system fell roughly into three groups: those who were positive, cautious, and negative about the implementation of the reforms. The positive group was more orientated towards the West and employability. The cautious group was concerned about the implementation process – that no real change was happening, and that the old system was being eroded without an effective replacement new system. This group also reported concern about Russian employers' and public perceptions of the Bachelor's degree, which is frequently viewed as being an incomplete and inferior qualification to the Specialist's degree. The negative group itself viewed the Bachelor degree as incomplete education, and expressed preference for the Soviet-type education.

During the conference I attended Research in Higher Education Network sessions. Of particular interest was the symposium on Higher Education Graduates in the World of Work. The presenters looked into factors contributing to graduates' employability, considering aspects such as field of study and type of university, gender, socioeconomic background, in-depth assessments of the situation in a particular country, or taking a comparative perspective. With such a variety of views and findings, no clear conclusion was reached. However, the session gave me a lot to think about, and has influenced my decision to go on to do a PhD in Employment Research.

★

St Anne's Research

In this section we have a selection of the research interests and achievements of St Anne's members across the JCR, MCR and SCR.

Geis, a literary motif in early Irish literature
Qiu Fangzhe

Introduction:
The Old Irish tale of *Echtra Fergus mac Léiti* (the Adventure of Fergus mac Léiti, EFmL henceforth) is an interesting one as it involves many aspects highly disputed in the studies of early Irish literature and society, including the problem of pledging surety, honour and shame, and concept of kingship, etc. This essay will concentrate on one aspect that is prominent in EFmL but has been for long neglected, namely the interpretation of *geis*, pl. *gessa* which was a favourite theme in early Irish literature. After comparison with other texts where the theme of *geis* has been well-developed, we shall see that *geis* was essentially a deliberate literary motif in early Irish literature.

The equation of *geis* in early Irish literature to, or the explanation of it by the concept of taboo in modern scholarship is apt to obscure more than clarify *geis* itself.[1] If we evade the shadow of the anthropologically vague taboo together with its implicit denotation of a cross-cultural comparison in order to find out what *geis* is in early Irish literature, we could possibly interpret *geis* in two ways: as a cultural sign and a literary device. The comprehensibility of *geis* in literature to early Irish audience indicates an external link between *geis* and other social values and institutions of the world depicted or the world the audience inhabited; a network of significance which enables every element to be understood within a network of relationship. On the other hand, *geis* has its own functions in the literature text it stands, an internal role for the existence and unity of the text.

A preliminary task, however, is to delimit the range of *geis* as the object of study in this essay. It has been argued by David Greene, James Carney and proved by T. M. Charles-Edwards in detail that the usage of *geis* had spread widely from some older meanings and formulae to various other circumstances, especially from a prohibited act to a thing prohibited, and from passive prohibition to active command.[2] The historical-literary criticism, by comparing texts from different temporal strata, has led to this very convincing conclusion of a diffusion of *geis*, which helps us to reveal anachronism of some scholars' arguments. For instance, though the analysis provided by Philip O'Leary is very incisive, many pieces of the evidences he employs to support his claim that the conflict between *geis* and honour, especially the general outcomes of the heroes who rather infringe the *geis* at the stake of life than forfeit their honour, manifests the importance of honour in early Irish society,[3] are actually of a secondary development of the semantic of *geis*, where the heroes are required to do something out of *geis*.

Such positive injunction is quite rare in earlier texts, and it reflects rather a 13th century ideology of *geis* and honour, and contemporary literary taste and technique, which is also possibly 'an author's lazy method of motivation action'.[4] Over-explanation may be incurred, for example, the reason why Fergus in *Longes mac nUislenn* could not refuse the feast is originally that he has been insistently invited, and has guaranteed his guests' safety with his two sons' company. This motivation is sound and solid in everyday terms. However, in a later

---

[1] See for instance, D Greene, 'Tabu in Early Irish Narrative', *Medieval Narrative: A Symposium*, 1979, 9-19; Myles Dillon, 'The Taboos of the Kings of Ireland', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy. Section C: Archaeology, Celtic Studies, History, Linguistics, Literature*, 54 (1951), 1-36; Tom Sjöblom, *Early Irish Taboos: A Study in Cognitive History* (Helsinki: University of Helsinki, Dept. of Comparative), 54-61.
[2] Greene: 15-19; James Carney, *Studies in Irish Literature and History* (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1979), 192-3; T.M. Charles-Edwards, 'Geis,Prophecy,Omen,and Oath', *Celtica*, 1999, 38-59.
[3] Philip O'Leary, 'Honour Bound: The Social Context of Early Irish Heroic Geis', *Celtica*, 1988: 93-107.
[4] Carney, 193.

recension coming to feast becomes his *geis*, a positive one,[5] which has led O'Leary to impose a connection with honour on the '*geis*', unaware of the fact that according to his theory, Fergus should have infringed his *geis* in order to protect the guests.[6] A lavish behaviour in feast may be a typical heroic attribute, provided that it is not a blind and foolish one, but heroic as a literary label cannot be always equated or connected to honour as a real institution in early Ireland. Here the *geis* indicates no heroic quality or honour-bound behaviour, but a rather redundant literary plot.

Therefore, I shall only discuss incidences of *geis* that have both real external and internal connotations, mostly in earlier literature where there is no evidence suggesting a later replacement of original causes or motivations by *geis*. Probably a precise demarcation between 'genuine' and 'secondary' *geis* could never be achieved, and a detailed analysis of all the *gessa* in early Irish literature is beyond the size and schedule of this essay. Though the date of a text itself does not tell the context and social cognition of a certain *geis* in it, general patterns of *gessa* become clearer and less diverse as we move backward to the older recensions and layers of the tales.

It is worth noting that *geis* seldom appears in contemporary historical accounts, i.e. annals and law-texts,[7] despite its flourish in literature, including sagas, tales, poems and a tract named 'the Taboos of the Kings of Ireland'.[8] Thus even the oldest description of *geis* in literature we have may not record a current custom or institution in Ireland. However, there must have been sources in real life that offered to construct such an image as *geis*. These sources could be norms, customs, rituals, omens, oaths, contracts or any other things that have a prohibitive power over individuals.[9] But the raw cognitive materials would not enter literature as an integral element called '*geis*' without selection, transformation and composition. Many of the modern studies on *geis*, in fact, fail to discern the distinction between the social basis of *geis* and the *geis* itself as a literarily refined unit, a meaningful integrity which only exists in literature. This is nevertheless not a new obscurity, as it must be firstly ascribed to the later literature in Medieval Ireland which already confused fine literary *geis* with its sources and replaced the former with the latter, as discussed above.

Binchy has argued that *Echtra Fergusa maic Léti* originated from an earlier date than Thurneysen has assumed, the text of which in H.3.18 might date back to 8th century.[10] There is another evidence to support this claim. In Paragraph 4, the prohibition for Fergus' going into Lake Rudraige is stated thus: *rotbia ar int abacc acht aen ar[a]cuillimm airiut loch rudrige fil ad crich ni dechais fai*. 'Thou shalt have it, save one that I bar to thee: thou shalt not go under Lake Rudraige which is in thy own territory.'[11] The verb here is *ar-chulli* (ban, prohibit), which shares a similar formation with *air(i)mbert*, and the same semantics. According to Professor Charles-Edwards, the word *airmit* from *ar-imm-bert* appears in earlier text in the meaning of the prohibition itself rather than the prohibited act, and then *geis* has not yet encroached upon the territory of *airmit* or *airchuillte*.[12] The text shows an original distinction between the prohibition and the prohibited act, and hence indicates its earlier provenance.

---

[5] Charles-Edwards: 57.

[6] Protecting the guest was an obligation of the host and any harm happened to the guests was regarded as an insult to the host's honour in early Irish law. See O'Leary: 101.

[7] Fergus Kelly, *A guide to early Irish law* (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1988), 20; Daniel A Binchy, *The Linguistic and Historical Value of the Irish Law Tracts* (London: H. Milford, 1943), 28-9.

[8] Dillon, 1-36.

[9] The injunctive type of geis is generally later than the prohibitive one. See Charles-Edwards, 38-59.

[10] D. A. Binchy, 'The Saga of Fergus Mac Léti', *Ériu*, 16 (1952): 35.

[11] D. A. Binchy: 38.

[12] Charles-Edwards: 47, 52; There is another word *argarad, urgarad* 'forbidden act', see Whitney Stokes, *Togail Bruidne da Derga*, 2nd ed (Paris: Librairie Emile Bouillon, 1902), 16; Dillon: 8.

Several factors make this prohibition not merely a term of contract but also one that contains a developed literary *geis*. To reveal these I would like to collate it with a text full of also well-composed *gessa*, namely *Togail Bruidne Dá Derga* (the Destruction of Dá Derga's Hostel, henceforth TBDD), often referred to by scholars.

Fergus mac Léiti was banned by the dwarf (Leprechauns!) from going into a certain Lake Rudraige which lies in his kingdom. This emerged from the dwarves' subjection to him after being caught at trying to attack him in sleep. Fergus required the dwarves' magical ability to pass under water. The dwarf chief promised him in exchange for life but laid a prohibition for him to go under Lake Rudraige. The tale here is somehow inconsistent, as Fergus said he would like three wishes and the dwarf did agree, but all we know from the latter part is only one wish of the underwater ability, and the reason why Fergus suddenly violated this prohibition is not told.[13] However, we can expect on fair basis that Fergus does not want the ability for entertainment. A supernatural or extraordinary ability increases a hero's prestige and thus his legitimacy as king, not to mention the extension of his actual control and strategic significance. The other two wishes, perhaps preserved in some older text with their role active in the story but already lost now, may be associated with kingship as well, in the view that the whole story is integral about the magical strengthening and loss of the kingship, and the hero's effort to defend his honour as a proper king. In the process of time, I assume, the two other wishes which were not the direct cause of his loss of legitimacy of kingship were dropped off, and only the dramatic third wish remained.

Prohibitions within the terms of supernatural support of kingship are prominent in TBDD. Conaire is told not to hunt birds because his biological father belonged to the bird-people, in turn of his recognising of which he gets the support from this folk and his 'bird-reign', whose prosperity is ensured.[14] However, TBDD is a far more complicated story than the single-string EFmL. Besides this prohibition, there are many other *gessa* imposed on him and infringed by him one by one. Conaire passed unjust verdict on the robbers, and rapines occurred during his later reign, which directly led to destruction of his reign, which Prof. Charles-Edwards terms as breach to *erchuillti a fhlatha*, 'the prohibitions attached to his reign'.[15] The verb *ar-chuilli* appears again here. These prohibitions do not come from magical folks, but from perhaps very ancient advices recited at the inauguration of kings.[16] They are rooted in abstract universal order and justice rather than magic. Nevertheless, the execution of the penalty of breaching prohibitions was then carried out by supernatural power.[17]

In EFmL, there is no such distinction as in TBDD between personal *geis* (as not to kill birds) and regal *geis* (as not to permit marauding).[18] But the two tales share a similarity that personal *geis* is imposed by magical folks subjecting to the hero's power and promising him supernatural support for his reign. The bargain is not the life of the subjugated in exchange of an absolute magical power, but of a power not to be abused. These prohibitions are both linked with certain places in the territory the hero reigns, and thus creating a spatial and temporal sphere where the hero becomes extremely vulnerable, where his extraordinary trait becomes exactly his Achilles' Heel. But unlike later literature where a mere appearance of place or phenomenon could be *geis*, in these two stories vulnerable place and time must be

---

[13] D. A. Binchy: 37-8.
[14] Stokes, 16-7.
[15] Charles-Edwards: 52.
[16] As they are similar in form and function to those listed in Dillon: 8-36.
[17] Charles-Edwards: 49-50.
[18] Both gessa are not, like a Taboo, imposed on a whole group of people or a specific age/ gender sub-group in them. This is the most salient difference between a geis and a taboo, there is no personal taboo in ethnography.

enacted by the hero's own action. Fergus was scared to distortion when he dived into Lake Rudraige using the magic, and Conaire was killed exactly as the description of his *gessa*, by the enemy of his reign, those he spared in unjust verdict which is also one of his *gessa*.

A literary *geis*, as shown above, comes from various sources: exchange with magical folks, kingship justice, omen, etc., but is carefully reformed and adapted into the story. A good folk story may be satisfied at a magical gift being retrieved because of the greedy protagonist's abuse of it, but a well-knit literary *geis* surpasses that simplicity by complicating causes and consequences, by many infringements inevitably entwined together leading to the final destruction of the hero. Even in the single-lined EFmL we can see that, instead of instant death by the Muirdris monster under Lake Rudraige, Fergus survived to reach the shore but distorted to such a dreadful extent that he is not fit for kingship anymore. This led to a concealing of his face even to himself by his wise men in the court, until the bondwoman revealed the awful fact to him. She, at this stage, is motivated both by the earlier incident that she was compensated as a *cumal* (female slave) for the murder of Eochu to Eochu's protector Fergus, and Fergus' scold when she washed his head. Obviously Fergus is an enemy to her brothers and son. This scene of the final realisation of penalty is firmly bedded in early Irish law, i.e. law about homicide, protection and regal qualification; honour, i.e. violation of Fergus' honour, and the resentment in the bondmaid who previously enjoyed great honour among the Féni people but was humiliated in Fergus' court; and history, i.e. the intervening of Ulster power into the conflict with Féni (Midland Irish?).

After Fergus has realised his blemish, he rushed into the lake to combat with the monster that he was formerly severely afraid of. It is an act to prove his prowess and power as a qualified king. In an honour-bound society he has no other choice to regain his decency but to revenge it. Honour is not the basis of his *geis*, but a prompter to its realisation. In this sense, Fergus is not destructed by the supernatural power which knows his *geis* and is doomed give him the lethal blow alone, but by a complex process interwoven with magic, heroic honour, social norm, emotion and self-motivation.[19]

Like in TBDD, *gessa* appear at the beginning episodes of the tale as a prophecy of the hero's destiny. Any reader will realise his destruction in the end, and these *gessa* are, paradoxically, doomed to be infringed. But they would not be breached as a dumb fact; in contrast, they would be 'offers that he cannot refuse', because he is a hero, a king, one who must act prominently and who would like to act so. Therefore a literary *geis* should have its full realisation during the process of the narrative, and its realisation should be interknit with various aspects of the world depicted. It sets up a limit for the otherwise inconvincible heroes,[20] granting them special powers and at the same times their very reason of destruction. It is a designed literary unit that gives some early Irish literature their unique complexity, intensity and beauty. And when we regard such a *geis* as a literary archetype, the problem of distinguishing 'true' from 'false' *geis* no longer exists, rather, it would be a problem of how this archetype was copied, imitated, transplanted or diffused, as in the actual cases of later Irish literature.

★

---

[19] This thus invalidates Greene's argument that the penalty of breaching geis is automatic. See Greene: 1.
[20] M W Pepperdene, 'Grendel's Geis', *The journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, 85 (1955): 189.

Meaning, Truth, and Existence
Dr Brian Ball, Lecturer in Philosophy, St Anne's College

Introduction: the Philosophy of Language

I am a philosopher of language; my research concerns linguistic meaning, the truth (or falsity) of things we say, and the existence of ordinary things (like cabbages and kings) which we talk about. The aim of this paper is to introduce you to some philosophical puzzles surrounding the relations between these notions.

What is the philosophical interest of language? Philosophers have always been interested in the nature of reality and in our knowledge of it – and indeed in the relations between mind and world more generally. A full philosophical theory of the workings of a language will explain:

(i)   the relations between expressions of the language and entities in the world; and
(ii)   the relations between expressions of the language and the understanding that competent speakers have of them.[1]

Thus, the philosophy of language aims to give an account of the cognitive relations in which human beings stand to the world surrounding them; moreover, the focus on language promises to make these traditional philosophical problems more tractable since (a) we can divide the task into (at least) two distinct components; and (b) linguistic expressions have relatively clear syntactic (i.e. grammatical) properties which mental items like thoughts do not obviously possess.

It will also be worth noting one further point about the philosophical interest of language. Philosophers – from Aristotle, to Kant, to Mill[2] – have always been interested in logic. Logicians want to know which arguments are valid, and which are invalid. The criterion they use for determining this is the following:

☐ An Argument is valid if and only if it is impossible for the premises of the argument to be true while the conclusion of the argument is false.

But arguments are expressed in language, so understanding how language works – and in particular, how it relates to the world, and what the world must be like for sentences to be true – will help us to get a grip on which arguments are valid.

Puzzles Concerning Names

Consider the following argument:

☐ Premise 1: Superman flies
☐ Premise 2: Superman is Clark Kent
☐ Conclusion: Clark Kent flies

Is it logically valid? The answer to this question is uncontroversially, "Yes". Imagine that we want to sort the things there are into two categories – those that fly and those that don't. If the first premise is true, then we'll put Superman on the side of the things that fly. But then, if the second premise is true, we can't find Clark amongst the remaining things – we've already classified him when we dealt with Superman. So the conclusion has to be true too – Clark is in the camp of the flyers.

---

[1] See Evans, Gareth and McDowell, John Henry (1982), *The varieties of reference* (Oxford: Clarendon Press) for an approach to the philosophy of language recognizing these two aims.
[2] See, e.g., Kneale, W. C. and Kneale, Martha (1962), *The development of logic* (Oxford: Clarendon Press).

Now consider a second argument:
- ☐ Premise 1: Lois Lane believes that Superman flies
- ☐ Premise 2: Superman is Clark Kent
- ☐ Conclusion: Lois Lane believes that Clark Kent flies

Is this argument valid? This issue is controversial.

The Superman stories seem to provide us with grounds for thinking that this argument could have true premises and a false conclusion. For it seems that the stories depict a world in which Lois believes Superman flies, Superman is Clark Kent, but Lois *doesn't* believe that Clark flies. However, the appearance that the conclusion of our argument is false may be misleading. Maybe deep down Lois *does* believe that Clark flies. Whether this is so depends not only on Lois' psychology but also on what exactly the meaning of the sentence "Lois Lane believes that Clark Kent flies" is. In particular, it depends upon (1) whether the meaning of the name "Clark Kent" is just the guy, Clark Kent – which is to say Superman; and (2) how the verb "believes" combines with other expressions.

Let's focus on the first of these points, (1). Suppose that we use the name "Superman" to refer to a certain guy. Then plausibly the meaning of "Superman" is that guy. We can then imagine performing a classification as we did in the case of our first argument – but this time we want to sort all the things according as whether or not Lois believes them to be flyers. When we get to Superman, we have to class him amongst the things of which Lois believes that they fly. By the second premise, we can't find Clark amongst the remaining items; he is already in the camp of things which Lois believes to fly. So the conclusion is true after all. Or, at least, so some argue.

Puzzles Concerning Existence

Before finishing I want to introduce you to two arguments which aim to prove existence claims and which I find problematic.[3] The first is the Ontological Argument for the Existence of God. It has been advanced by a number of philosophers – including, notably, Anselm and Descartes.[4] It runs as follows:
- ☐ Let "God" be a name for the perfect being
- ☐ Premise 1: The perfect being has all the perfections
- ☐ Premise 2: Existence is a perfection
- ☐ Conclusion: The perfect being has existence; in short, God exists

Before you run out to spread the good news, note that this argument "proves" too much. For consider the following parody:
- ☐ Let "Awesome" be a name for the perfect mountain
- ☐ Premise 1: Awesome has all the perfections (appropriate for a mountain)
- ☐ Premise 2: Existence is a perfection (appropriate for a mountain)
- ☐ Conclusion: Awesome exists

Of course, noticing that an argument is no good isn't sufficient: we need a diagnosis. The most significant response to the ontological argument has been advanced in one form or another by Hume, Kant, Frege, Russell, Quine, and others: it involves a theory about the nature of existence.[5]

---

[3] I could, in addition, give you an argument for the existence of Superman; but due to limitations of space I'll leave you with just the two (arguably more philosophically significant) cases below.

[4] See Oppy, Graham, "Ontological Arguments", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Winter 2009 Edition)*, Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2009/entries/ontological-arguments/>.

[5] See Miller, Barry, "Existence", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Fall 2009 Edition)*, Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2009/entries/existence/ for an attribution of this view to Hume, Kant, and Frege; and see

These philosophers deny the second premise of the ontological argument (and its parodies); they claim that existence is not a feature of objects at all (let alone a good one)! Indeed, on this theory, to say, for example, that electrons exist is just to say that something is an electron – or perhaps more colloquially, that there are electrons; and to deny that unicorns exist is just to say that nothing – none of the things there are - is a unicorn.

This theory of existence, however, gives rise to a final style of ontological argument which I find problematic. Consider:

- ☐ Premise 1: "2 and 3 are prime numbers" is true
- ☐ Premise 2: If "2 and 3 are prime numbers" is true, then so is "2 and 3 are numbers"
- ☐ Conclusion 1: "2 and 3 are numbers" is true
- ☐ Premise 3: If "2 and 3 are numbers" is true, then so is "There are numbers"
- ☐ Conclusion 2: "There are numbers" is true
- ☐ Premise 4: "There are numbers" is true if, and only if, numbers exist
- ☐ Conclusion 3: Numbers exist
- ☐ Premise 5: Numbers, if they exist, are abstract objects – that is, objects with no spatial or temporal location and therefore no causal powers
- ☐ Conclusion 4: Abstract objects exist (e.g., the numbers 2 and 3)

Now, this argument poses a challenge for me, because I like mathematics – I think it is useful and reveals truths. Thus, I find no flaw with the reasoning up to Conclusion 2. On the other hand I don't like abstract objects – in fact, I don't think there are any. Accordingly, I reject Conclusion 4.

The most obvious culprit here is Premise 4;[6] but recall that it is motivated by the theory of existence which helped us to dispense with the ontological argument. Despite this, in my D.Phil. thesis I claimed that "there are numbers" is not always synonymous with "numbers exist", and so it is not the case that this sentence is true if and only if *numbers exist* – at least, not in all speech contexts. Crudely speaking, the idea is that just as the word "I" refers to different people depending on who uses it, so too the phrase "there are" means different things as used on different occasions. This allows us to say that it means *there exists* when used in the context of metaphysical investigations – and hence to deny the validity of the Ontological Argument – yet it is used more loosely in other contexts, including those at play in mathematics departments. So that's my diagnosis of this argument: premise 4 is false – "there are numbers" is true as used in mathematics even though numbers don't exist.

★

Russell, Bertrand (1905), 'On Denoting', *Mind,* 14 (56), 479-93, and Quine, W. V. (1948), 'On What There Is', *The Review of Metaphysics,* 2 (5), 21-38 for first hand advocacy of the advantages of the view in question.

[6] When I presented this material at the Subject Families Event Alberto Behar asked why we should accept premise 5. This is a good question. The answer is that rejecting it in this case won't obviously help, since we could run an analogous argument concerning the existence of sets – and there are simply too many of these (according to contemporary set theory) to regard them as being any sort of concrete material object. Thus denying premise 5 in the set-theoretic case is implausible; and we should seek an analogous solution here in connection with number theory.

"She goes out as I enter": the symbolism and verisimilitude of space and place in Richardson's *Clarissa*
Grace Egan

> Room after room
> I hunt the house through,
> We inhabit together.
> Heart, fear nothing, for, heart, thou shalt find her -
> Next time, herself! - not the trouble behind her
> [...]
> I [...] Range the wide house from the wing to the centre.
> Still the same chance! She goes out as I enter.[1]

Clarissa is a novel of locked rooms, secret compartments in flesh and wood, closets and keyholes. Both the cognitive behaviour and the wellbeing of the correspondents in *Clarissa* are shaped by the architectural and corporeal limits which define their reality. What is so distinctive about descriptions of space in *Clarissa* is the way in which the epistolary form allows the characters' differing, subjective senses of the same spaces to be conveyed. Over time, the emotional events which transpire within the novel's buildings make the characters who occupy them imbue each room, stairway and passage with symbolic meaning, a meaning which differs according to their individual viewpoints. The materials with which the protagonists create their own symbolic maps are provided by Richardson, and in that sense the parallel symbolisms of the characters all originate from a single source. And yet, the absence of an omniscient narrator means that an objective view of the novel's settings does not exist. Richardson's desire to develop his characters in certain opposing directions dictates which materials he chooses to give them. The fate the author has planned for a character gives rise to his or her spatial context: character and setting develop simultaneously. The differing stances (physical and moral) of Clarissa, Lovelace, Anna Howe and Belford produce a collage of subjective, highly psychological accounts of the same buildings, so that on the page, character and space give rise to one another. This is something that has not always been recognised in readings of *Clarissa.*

Richardson's spatiality differs from that of his contemporaries in prose fiction. For example, Fielding's novels comprise wide open spaces, which allow room for overarching analogies between the progress of the story, and the journeying of the characters to new places. In *Joseph Andrews* (1742)*,* for example, Fielding sets up a running metaphor for the progress of Andrews and Parson Adams from ignorance of their situation, to resolved understanding, by having them wander through the countryside until they both literally and spiritually reach their goals. In *Clarissa* and *Pamela,* by contrast, Richardson uses only the finest touches of the metaphor of the spiritual journey as it is found in (for instance) *Don Quixote*, or *The Pilgrim's Progress.* Crucially this metaphor hardly ever relates to the physical movement of the characters. Richardson creates symbols tailored to the individual voices and experiences of his characters, and because his characters occupy stagnant domestic spaces for the majority of their time, the closed space, and its most paradigmatic manifestation – the house – is the dominant spatial metaphor. It presides over the plot of *Clarissa,* and even dictates the choices of the protean Lovelace.

---

1   Browning, "Love in a Life", Collected Poems (vol. 1), ed. John Pettigrew (London, 1996), pp. 603-4 .

Richardson was not alone in structuring his novels according to domestic space. The narrative form of Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* (1759-67) is a transliteration of a building's dimensions, and characters' movements within it. Chapters begin with the opening of a door into a new room, or a curtain being drawn. Richardson employs a similar technique to end some letters, but in a far less ostentatious way; for example, Clarissa coincides the end of a letter with an account of the unceremonious end of a conversation: "Thus she run [sic] on, as she went down-stairs" (202,L44).[2] For Sterne, the house is a grand prop which is used to stretch out time unnaturally, a symptom of the unpredictable narrative. Tristram complains that it is "a shame to make two chapters of what passed in going down one pair of stairs ... and for aught I know ... there may be as many chapters as steps."[3] The difference between Sterne and Richardson's imaginings of the domestic is that Sterne's rendering of space is prominent and comically virtuoso; the dominance of Tristram the narrator does not allow the incremental influence of character stance to seep into the author's descriptions of space in the same way that Richardson's epistolary form does.

What is so evocative in Richardson's use of space is the way in which he accurately mimics the human tendency to magnify the quotidian. As Samuel Johnson said of Pope's *The Rape of the Lock,* "new things are made familiar, and familiar things are made new."[4] Richardson's is technique functions like an inward-looking version of Swift's earlier work, *Gulliver's Travels* (1726). Swift uses the travel narrative to allow him to comment upon his own society, by grossly distorting and highlighting its faults. In this way he is able to use the Brobdingnag kitchen to show how strange national conventions look when viewed from another place or perspective: "...if I should describe the kitchen-grate, the prodigious pots and kettles, the joints of meat turning on the spits, with many other particulars, perhaps I should be hardly believed..."[5] While Richardson acknowledges the "importance of elsewhere"[6] in *Clarissa*, the "elsewhere" is seen only as a vague and undesirable alternative: Clarissa's plan to go to the American colonies, for example, is not something that is imagined as desirable for its own sake. Both Richardson and Swift subtly undermine the self-knowledge of their central characters; like Clarissa, it may be said of Gulliver that for him there is always something preferable to the truth.[7] In contrast to Swift, however, Richardson conveys realistic peculiarities of thought and behaviour by having the same domestic spaces re-imagined by different characters.

It is difficult to articulate the precision with which Richardson shows the mutual influence of places and mindsets, and the way in which he represents the evolution of domestic metaphors (both individual and collective), by comparing him with other novelists. The most prominent critical analysis of Richardson's symbolic space is Margaret Doody's essay "A Fine and Private Place".[8] Unfortunately, Doody does not analyse the houses in *Clarissa* in terms of the particular characters who write about them. Instead, she often takes the semantically loaded objects and spaces in the novel to be of uniform metaphorical weight. For example, she compares the mirror in the officer's garret prison, described by Belford as "breaking out into a thousand points" (1065,L334) with a completely unrelated mirror: "when Clarissa is living in a false world, the glass sometimes shows the truth, as when Clarissa surprises Lovelace's ugly expression in the pier-glass. Now, when the world appears as it really is, the mirror

---

2   All references are to Samuel Richardson, *Clarissa,* ed. Angus Ross (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1985), unless otherwise stated. Quotations are referenced by page and letter numbers in parentheses in the text.

3   Laurence Sterne, *Tristram Shandy,* Vol IV, Chapter X (Michigan, 1980), p.203.

4   Samuel Johnson, *Lives of the English Poets* (Oxford, 1905), vol.III, p.338.

5   Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels* (Falkirk, 1787), p.132.

6   Philip Larkin, "The Importance of Elsewhere", *The Whitsun Weddings* (London,1964),p.34

7   Samuel Johnson, *Johnsonian Miscellanies* ed. George Norman (London, 1966), vol.I, p.297.

8   Margaret Doody, *A Natural Passion* (Oxford, 1974), pp.118-125.

represents the false, and is destroyed."[9] This interpretation homogenises the mirrors in the novel, which are in fact significant only insofar as they are meaningful for the characters describing them. Belford longs for redemption, and sees his own self-hatred reflected in the damage that has been done to the prison mirror. The mirror which gives Clarissa a brief insight into Lovelace's dual nature belongs to an entirely different cosmology of symbols, which is peculiar to her, a pursued character moving swiftly from room to room. Far from reinforcing received, abstract ideas, *Clarissa*'s actual mirrors illuminate differing angles of the personalities of those who view them.

As Doody's broad-brush analysis does not take into account the specific social practices of Clarissa's age, Amanda Vickery's recently published book *Behind Closed Doors*[10] will contribute towards a more accurate understanding of Richardson's eighteenth-century domestic world, giving greater definition to the nuances of particular spatial metaphors. In order to progress with a new analysis of space in *Clarissa,* it is necessary to demonstrate Doody's technique, and the ability of Vickery's research to counteract it. A representative example is Doody's treatment of the letter in which Clarissa is compelled to speak with the hated Mr. Solmes, her family obstinately leaving her to fend for herself:

> There are two doors to *my* parlour ... As I entered at one, my friends hurried out at the other. I saw just the gown of my Sister, the last who slid away ... And they all remained in the next parlour, a wainscot partition only parting the two.
> ...
> Not knowing what I did ... I flew to the door, and would have opened it ... I pressing against it ... fell flat on my face into the other parlour ... But everybody was gone. (303, L78)

This scene is an example of a symbolically-loaded behavioural pattern which occurs repeatedly in *Clarissa,* that of withdrawal and pursuit. Architectural space frequently serves as the physical confirmation of emotional barriers between people (later in the same letter Clarissa "throws" herself into the "contrary window" to avoid her uncle). Doody recognises this pattern and its spatial implications: "Clarissa is caught, like a bird in a cage, just as she is later at Sinclair's".[11] However, while the gesture of withdrawal, and the compulsion to pursue are common acts in *Clarissa,* it is the particularities which give meaning to each iteration. Here, for example, the "wainscot partition *only* parting the two" hints at the theatrical, rather superficial cruelty of Clarissa's family; the heroine's farcical entrance "flat on my face" is both pathetic and humorous, and serves as a reminder of Clarissa's youth, vulnerability, and the innocence of her pride. These nuances are not part of Doody's appraisal of patterned behaviour involving space:

> The use of the house imagery is not exactly pictorial ... Physical objects are seen in relation to the motion, physical or mental, of a character. We know where rooms stand in relation to each other in the various dwellings and how the characters move to and fro in each of the houses described ... even though we hardly know what the rooms actually look like.[12]

By minimising the description of interiors, Richardson is demonstrating a degree of psychological realism in his ventriloquism of the observations of someone in Clarissa's position. There would be no reason for her to remark on the furnishings of a room with which she was already familiar. As Amanda Vickery points out, "[i]nteriors do not easily offer up

---

9   Doody, ibid. p.207.
10   Amanda Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors* (New Haven, 2009).
11   Doody, *A Natural Passion*, p.193.
12   Doody, ibid. p.188.

their secrets. The backdrop of a life is rarely the fodder of diaries and letters, just as routines are less interesting to record than events. They were taken as read at the time, and so remain elusive in surviving written records today."[13]

CLARISSA.

OR, THE

HISTORY

OF A

YOUNG LADY:

Comprehending

The moſt Important Concerns of Private LIFE.

And particularly ſhewing,

The DISTRESSES that may attend the Miſconduct
Both of PARENTS and CHILDREN,

In Relation to MARRIAGE.

Publiſhed by the EDITOR of PAMELA.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

Printed for S. Richardſon:

And Sold by A. MILLAR, over-againſt *Catharine-ſtreet* in the *Strand*:
J. and JA. RIVINGTON, in *St. Paul's Church-yard*:
JOHN OSBORN, in *Pater-noſter Row*;
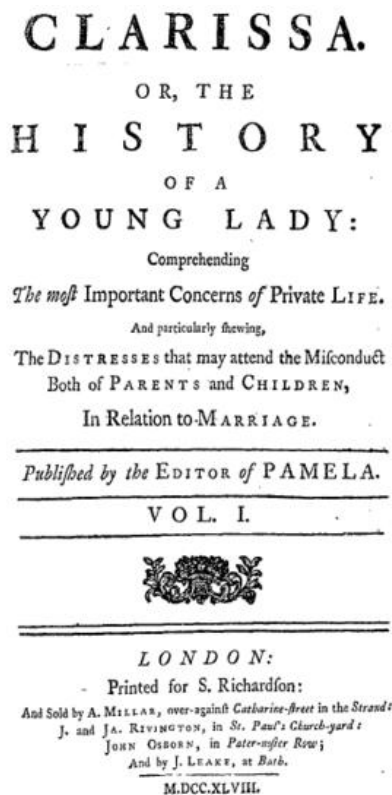And by J. LEAKE, at *Bath.*

M.DCC.XLVIII.

Image: Public domain

Richardson was loath to include anything in his novels that was inconsistent with human nature, and part of the natural state of writing was that "styles differ ... as much as faces, and are indicative, generally beyond the power of disguise, of the mind of the writer!"[14] Further to this, Richardson described the absolutely individual identity he proposed to give to Lovelace: "I intend in him a new Character, not confined to usual Rules: And something indeed New in each, or I should not have presum'd to scribble: If absurd or unnatural, they ought not to appear at all ..."[15] As Tom Keymer notes, Richardson was so successful in representing realistically a "proliferation ... of contending points of view" that "[r]eaders failed to converge on a single definitive understanding of the text".[16] The fact that, as Henry Fielding reported, "there is scarcely a Contradiction in Character, which I have not heard assigned from different Reasons to this Poor Girl",[17] meant that the diversity of voices in Richardson's text was successful in bringing out the diversity of its readers' viewpoints. In *Clarissa,* total immersion in characters' free individual styles results in symbols of space which reflect the diversity of human nature. Each character's way of looking at a domestic object is silently coloured by his or her personality and experience, just as facial expressions shift according to situation. There are points where an intersection occurs between different characters' understandings of space: these intersections are governed by shared social norms, and understood through shared metaphors which arise out of these norms.

Vickery's historical approach may help to unravel particularly confusing knots of meaning to do with the home. On occasion, it is possible that Richardson, and his sympathetic critics, aim to cover plot holes with the cloak of the symbolic, but it is also possible that *Behind Closed Doors* will vindicate him. After her flight from Harlowe Place, Clarissa writes to her family requesting that they send her some clothes, "together with fifty guineas, which you'll find in my escritoire [of which I inclose the key]..." (411, L102). Lady Bradshaigh, ever the purveyor of astute comments on etiquette and probability (for probability is an etiquette within the conceit of the novel's letters as "found documents"), wrote an annotation in her copy of *Clarissa,* with the objection that "I thought the key of her escritoire had been left in the hands of her Relations." Richardson replied "If so, omit [of which I enclose the key]."[18]

---

13   Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors*,p.3.
14   To Sophia Westcomb, [1746?]. *Samuel Richardson: Selected Letters,* ed. John Carroll (Oxford, 1964), p.64.
15   *Selected Letters,* ed. Carroll, p.76.
16   Tom Keymer, *Richardson's* Clarissa *and the Eighteenth-Century Reader* (Cambridge, 1992), p.57.
17   Keymer, ibid. p.57.
18   Barchas, *The Annotations in Lady Bradshaigh's Copy of* Clarissa (Victoria, 1998),p.59.

Janine Barchas - editor of Bradshaigh's annotated *Clarissa* - defends Richardson's original text, as the author did not amend the section in the third edition. She explains Bradshaigh's confusion as an inability to grasp the symbolic meaning of an earlier passage, where Clarissa writes "[t]his moment the keys of everything are taken from me" (P116, L21):

> Perhaps, while Lady Bradshaigh recalled that passage as the moment when Clarissa is stripped of all keys, Richardson intended it to mark the removal, not of Clarissa's private escritoire key, but of her many domestic keys, and – by extension – the termination of her privileged position in the Harlowe household.[19]

Barchas defends what seems to be a mistake on Richardson's part by saying that Clarissa's use of the word "everything" was symbolic. However, there could be a more practical root to the problem. Clarissa's behaviour was typical of eighteenth-century divisions of storage (and the keys which granted access to divided space), as Vickery explains: "the passing of household power was ... ritualised in ceremonial renunciation, as when a Lancashire merchant's wife ... handed to her inheriting son in 1778 'the keys of the Buroe where he wo'd find all the keys.'"[20] This is like the opening ceremonials in *Pamela,* where Mr. B announces to all the servants that Pamela will look after the linen. The wife of the Lancashire merchant views her bureau's key as the key of all keys. Because of the special status afforded to secret storage, it is possible that a person of Clarissa's domestic precision would have held the house keys and her private set of keys to be so different semantically, that she would have thought the escritoire key too private to be included in the phrase "the keys of everything". In other words, there is a practical explanation for Clarissa's oversight: the different symbolic categories of key correspond with their functions in the real world.

Kant said "space ... is a pure intuition," "the subjective condition of sensibility",[21] but in Richardson's novels, intuition is as much imprinted by space, as space is subject to the biases of sensibility. Plot and setting, character and space develop in parallel, and are mutually influential: all plaited together in the Gordian knot of Richardson's faithful transcriptions of human nature.

The novel opens at Harlowe Place, which is large enough to accommodate both the grand frontispieces of human nature, as well as its shabbier back-stairs. Awkward social "conversation pieces"[22] such as the staged tea ceremony in which Mr. Solmes reveals himself to Clarissa's repulsed gaze, and disorganised rushing and whispering combine.

The most powerful colonization of space in Harlowe Place for Clarissa, without doubt, is her closet. As Vickery points out, the closet was a place where women especially could fulfil their secular "closet duties" and have religious privacy. Richardson thought the "modest Lady, happy in herself" would find "her Closet her Paradise".[23] Clarissa is in charge of who enters her closet while she occupies it; it locks on the inside. Locks, and her ability to control them, are Clarissa's first priority when examining her new quarters at Sinclair's, and in the officer's prison. When she uses her closet, Clarissa is most able to be herself; indeed, all the closets she adopts in the novel occupy the same semantic space in that they are all at least perceived as safe retreats by the heroine.

---

19   Barchas, ibid., p.59.n.
20   Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors,*p.44.
21   Joseph Kestner, *The Spatiality of the Novel* (Cambridge,1992),p.16.
22   cf. Lynn Shepherd, Clarissa's *Painter* (Oxford,2009) for general discussion of this genre of portraiture.
23   *Selected Letters,* ed. Carroll,p.68.

For Clarissa, the dairy and the summer-house, like the closet, are places for cultivated self-expression, free from the social politics occurring in the main house. Katharine Esdaile calls the summer-house "the finest flower in the first Gothic revival", an amenity without which no eighteenth-century garden was considered complete.[24] It was one of a number of fashionable accoutrements which romanticised outdoor spaces (another being the hermitage), and allowed gardens to fit more easily into the literary process for Richardson and his contemporaries. Whereas Lovelace, hiding out in the coppice adjoining the Harlowes' paddock, is reduced to "[k]neeling on the hoar moss with one knee, writing with the other ... My feet, by the time I had done, seeming to have taken root" (718,L223), the summer-house facilitated a more civilised meeting between the writer and their outdoor environment. Summer-houses appealed to Richardson personally, as he wrote to Sophia Westcomb:

> I sit with you, I talk with you, I read to you, I stop to hear your sentiments, in the summer-house: your smiling obligingness, your polite and easy expression, even your undue diffidence, are all in my eye ...[25]

William Sale asserts that the summer-house at Richardson's country residence at North End was special to the author, as he had built it and written most of *Clarissa* there.[26] Catherine Talbot, upon visiting Parson's Green, noted that his "Villa is fitted up in the same Style as his Books are writ ... Every Minute detail ... useful or pleasing."[27] If Clarissa first came to life in Richardson's summer-house, it is appropriate that she should feel most at ease in her own at Harlowe Place. Keymer insists that the yew hedge and "Dutch-taste garden" have connotations of overbearing authority,[28] but it is Lovelace who sneers at the outmoded style; for Clarissa, the straight lines of the Dutch-taste might well signify the straight and narrow path, from which her "swerving feet" (650,L201) took her towards Lovelace, and her fall from grace. Both Pamela and Clarissa find a peaceful solitude at their respective summer-houses, until they are forced to meet with an aggressive male presence there.

The importance of the closet, not just to Clarissa, but to her family, may be seen in the highly ritualised way with which they dispose of her paraphernalia once she has left Harlowe Place. Her things are treated like those of a disgraced and deceased person. She has died in the affections of her family, and consequently all traces of her prestigious presence are thrown into her closet, which has become a kind of tomb, or anti-shrine:

> Your drawings and your pieces are all taken down; as is also your own whole-length picture in the Vandyke taste, from your *late* parlour: they are all taken down and thrown into your closet, which will be *nailed up* as if it were not a part of the house; there to *perish* together... (509, L147, my emphases)

The Harlowes' is a psychologically plausible reaction to Clarissa's absence: they want their surroundings to reflect the rift that has occurred between them and the "flower" of their family. Clarissa's marginalisation begins with the change in her status from participant in family life, to spectator. Lynn Shepherd discusses Joseph Highmore's portrait of the Harlowe family (c.1745-7) as a visual transliteration of this shift, where Clarissa's "symbolically empty chair" is used to divide the figures in the "claustrophobic picture space".[29] Clarissa is pushed

---

24   Katherine Esdaile, "The Small House and its Amenities in the Architectural Handbooks of 1749-1827", *The Library* (March 1918), pp.115-132.
25   *Selected Letters,*ed. Caroll, p.65.
26   William Sale, *Samuel Richardson: Master Printer* (New York, 1950), p.13.
27   Keymer, *The Eighteenth-Century Reader,* p.108.n.
28   Keymer, ibid. pp.109-110.
29   Shepherd, Clarissa'*s Painter*, pp.121-2.

back to the far left of the portrait, an area usually reserved for servants. Eventually, she is pushed out of the house altogether, to the moral squalor of Mrs. Sinclair's brothel, to the officer's garret prison, to the Smiths', and finally to the confines of her coffin.

The final space of *Clarissa*'s to be discussed is the page, and the formal subdivisions of printed and grammatical space thereon. Richardson takes great care throughout to suggest a link between the original documents which comprise the correspondence of which he is the "editor", and their printed setting. From Lovelace's frostbitten jottings in the coppice, to the smudged, disordered writing of Clarissa in her illness, there is often a third dimension to the letters' expression of the state of their writers, and a sense in which *where* they were written defines the content, and its layout on paper.

In the first edition of *Clarissa* (1747-8), Richardson gave each of the three principal writers their own set of asterisks with which to divide their letters into discrete sections. He saw his printer's devices as defining features of his press, and was confident that "the Want of the same Ornaments" would expose pirated editions.[30] Clarissa's asterisks have a greater "female fancy" than the other two (she shares the device with Anna Howe, indicating that it is a gendered symbol), a circular femininity which suggests the daisy, and hence the Marguerite tradition. Lovelace's are elaborately phallic, suggesting his vanity. Belford's are horizontal and equivocal: either a lozenge between two circles, or leaves pointing left and right, which indicate his intermediary position between Lovelace and Clarissa. He shares his asterisks with Colonel Morden, which is appropriate given the accord between the two men, and their unity of purpose. The joining of a typographical device to Clarissa, Lovelace and Belford respectively suggests that the individuality of the printed characters of each asterisk relates to the *character* of each correspondent, and consequently to how they occupy space, both in life and letters. The different typographical boundaries are a visual assertion of the inextricable link between character and setting: after all, the tools with which the characters assert their sense of textual (and thereby temporal) parameters are given to them by Richardson the printer, just as the fictional settings they occupy are provided by Richardson the author. The resemblance of the asterisks to architectural decorations makes an aesthetic link between the filling of space on the square of the page, and the building designs which appealed to Augustan taste. Richardson's bibliographical playfulness allows the characters to approach the reader and occupy *real* space, by drawing attention to the relevance of the spatiality of the text itself.

★

---

30   Sale, *Master Printer*, pp.251-2.

The Role of Virtue in Ethics
Laura Harrison

Introduction
Virtue ethics is concerned with moral theories that focus on the character of the person, rather than a set of principles or actions, which one should follow. The main author of this concept, is widely considered to be Aristotle, whose *Nicomachean Ethics* focused much of its attention on the character of the virtuous person, particular virtues and a consideration of how one should live one's life morally. Virtue ethics gives virtue a dominant role in terms of morality, but is it right to do so? In order to work out what kind of a role, and how much importance, we should give to virtue, there are numerous things that must be considered: the benefits of looking at someone's character rather than their actions or principles, a comparison with rule or act-centred theories, what virtue consists of, what virtue ethics has to say about how to act in particular circumstances and whether an emphasis on virtue could work as a theory of morality, to name a few. Virtue ethics, a relatively recent revival of the ancient concept, is an agent-centred look at morality that has provided many with an alternative to the prominent theories of utilitarianism and universalizibility, which have dominated the history of ethics. However, I wish to argue that one need not choose one side or the other of the agent-centred vs. act-centred[1] debate concerning morality, and that a compromise, or at least a borrowing of ideas from one side to the other could provide a new way forward in the study of ethics.

I – The Focus on Character
When it is commonly believed that, like Gyges from Plato's *Republic*, most people, will act unjustly given the opportunity and freedom from repercussions, one can see why there is such a call for an ethics that pays most attention to the good of the agent. There have been many different interpretations of the relation between the good of a moral agent and morality itself, from Aristotle, who thought that the nature of human beings is perfected by the rational exercise of the virtues, to Philippa Foot, who seemed to think that human nature is often inclined towards the vices and that the virtues are required to be corrective.[2] So which angle should we come at this problem from – the belief that people are intrinsically inclined to be good or bad?

It seems to me that there is much evidence for arguing both sides, with examples like Gyges on the side of that bad, and Kant's sympathetic man on the side of the good. In judging this, it seems sensible to approach from a more neutral point of view, assuming that people can be inclined either way, but that human nature in general is not predisposed to either. Foot ascribes the idea of virtue to someone's will, stating that in a man of virtue it will be their will that is good.[3] This idea of the will primarily encompasses his intentions, the disposition of his heart, his innermost desires, his attitudes, the things he wishes for and those he seeks.

This focus on what the agent wants rather than the outcome of his actions is a promising start, because it seems to label as moral, those people who are fundamentally good people, and not just those who do the right action, or follow the right rule. A strong link can be found to Aristotle here, who believed that to do a virtuous action was not enough - it had to come from a virtuous disposition. Such a focus could work better than the focus on actions found in a

---

[1] Under the heading act-centered, I am including consequentialist and deontological theories as well as any rule-centered theories that provide rules to govern ones actions. By agent-centered, I mean theories that focus on the character of the agent, rather than the agent's actions.

[2] Foot, P. *Virtues and Vices* in Crisp, R. and Slote, M. *Virtue Ethics* (OUP 1997) p. 169-70

[3] Ibid p. 165

consequentialist theory of ethics, since it also allows as moral someone who wanted to act morally but failed in some way, which is in keeping with our modern perspective that one's heart has to be in the right place. So far so good in that an agent-centred theory of ethics seems to work best. However, this kind of theory also suffers from many problems.

II – What is Virtue?

One of the first problems that may come to mind is the question of what is virtue, and what it means to be virtuous? It's all well and good saying that we need a theory of morality based on the virtue of the agent but what does this virtue consist of? One of the suggestions has been that virtue is a kind of knowledge. McDowell proposes this view, offering suggestions as to what kind it could be. He first suggests that it is a kind of perceptual capacity, which enables him to judge the situation correctly – a kind of reliable sensitivity as to what kind of action/behaviour is required.[4] He suggests, however, that this idea of sensitivity will not work, because some people can judge the situation like the virtuous person but act otherwise, because of their desire.[5]

However I do not believe that this is the case, since a truly virtuous person, it seems to me, would have the desire to do the right action as well as the correct judgement about the situation. In this way I agree with Aristotle - that someone who had full understanding of the situation, who had fully deliberated about all of the options, is almost bound to make the decision that corresponds to the outcome of the deliberation and do the right action. Aristotle only allows that someone can desire to do the wrong action when they know the right one, if desire clouds their judgement over which line of reasoning to accept, and so a person who has the full capacity for judgement, which we consider virtue to be, could not have this clouding desire. He also relates the knowledge that is virtue to a practical syllogism, suggesting that the major premise could be the virtuous person's conception of how to live, and the minor premise, be the application to the current situation. However I feel that this explanation of the kind of knowledge that is virtue suffers from the difficulty that, unless there are some kind of rules involved in virtue ethics, which could give a general conception of how to live, one would be unable to know how apply it to specific occasions and therefore would not be able to form criteria for virtuous action.

We will see later that the idea of virtue ethics is able to accept some kind of rules, and so we can assume for now that the idea of the practical syllogism can work. In this way the kind of knowledge that virtue is takes the form of practical syllogism, and McDowell's idea of sensitivity is the perceptual capacity that one needs to translate the conception of how to live generally (the major premise of the practical syllogism) into a decision as to how to act on a specific occasion (the minor premise).

One problem that seems to remain for me in this discussion of virtue as knowledge, is that it does not seem to be enough. It seems to me that the virtuous person has to have some kind of inclination towards virtue and not just the kind that comes from the knowledge that one action is the right action in the situation. It also seems unlikely to me that someone could be naturally gifted in terms of having the perceptual capacity to evaluate the situation and a sensitivity to the situation, but instead would develop it over time. I must turn to Aristotle's doctrine of the mean at this point, since it includes not only the knowledge and consequent choice that we have considered is necessary for virtue, but also a person's habitual disposition.

---

[4] McDowell, J. *Virtue and Reason* in Crisp, R. and Slote, M. *Virtue Ethics* (OUP 1997), p. 142-4
[5] Ibid p. 145

The habitual disposition is one that is acquired after much time spent practising virtuous actions, and I think it is here that the inclination I am looking for can be found. One can only be develop such a virtuous disposition if someone is inclined towards virtue in the first place since we have to choose to do virtuous actions to gain the firm and settled disposition needed to be a virtuous person. Clearly more is needed than just knowledge for one to be virtuous, since an inclination towards it is also required. The importance of this addition lies in the fact that in order for someone to become reliably and fully virtuous, they will need a desire for virtuous action to ensure that they are inclined choose the correct action. Because, someone will not be fully virtuous until they have a perfect perceptual capacity for selecting the right action on every occasion, and a habitual disposition for it, they will need something further to ensure that they select the virtuous action on a regular basis and so are able to develop them both. So for me, virtue consists in knowledge, that is a kind of sensitivity to the situation and an inclination towards virtue which leads to a disposition for it.

II – How do we spot a virtuous character?
The second problem concerns the question of, how we are meant to judge someone's character. We cannot rely on what people say their will/intentions were or what kind of character they have, because people lie, misrepresent themselves, are self-deprecating and often modest, which means we will not get a clear picture of their character. Judaeo-Christian traditions do not suffer from this problem because they have an omniscient god, who judges everyone exactly as they are, but in these times of increasing atheism we cannot rely on such a concept of an infallible judge of character. We could however suggest that morality is based on how you actually are and not how you are perceived to be, and negate the need to label people as moral or not, but we encounter the difficulty of how we are meant to know what virtue is, or provide a paradigm of virtue if we have no way of judging people's characters effectively. With a theory of ethics that is based on something so internal to the agent, it is difficult to see how it could ever be implemented or perceived in the world. By turning to an explanation of what virtue is, we may shed light on the matter.

Usually we would consider actions as good indicators of character, since actions are often considered to be the manifestations of character and will. This is an appealing characteristic of consequentialist theories of ethics, since it is easy to see which people are moral, for it is easy to judge whether their actions conform to the criteria of morality. Aristotle suggests a solution to this problem in the *Nicomachean Ethics* when, in 2.4, he tells us that that virtuous action consists of three components: knowing what you are doing, choosing it for itself only, and acting from a firm and settled disposition. In this way we could see how action could display your character, since it shows your disposition, and it shows your will, through the choice you make. However this does not account for those who have a virtuous character and try to perform virtuous actions but for some reason fail, since we can only evaluate characters in this way if virtuous actions are successfully performed. Also, if we consider only actions we are in danger of ending up back at a theory of morality that is act-centred, which we were trying to avoid in the first place. In this way virtue ethics would need to provide a method of evaluating character, independent of actions, in order to provide a feasible theory of morality.

III – How do we use virtue ethics to choose the right action?
One of the most common charges that virtue ethics often faces is that it does not give us any indication of how we are meant to act in particular cases – it provides us with no criteria for right action. This is a charge that is often associated with supporters of rule-centred theories of morality, such as rule-utilitarianism, which suggest that there should be guidelines as to what are right or wrong actions, so we know how to act morally. But Aristotle would say that this is not enough – morally good action is only such if it is performed by a virtuous character,

something that rule-centred theories do not take into account. Further to this his theory does provide us with one example of how to solve the problem of how to act in particular cases, as we saw above, with his criteria of virtuous action. His theory still centres around the virtuous character, which is the firm and settled disposition that he speaks of, but he provides a way of translating this into a way of selecting virtuous action, by way of the practical syllogism, I discussed earlier.

Another view that has been suggested is that of Rosalind Hursthouse, who proposes that the reason that virtue ethics does not have a clear set of right and wrong actions - a criterion of right action - is that there is no such clear dividing line to be found.[6] There cannot be rules about which kinds of actions are right and which are wrong because there are no actions that are universally right or wrong. Right or wrong actions depend on the circumstances, the people involved and other such things, which makes them impossible to universalize. Anscombe also proposes a similar view. She suggests that the idea of things one ought to do is redundant now that many people no longer accept the idea of the divine law-giver, who gives us the rules that dictate which right or wrong action we must do.[7] If this is right then virtue ethics could be the only way forward, since it provides a criterion of morality in contrast to a criterion of right action, of which there can be no such thing. But before we commit ourselves to this view we must look at the matter more closely.

Hursthouse illustrates her point with the example of abortion, a highly discussed topic and one for which a right answer seems to be difficult to find. She discusses the idea that there are countless considerations which need to be taken into account to work out whether or not abortion is the right or wrong thing to do – and there can be no conclusion as to whether it is always the right or wrong thing, since it can be right or wrong depending on the case we are talking about. The main points that should be considered when talking about abortion can often be unclear. We talk of women's rights to their own body, but fail to acknowledge that just because we allow that women could have this moral right, does not mean that in exercising this moral right they cannot be doing something cruel or vicious.[8] So in fact women's rights are irrelevant to the question of whether in having an abortion a woman would be acting virtuously, viciously or neither.[9] The gradual development of the fetus is a relevant consideration to the morality of abortion, since it is difficult to be fully conscious of the existence of a fetus at an earlier stage in the pregnancy.[10] This implies that abortion in the earlier stages would be more acceptable.

However, I think that this idea needs to be pushed further, into a consideration of the cruelty or pain caused to the fetus during an abortion in the later stages of a pregnancy. For example, if someone wanted an abortion early on in their pregnancy because they did not want to raise a child, then this would be the right thing to do. If they waited until late on in their pregnancy, when the fetus has now developed pain receptors, because for some reason they did not have the abortion earlier, when they had initially made the decision that this would be the right thing for them, this would alter the status of the action, making it more vicious than an earlier abortion would have been. Other things that must be considered include how one got into such circumstances, and how one responds to or views the possibility of having a child. All the numerous considerations she suggests seem to point to the conclusion that there is no right or wrong answer as to whether abortion is morally right or wrong, it simply depends on the individual cases.

---

[6] Hursthouse, R. *Virtue Theory and Abortion* in Crisp, R. and Slote, M. *Virtue Ethics* (OUP 1997)
[7] Anscombe, G. *Modern Moral Philosophy* in Crisp, R. and Slote, M. *Virtue Ethics* (OUP 1997) , p. 30
[8] Hursthouse, R. *Virtue Theory and Abortion* in Crisp, R. and Slote, M. *Virtue Ethics* (OUP 1997), p. 235
[9] Idem
[10]Ibid, p. 239

For moral matters other than abortion it also seems that one can always find exceptions to the rule. The example of abortion indicates that these kind of moral rules may not work, since there is no such thing as a categorically right or wrong action. The idea of virtue comes in to fill this gap, because the ideally virtuous person would know what was right or wrong in that particular situation and act accordingly. Could this be a compelling reason to accept virtue ethics over rule-based ethics?

V – Conclusion: A Two Level Theory
While it seems to me that virtue ethics could be the best way forward in terms of finding a theory of morality, for someone who is not already ideally virtuous it may seem hard to figure out what the right way to live should be or on particular occasions how to act. Because of this I wish to propose a two-level theory which involves both rules about how to act and the idea of virtue. The theory would work as follows: On an everyday basis most people don't have the time to deliberate fully about what to do in certain situations or think about virtue and what the virtuous person would do. So, I would suggest, that we follow the conventional rules of morality where they seem uncontested in order to habituate someone to be a virtuous or more virtuous person, which will help them to gain the kind of knowledge that we discussed above was needed for virtue.

In difficult situations, such as the abortion case mentioned above, one should take time to deliberate everything about the situation independent of any rules of morality, in order to find the right action in the situation. While this will probably not make people ideally virtuous it will give them a way to become more virtuous, and so select more of the right actions and live the right life. Even if you do not accept my way of looking at virtue ethics, I still think that without any kind of guidelines at all, no matter how well we understand the concept of virtue, we won't know how to acquire it or how to select the right action in a certain situation. Because of this and considering human nature realistically, it might be more likely that people will generally choose the virtuous action if we follow rule-based theory of morality. Having said this, I think the ideal theory of morality would be one that places much emphasis on the character of the agent, but that also, if it cannot provide a criterion of right action (which I suspect it won't be able to since I do not think we can say that one kind of action is always right), should provide a way of judging the situation to help people decide in each particular case what is the right thing to do.

★

Western music and its '*internalised others*'; Modernism, Post-Modernist Experimentalism and the challenge of being the 'New'
Eldon Fayers

The History of Western Music can be viewed in one guise as the History of Styles. The progression from one style to another is one way of measuring changes in critical thinking about the Arts. This continuous transfiguration of style is a process that occurs not only in the practice of Art but also in the accompanying theory and philosophy. However, the often opposing positions of theory and practice consistently alter their discursive positions in aesthetic philosophy; theory begets practice and practice begets theory. This constant oscillation and debate came to define the Arts in the 20th century as 'style' became not a transition or development but a polemical stance. As a result more and more schisms occurred and Art became more democratized and fragmented. This article seeks to look at a few of those fragmented movements and examine their relative positions within their marginalization within Western Culture.

The definition of Western Music is, in its most conservative understanding, clarified as music pertaining to the European tradition. This general definition, comprises a further, conservative, category we call 'Art Music' that excludes what is defined as Popular music as well as Art music that does not 'fit' into the fixed canonic view of Culture – a view overwhelmingly shaped by the classic masterpieces from the past. New music, be it 'popular' or 'serious' was predominantly excluded from this musical pantheon. This exclusion of certain Art music types is a situation that arose within the musical mainstream and occurred soon after Modernism (for clarity it is useful to ally the 'modernist' term to the atonal Serialist music developed by Arnold Schoenberg in the first quarter of the 20th century. The moniker 'Modernism', as it was used in parallel movements in the visual and cinematic Arts, has no such concrete meaning in Music). With Modernism, music was no longer seen as going in a 'natural' direction by large parts of the cultural establishment. Instead the new developments in music were regarded more as an aggressive schism from what came before. Music turned in on itself and developed its own immobile 'museum'[1] of, ironically, popular cultural artefacts as a reaction against new music that was seen as being subversive and almost an anti-culture. This museum consisted of the old works – the Beethoven Symphonies, Verdi's Operas and Chopin's Piano works, amongst others, which fill our concert halls today. Through domination of the repertoire these works contributed towards the conservative situation of music in the 20th century.

This aggressive reception conservatism in the reception of music occurred in parallel alongside some of music's most radical innovations, the two opposing factions feeding off each other. The conservative construct of the musical canon required specific value judgment of the aesthetic worth of music and so was constrained within its own exclusive criteria. New music did not fit into this box, and so lost its cultural worth in the eyes of many. Instead it fell under the domain of the Avant-garde and the minority highbrow Arts. This caused the end of 'New' music being at the forefront of the musical landscape; no longer were new compositions the engine of dynamism. New music became the unspeakable 'Other', set apart from the musical orthodox. In addition, its affect upon the music that it claimed to be defending was, in turn, stagnation. At the same time, the canonic repertoire metamorphosed into cultural artefacts and ceased to be living, breathing works of Art. The polarized orientations of new music and historical works cemented themselves, and the dialectical discourse between the two lost energy. And so began the crisis of musical culture.

---

[1] 'The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works'. Lydia Goehr. Publ.1994

This crisis-centred view is a position that represents only one of the tools used to analyse the hegemony of canonic western culture. For the sake of examining the position of 'Art Music' now and over the last 50 years, however, it is necessary to play devil's advocate and use these conservative definitions of the 'right' kind of culture as a starting point for analysis. This is in order to gain a better understanding of the struggle of the 'New' to define itself in positive terms. This was in response to its marginalization and its increased aesthetic relation to the 'Other' in Western Art Music. This struggle witnessed the new 'serious' music gradually became the 'Other' in a dramatic repositioning of cultural values. Of course, regarding the use, and therefore acceptance of these conservative paradigms, it is imperative at the same time to continue the re-examination of the numerous issues affecting their validity. For sake of defining the long history of the 'Other' in stagnated Western culture, however, they serve a very useful purpose. These polarizations between different artistic factions are, obviously, nothing new. Various cultural views will and have always segregated themselves from the rest, this being the first step toward self-definition. However, for a long while the 'Other' had simply meant the inclusion of exotic sounds foreign to the bourgeois audience. Composers such as the Johann Strauss' in their waltzes, or Respighi in his Ballet music were all frequent employers of the 'Other'. With the arrival of Modernism, however, the definition of the 'Other' changed dramatically and in turn became a debate about the very essence of Art Music itself.

Although there have been battles over which direction music 'should' go before – most famously the dichotomy between Brahms and Wagner is seen as one that defined various aesthetic positions of late 19th century music – none has been more explosive than that over the definition of 'Modernism'. In order for the 'direction' debate to function in the first instance, it is necessary to maintain the assumption mentioned above that music has some intrinsic sentient and pneumatic identity. This essentially refers to the notion of the autonomous Artwork. Theodore Adorno's usage of this term (continued from Hegel's position on the matter) concerns the problem of mediation – the way a work (object) conveys its meaning to its audience (subject). For Adorno, mediation (in the negative sense) is distortion of direct meaning between object and subject. In the positive sense it is the actual process of conveyance of meaning between object and subject itself in which the work's 'truth content' (*Wahrheitsgehalt*) is sublimated to the audience. This would be, in simple terms, a perfect state of mediation that would allow for the integral autonomy of the Artwork and enable it to communicate directly with its audience, away from a compromised interpretive cultural context.

For the Modernists, the all-consuming historical debate on the 'direction' of Art and its relation to the social values it represents changed decisively. The discourse became instead a constant self-critical mediation of Subject and Object that was consequently amalgamated into the dialectic that took place within the autonomous works themselves. Thus the Modernists removed themselves from the public debate altogether as their music became a matter of highbrow philosophy at a critical distance from their audience. This aspect can essentially be seen as an attempt to the realization of Hegelian and Adornian philosophy. With this, the search for meaning or the identity of a musical work became a closed issue. It no longer needed an interpretative stance to illuminate it, as it conveyed all of its meaning directly within its own internal aesthetic discourse. In Hegelian terms this can be seen as the realization of the work's 'Spirit' (*Geist*), as for Hegel the work's 'Spirit' can be seen as unity, 'an 'I' that is a 'We' and a 'We' that is an 'I''.[2]

---

[2] G. Hegel, 'Phänomenologie des Geistes' in M. Paddison, 'Adorno's Aesthetics of Music' (1993),'The problem of mediation'.

However, Modernism, or the general perception of it, became marginalized as western music became a museum of cultural artefacts dealing almost exclusively with the tonal works of the past. The 'new' in music was no longer an inevitable evolution, but something to be aesthetically judged as being either right or wrong in the strongest ideological sense. This results in a view of a concept of Modernism that, according to Lyotard turned into an, 'ethical, implicitly political project'.[3] Lyotard specifically applies this thinking to the development of high-culture modernism – a definition that seeks to connect this new Modernism within a canonic tradition through affiliation with the concept of 'High-Culture', while still retaining its 'new' factor. Lyotard argues that a premise of the 'new' is progression and originality. These conditions arise from questioning the rules of predecessors. In the context of the creation of new creative works, this position can be interpreted in two ways.

The first presents an evolution that whilst 'new', still presents a tangible link with the past, the 'Other' presents a creative work in absolute opposition to what came before it. This is a simplistic nature of this definition when considering the two main reactions to Modernism. One is that the language used by composers Schoenberg and Webern is in such opposition to the harmony of tonality as to become the 'Other' (in this case sometimes perceived as the subordinate and dangerous) or that the said language is in fact a logical continuation and expression of what came before it. Schoenberg's aim in creating the new atonal musical language was not, in fact, to take music on a radically different trajectory. It was intended to be a conceptual rejuvenation of the German musical tradition. In this context Lyotard's definition of the 'new' becomes void due to unnecessarily strict parameters. Modernism essentially suffers from a historically oversimplified interpretation that doesn't consider the complexities and differences within the conceptual framework of Modernism.

With the Modernist debate focusing on the pure dialectic in Art came another, related, notion, according to Peter Franklin,[4] of the *internalized* 'Other' in music. This occurred later in the 20th century as a reaction to the rather finalized artistic language of Modernism and turned into an eclectic aesthetic, loosely defined as Post-Modernism. Post-Modernism (both the theory and the practice), according to P. Franklin, seeks to restore the complex nuances between different fields of cultural activity that Adorno – by drawing on a complex mediation of historical attitudes - treated as unitary; for example the concept of popular entertainment. Thus the main issue and endless crisis of Modernism, according to A. Huyssen,[5] is that it becomes the 'Other' of the culture ferment. In turn, the 'Other' music no longer came to be defined exclusively by that aspect of it were taken from other cultures, namely those that were non-western, but also by the concept of the 'Other' within its major canon. A more expansive dialectic replaced the strict Hegelian parameters.

An example of this is the Experimentalist tradition pioneered by John Cage and Cornelius Cardew in the second half of the 20th century. In order to consider that a core element of Experimental music is the 'Other', a short exploration of Experimentalism is needed. The term 'experimental' is often used to characterize unusual or avant-garde music of any sort. However, the phrase, 'experimental music' refers more specifically to a particular genre of vanguardist music developed in the U.S and U.K in the 1960s. Traditionally, in Western music the Composer has taken on an absolute role in the compositional process; the notion of authorship is an undisputed fundamental in the concept of Western music. The Composer structures and controls all aspects of a musical performance. Regarding 'experimental music',

---

[3] F. Lyotard, 'Modernism, Deception, and Musical others…' (P. Franklin) 'Western Music and its Others' p.143

[4] Franklin, Peter. "Audiences, Critics and the Depurification of Music: Reflections on a 1920s Controversy." *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 114, no. 1 (1989)

[5] F. Lyotard, 'Modernism, Deception, and Musical others…' (P. Franklin) 'Western Music and its Others' p.143

however, John Cage characterizes it as single or set of musical actions, 'the outcome of which is not foreseen'.[6] In Alvin Lucier's, 'Music on a Long Thin Wire', an 80-feet wire is suspended, set in motion with a sine wave oscillator and then amplified. Lucier described the event highlighting that 'all changes in volume, timbre, harmonic structure, rhythmic and cyclic patterning, and other sonic phenomena were brought about solely by the actions of the wire itself'. The experimental composer, then, designs a set of initial conditions, which could be technical, conceptual or social, and leaves them to take on a life of their own. Experimental music invites the listener into a self-determining scenario of evolving sounds rather than one that is composed for us in advance.

Brian Eno describes experimental music as 'operating as an evolutionary process.'[7] It begins with a particular set of sonic fundamentals or organizational elements. These elements are then submitted to environmental effects or aleatoric mutations that render the original organizational elements irrelevant and irreconcilable. The process is often open-ended, without a determined stopping point. The experimental composer initiates preliminary musical events but renders his or herself powerless to influence their evolution or self-perpetuating character. The composer's traditional autocratic creative role is transformed into an observational one. Against this movement and the broad notion of Post-Modernism in music, Modernism becomes yet another 'Other'. Furthermore, Experimental music arguably contains its own 'Other', in that it often, due to the indeterminate nature of its compositional premise, contains elements that are not the absolute product of the Composer's subjective mind. If Modernism represents the opposite cultural value to Popular music, Experimentalism avoids that particular problematic dichotomy. For the Western Canon, theory has been a means of justifying the canon's existence and exclusivity. Experimentalism represents the undermining of Music Theory as being a system of value judgment. Theory in Experimentalism remains just that, something hypothetical.

The issue of the use of the 'Other' as a decorative aspect of western musical language is one that has been heavily explored in the area of Edward Said's Orientalism. The 'Other' , is seen as both exotic and inferior by the ultra-modernists hell bent on the 'purity' of musical language, through its superficial use in Art and especially music. However, John Corbett attempts to redefine or at least open up a different understanding of the use of the 'Other' or non-western elements in western Art music in the 20th century.[8] He questions how the Oriental functions in the Experimental tradition and how legitimately we can regard it as being an essential part of a 'new' music as opposed to being a decorative aspect used to assert a cultural hegemony. Here J. Corbett seeks to prove the irrelevance of utopian separatism as causing the same problem that it seeks to solve. He argues that the move to unravel 'authentic' ethnic music from its 'hybridized' new forms can be seen as a reassertion of the, 'peculiar western power to define 'pure' expressions of cultural ethnicity as opposed to their tainted counterparts.' He believes that the Experimental tradition has given legitimacy to underlying compositional concepts that are taken from other cultures and used in the composition of western art works. He argues that there is a positive underlying, 'epistemic framework'[9] in Western Art that provides a context for Western Art Music's ability to turn to the music of other cultures. Corbett explicitly questions how Orientalism functions in the Experimental tradition and how specifically Orientalism takes its form in Experimental music.

---

[6] J. Cage, 'Composition as Process: Indeterminacy', 1958 Lecture, 'Silence'
[7] B. Eno, 'Generating and organizing variety in the Arts', Essay, 1976
[8] John Corbett, 'Experimental Oriental: New Music and other others', 'Western Music and its others' p.163
[9] ibid. p.165

Experimentalism, however, is not wholly informed by Orientalism influence. Experimentalism, especially in John Cage, uses specific concepts as a compositional fundamental rather than as a purely decorative aspect. Cage's music does not retain a clear aural semblance of the 'Oriental'. This is because he only deals with the core philosophical or ideological concepts as opposed to a more explicit language. This is a further subversion of the essential western concept that the Composer has an absolute controlling role in the creation of a work of art. Cage's application of what J. Corbett highlights as the use of the 'Oriental' in experimentalism is validated by his view of the use of non- western music and philosophy as a potential strategy for the disruption of the western preoccupation with harmony, structure and intentionality. Cage's increasing interest in the most general concepts of Zen Buddhism is based not on the acquisition of new sonic objects but concerned with posing unanswerable or indefinite musical questions. His use of what is called the musical 'Koan' – an unsolvable riddle or paradox used in Buddhism to derail rationality – is therefore not just an 'other' cultural acquisition that is merely demonstrated in his composition, but a conceptual essentiality.

J. Corbett asserts that Experimentalism has an essential indeterminate character. The indeterminate is seen as being the 'Other' and more of a cultural purchase from aleatoric procedures pieces based on the Chinese oracle 'I Ching' (book of changes). Through the use of the I Ching as an underlying concept, it was possible to eliminate the Western governing principle of structure and supplant stylistic taste with process. Cage sought to divorce composing from 'the mind as ruling factor'. This could be seen as an expression of zeitgeist in a very real sense, a recalcitrant musical force, and an attempt to liberate sounds from their social and political connotations. However, the experimental tradition has a distinctly different aesthetic to the indeterminate compositions of Modernism, even though both would fit Cage's definition of, 'outcomes not foreseen'. Interdeterminacy emerged from a 1950s 'avant-garde', represented by Stockhausen's 'Klavierstück XI' and Cage's 'Music of changes'. Indeterminacy represented a move away from a highly structured world of Serialism. On the other hand, experimental music originated later, in 1960s 'counterculture', and emerged as much from conceptual and performance art as from current compositional practices.

Essentially, though, the concepts of indeterminacy and experimentalism, within the context of Cage's work, stem from the same root. Cage developed a variety of techniques that would permit a relinquishing of control over his compositions, with the aim of inverting the role of the composer into one of listener and discoverer rather than author. Indeterminacy is arguably flawed and contradictory in its intention to relinquish control as it uses elements of determination, such as dice throwing, to inform performers in making choices of their own. The concept of physical sound taking on its own trajectory, as in Lucier's 'Music on a Thin Wire', untouched by human subjectivity, and therefore defined as 'experimental', is not honestly explored in indeterminacy.

In his essay, 'Composition as Process: indeterminacy', Cage criticizes indeterminate compositions as being too vulnerable to subjective interpretation and therefore determined by our own subliminal, preconceived inclinations. In 'Klavierstück XI', Stockhausen provides the performer with a large manuscript consisting of a series of note groupings. The instruction is then for the performer to choose from amongst these groupings in order to create the performed work. In this piece the instrumentalist's freedom is as a function of the combinative nature of the work. The structure allows the performer to play the sequence of series in his own subjectively chosen order. In Luciano Berio's Sequenza for Solo Flute, the performer is provided with a text that predetermines the sequence and intensity of the sounds to be played. However, the performer is free to choose how long to hold any one note

inside the 'fixed' structure imposed on him which is itself determined by the fixed pattern of the metronome's beat. Cage criticizes these works in his essay, including his own 'Music of Changes', created as a performance through a process of coin-tossing, as 'indeterminate with respect to their composition….but determinate with respect to their performance'.[10] Cage is arguing that such compositions do not allow the same freedom to the performer that they allow to the composer. Cage proposes a more radical indeterminacy, in which compositions are absolutely indeterminate with respect to their performance. Arguably Cage points the way to a musical concept that would move the idea of indeterminacy more clearly in the direction of experimentalism; when compositions are conveyed not as indeterminate objects but as indeterminate processes.

Essentially the concept of 'Other' in music has become an issue clouded by the impossibility of defining that 'Other' against any fixed concept. The Western Musical Canon has traditionally been the measurement but no longer represents anything of fixed cultural value. J. Fabian argues that, 'cultural anthropology tends to position its object at a temporal distance from itself, even when the people in question are contemporaneous with the inquirer'.[11] This highlights a fundamental issue both for those concerned with a critique of the 'Other' in Western Music and also those involved in its creation. On one hand it supports criticism of the 'other' processes used in the construction of Experimental Music especially J. Corbett's assertion that the, 'Cloak of ideological blankness does not hide the underlying value system'.[12] On the other hand it can be used to highlight that the intention of the Experimentalists is not to imitate but to *regard*, albeit at a certain cultural distance. Although Experimentalists have often defined the Oriental as a generalized set of potential 'new musical resources', it is also a more expansive term that, through debate and analysis, allows Western Music to reconsider *itself* as the 'Other' with a positive outcome.

The cultural hegemony of the West is founded in the past. Its deconstruction is of utmost importance. The 'dominance' of Western culture not only infringes upon other diverse cultures, it also discourages innovation within and therefore results in cultural stagnation with a focus on the past. This reconsideration of cultural positions and identities is one that spills over into the West's gradual reassessment of its identity in the wake of political and cultural power shifting elsewhere. The question of cultural identity for a globalised, and increasingly 'weakened' West is an issue that goes beyond a purely aesthetical concern for the world of Music.

★

---

[10] J. Cage, 'Composition as Process: Indeterminacy', 1958 Lecture, 'Silence'
[11] John Corbett, 'Experimental Oriental: New Music and other others', 'Western Music and its others' p.170
[12] ibid.p169

Talking whilst driving: A discussion of the difficulties of dual task performance
Alexander Brown

The need to process two tasks at once in everyday life is both common and sometimes a necessity. In other instances, it is merely convenient, such as talking on a mobile phone whilst driving a car. In some dual-tasking activities there is a deficit in one task or the other as a result of completing the two tasks simultaneously. This article will cover the nature of the dual task of talking while driving and its associated risks, and then attempt to link the constraints found in dual-tasking problems from laboratory studies to explain the deficit found when talking and driving.

Image: Public domain

It is a well-known fact that it is difficult to perform two tasks at once. One such difficulty encountered in everyday life is talking on a mobile phone whilst driving. Whilst this at first may not seem a hard dual-task, there is a marked increase in vehicle accidents as a result of combining these activities. There has been mass media coverage of this problem, with several ad campaigns being produced designed to raise peoples' awareness of the danger of using a mobile phone whilst driving, and current legislation bans the use of hand-held mobiles whilst driving a vehicle. Findings that led to this ban include that of Redelmeier and Tibshirani (1997), who note in their epidemiological study of mobile phone records that there is a fourfold increase in the risk of an accident when using a mobile phone (indeed showing a similar increase in accident likelihood to that of driving under the influence of alcohol). The Mobile Phone Report (2002) showed that braking distances when using a hand-held mobile phone were on average over 14m longer than normal when travelling at 70mph.

The difficulty of driving and talking at the same time may not be present for all aspects of driving however, with little decrease in performance seen on "automatic" aspects of driving. No detrimental effect was found for performance on speed, distance from the middle of the road, the mean decision time at when emerging from side-roads (Spence & Read, 2003), or steering (Brown, Tickner & Simmonds, 1969). Redelmeir et al. (1997) suggest that the driving/talking deficit is not a result of loss of manual dexterity but instead a loss of cognitive and attentional resources. Horswill and McKenna (1999) state that driving studies demonstrate that there is an impairment in risk-taking judgements including judging gaps, close following, and gap acceptance when performing a secondary concurrent verbal task. This suggests that these dynamic risk-taking decisions are not automatic, and indeed the interference caused by completing a verbal task at the same time increases individuals' propensity to take risks.

Treat, Turnbas and McDonald (1977) identify inattention as one of the leading causes in car accidents, and in a study of Israeli bus drivers the link is made between attentional capacity and number of accidents per year (Kahneman, Ben-Ishai, & Lotan, 1973). Kahneman et al.'s study found that the performance of accident-prone drivers' (those who had been involved in more accidents per year compared to their colleagues - unrelated to using a mobile phone) performance was significantly worse on "shadowing tasks" (which requires participants to

repeat sentences spoken to them via headphones out loud). Moreover Strayer and Drews (2004) found that even when participants looked directly at objects in the driving environment, they were less likely to create a durable memory of those objects if they were conversing on a mobile phone, suggesting that very little semantic analysis of the objects occurs outside the restricted focus of attention, and supporting the idea that the driving/talking deficit stems from inattention.

Laboratory research into dual-tasking activities provides some explanations into why people experience this inattention to driving whilst talking. McLeod (1978) found that different types of task require different neural resources within the brain and hence two similar tasks completed at the same time are likely to cause interference. This would suggest that the tasks of driving and talking are similar; yet they do not involve the same senses (visual information is thought to contribute around 90% of driving input, (Sivak, 1996)), so it seems McLeod's findings alone are not sufficient to explain the distraction effect. Pashler (1994) took a different approach by breaking mental processing down into three stages; perceptual processing, response selection, and execution. Pashler states that we can deal with two tasks effectively if their outputs are of different modalities (such as movement and speech) or if the input from the task contains different information (as per McLeod's findings). Thus, the interference factor of talking whilst driving must stem from the response selection stage, where the brain is still processing the appropriate response to make to the first stimulus. This effect is dubbed the psychological refractory period (PRP), and is said to be an unavoidable effect that cannot be overcome - a bottleneck in processing. However in Pashler's study his participants are completing single dual-tasks at discrete intervals, rather than continuous dual-tasks such as driving and talking, suggesting there are other factors contributing to the deficit in attention.

Research has shown that some dual-tasks can be modulated by practice. Beilock, Bertenthal, McCoy and Carr (2004) showed that experienced golfers could in fact putt with increased accuracy if their attention was distracted. Also Allport, Antonisa and Reynolds (1972) observed that expert pianists were able to shadow speech whilst sight-reading, with no deficit in their playing. Allport et al.'s study suggests that the pianists have become so skilled and practiced at sight-reading that their brains are able to process other information at the same time as playing. These findings may explain the result that "automatic" driving was unaffected by talking.

Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI) studies show a differentiation in brain activation for tasks that are dissimilar. Adcock, Constable, Gore and Goldman-Rakic (2000) scanned participants completing aural "noun" tasks and visual "space" or "face" tasks and found differential cerebral activation between the tasks, namely activation of Brodmann areas 10/46, and posterior visual areas respectively. These different activations suggest that executive processes are mediated by interactions between anatomically distinct systems. Counter to these results, Just, Kellar, and Cynkar (2008) showed in their analysis of 29 participants at Carnegie Mellon University that there was a 37% reduction in brain cell firing in the parietal lobe (which is associated with spatial processing tasks), when the participants in simulated driving tasks concurrently listened to sentences. In addition to activation of speech areas, there was also a reduction of activity in spatial, visual and motor areas; enough to cause participants to make errors in the simulator. As driving and listening draw on resources from two different brain networks it would be expected from Adcock et al. that these networks could work independently on each task. Just et al. state that their study shows that there is only so much that the brain can do at one time; no matter how different the two tasks are.

The idea of the brain having a limited processing capacity is noted in Wickens's (1984) model of multiple brain resources theory, in which Wickens divides the brain into separate processing areas for auditory, visual, spatial, verbal, manual and vocal input. This model would suggest that a perfect separation of attention should be possible while executing the tasks of driving and talking; driving is visual, spatial and manual, whereas talking is auditory, vocal and verbal. In a revision of the model Wickens (1991) notes some caveats; namely that the model only applies to concurrent tasks (such as holding lane position) and not discrete task performance (such as responding to hazards), and under sufficiently demanding conditions resources can be transferred. The concept of transferral of resources under demanding conditions may explain the results from Just et al. (2008), as the majority of all information used in driving being approximately 90% visual).

In sum, there is clear evidence that constraints on dual task performance exist in the situation of talking whilst driving. This in itself appears to be an attentional problem that adversely affects risk-taking and judgements. Whilst the findings from McLeod (1978) do not help to explain this effect, Pashler's (1994) PRP theory suggests that the root cause of the problem stems from response selection. Beilock et al. (2004) and Allport et al. (1972) provide an explanation for why automatic driving skills are not impaired, and fMRI studies demonstrate that when talking and driving there is reduced activation of the areas used when driving alone, even despite the differences in the modality of the tasks. Whilst the original Wickens model does not explain the interference of talking and driving, the new revised model with additional caveats largely accounts for the effect. The extent to which the constraints on dual task performance identified in the laboratory account for the difficulties people encounter in talking whilst driving appear to be fairly extensive. Indeed, by making use of the laboratory information studies, Spence and Read (2003) have designed systems which help to reduce the effect of the dual-tasking deficit whilst talking and driving; drawing also on recent findings showing that there are extensive cross-modal links in spatial attention.

★

References:

Adcock, A., Constable, T., Gore, J. C., & Goldman-Rakic, P. S. (2000). Functional neuroanatomy of executive processes involved in dual-task performance. *PNAS, 97 (7),* 3567-3572.

Allport, A., Antonisa, B., & Reynolds, P. (1972). On the division of attention: A disproof of the single channel hypothesis. *The Quarterly Journal of Experimental Psychology, 24 (2),* 225-235.

Beilock, S. L., Bertenthal, B. I, McCoy, A. M., & Carr, T. H. (2004). Haste does not always make waste: Expertise, direction of attention and speed versus accuracy in performing sensorimotor skills. *Psychonomic Bulletin & Review, 11 (2),* 373-379.

Brown, I. D., Tickner, A. H., & Simmonds, D. C. V. (1969). Interference between concurrent tasks of driving and telephoning. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 53,* 419-424.

Direct Line Motor Insurance (2002). The mobile phone report: A report on the effects of using a 'hand-held' and 'hands-free' mobile phone on road safety. Retrieved January 27, 2008, from http://info.directline.com/.../bec9c738833c7fb180256b84002dec5f/$FILE/Mobile%20Phone%20Report.pdf

Horswill, M. S., & McKenna, F. P. (1999). The effect of interference on dynamic risk-taking judgments. *British Journal of Psychology, 90,* 189-199.

Just, M. A., Kellar, T. A., & Cynkar, J. (2008). A decrease in brain activation associated with driving when listening to someone speak. *Brain Research, 1205,* 70-80.

Kahneman, D., Ben-Ishai, R., & Lotan, M. (1973). Relation of a test of attention to road accidents. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 58,* 113-115.

McLeod, P. (1978). Does probe RT measure central processing demands? *Quarterly Journal of Experimental Psychology, 30,* 83-89.

Pashler, H. (1994). Dual-task interference in simple tasks: Data and theory. *Psychological Bulletin, 116,* 220-244.

Redelmeier, D. A., & Tibshirani, R. J. (1997). Association between cellular-telephone calls and motor vehicle collisions. *New England Journal of Medicine, 336,* 453-458.

Sivak, M. (1996). The information that drivers use: Is it indeed 90% visual? *Perception, 25,* 1081-1089.

Spence, C., & Read, L. (2003). Speech shadowing while driving: On the difficulty of splitting attention between eye and ear. *Psychological Science, 14,* 251-256.

Strayer, D. L., & Drews, F. A. (2004). Profiles in driver distraction: Effects of cell phone conversations on younger and older drivers. *Hum. Fact. 46,* 640-649.

Treat, J. R., Turnbas, N. S., & McDonald, S. T. (1977). Tri-level study of the causes of traffic accidents. Final Report on U. S. Department of Transportation Contract No. DOT-HS-034-3-535-770.

Wickens, C. D. (1984). Processing resources in attention. In R. Parasuraman, & R. Davies (Eds). *Varieties of Attention* (pp. 63-101). New York: Academic Press.

Wickens, C. D. (1991). Processing resources and attention. In D. Damos (Eds). *Multiple Task Performance* (pp. 3-34). Washington, DC: Taylor and Francis.

Writing Up: How to survive your PhD
Dr Nina Alphey, Postdoctoral Research Fellow, St Anne's College, submitted her DPhil thesis in 2009

The thought of writing up a DPhil thesis can be daunting. To make matters worse, there is often some looming deadline, such as the end of your student funding or the start of a postdoc position, which limits the time available and adds to the pressure. There are many sources of advice on writing up a PhD thesis. Your supervisor will be your main port of call, but a range of advice from different quarters should help.

From this…   **_…to this_**
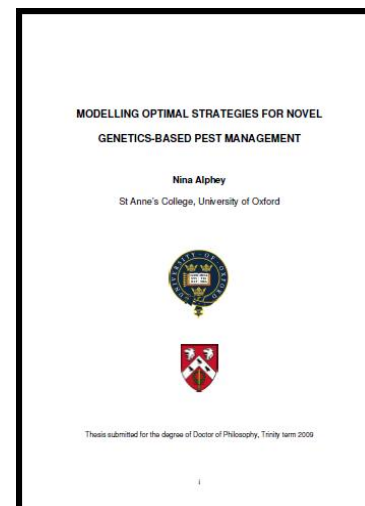
Images: Daria Luchinskaya (LHS), Nina Alphey (RHS)

The Vitae web site (strapline "realising the potential of researchers") has advice on thesis writing (www.vitae.ac.uk/pgrthesis) as well as more general tips and advice to help you through a PhD (register for the mailing list at www.vitae.ac.uk/pgrtips). There are many self-help books available too – examples are listed below. Be careful, though. If, like me, you are the kind of person who could easily have spent more time at school drawing up and colouring in a revision timetable than actually revising for the exams, then such books can be a big distraction. Instead of seeking out a particular recommended book and reading it from cover to cover and then repeating with another book mentioned in that first one, just pick up the first one you can and flick through the chapter on thesis writing, scanning for what are likely to be the parts most relevant to you. Much of it will be common sense anyway; you are looking for the few gems that make a difference to you.

Go to your supervisor's shelf or subject library and flick through a few recent theses in a similar area, to get a feel for what the finished product should look like. For one or two, sketch out what is in them and how they are put together and translate those into what your thesis will look like. The overall structure varies, especially between subjects, but will often be an introduction, some kind of background, methods, results or findings, discussion and/or conclusion. Find out what is normal in your field and think about whether that fits your work. Is there usually a separate "literature review" or is prior work usually referenced from within each substantive chapter? Are methods set out in a separate chapter as is often the case for laboratory-based experimental research) or will each chapter contain its own? The overall framework should tell a story; Cryer likens it to reporting on an expedition having returned from a voyage of discovery. Having a good overall plan makes it much easier both to get through the whole writing up process (Marshall and Green note that doing a PhD is more like a war of attrition than a single heroic assault) and to get "from pieces to thesis" at the end.

You should also sketch out the content of each chapter before you write it. Set out its purpose, link it with other knowledge (including earlier and later chapters of your thesis), specify the work you carried out and describe its outcomes. The introduction should set the scene and indicate what to expect from the rest of the thesis. The general discussion or conclusion draws all the strands together, shows how your work fits into the wider body of knowledge, and looks to the future (imagine there were plenty of time and funding available and write about what could be done next, even if you know you are going off to do something entirely different). Turn that outline in your head into a list of headings, sub-headings and bullet points as a first step to writing that chapter. This can be especially helpful if you are confronted with writer's block.

Writing a thesis, viewed from the start, is a huge task. Getting started can present a problem. There are tricks and tips to help with this. Use anything you already have, including papers, your report for Transfer or Confirmation of Status, notes you made when reading key papers, posters that you created or talks you prepared, however informal. Use "salami tactics" – break a huge task down into small manageable chunks and pick those off one at a time. Don't start at the beginning, start with something easy, such as describing materials and methods for the piece of work you are most comfortable and familiar with. As something begins to take shape, your confidence grows. Even with a good plan, some details change and the thesis can evolve as you write, review, edit and get feedback, so leave the overview and summing up parts until you have a good idea how the substantive chapters have turned out. I suggest you don't edit and polish your rough draft introduction until quite late on and leave the general discussion/conclusion and abstract until near the end.

Agree an approach with your supervisor in advance, at least in outline. This need not be an overall timetable; a rigid schedule may hinder more than help at this stage, although a rough one can help judge how realistic you are being. It is a good idea to find out what your supervisor hopes and expects to see, at what stage of drafting and roughly how many drafts of the various parts he or she is willing to consider. He is unlikely to be impressed to receive an entire polished thesis for the first time only a week before the absolute final deadline for handing it in! Ask if there are any crucial periods when he or she will be away or busy.

As far as I can tell, everyone finds that writing up takes longer than they expected. So allow plenty of time. For example, it took me a week just to glue all the separate chapters together with a single combined bibliography, a table of contents and lists of figures, tables, etc. Reformatting existing material can likewise take ages, so try to minimise this. Set up a template (easily done in Word or LaTeX, for example) with the right margins, font sizes, heading and sub-heading styles, etc, and write (or paste pre-existing material) into that. Check the University guidance (http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/gso/forms/#_Toc27557430) and specific requirements for your subject before making a start. Plot out the rough size of each of your chapters bearing in mind the overall word or page limits. Allow time to redraft, refine and polish and take account of feedback from your supervisor and others. It is a good idea to put a newly drafted chapter to one side for a few days then return to it in editorial mode to read it through, make any obvious improvements, check the narrative flow, edit out any unnecessary padding, plug a few gaps you may have left for later, and so on.

It can also be hard to know when to stop, especially if you have perfectionist tendencies. There will always be more work you could do – put those extra ideas on a separate list or into a shoe box for later.

A thesis littered with spelling mistakes and poor language will be hard to read and may annoy your examiners. But a few typos here and there or slight differences in how figures align are not going to interfere with anyone's understanding of the content and are not worth spending a lot of time seeking out and tweaking. It might be that only a few people will ever read your thesis (you, your supervisor, and your examiners) – it could help to remind yourself of that any time you are inclined to get carried away.

If you know your time management is poor, get some tips and advice specifically on that. One key aim is to avoid distractions and focus on the goal, i.e. spend your time working on the thesis rather than other things. For example, use carrots (rewards) and sticks (punishments) to motivate yourself, and choose things that will work for you personally. Another broad aim is to work more efficiently and productively in the time that you do have. Figure out which times of day (or night) are the best for you to do certain kinds of work – reading, thinking deeply about difficult issues, turning rough notes into formal prose, repetitive tasks such as reformatting or organising your bibliography entries in Endnote, etc. Take periodic short breaks (or change activity), eat proper meals and drink sufficient fluids, regularly get a good night's sleep, do some exercise, and all the other sensible things you know about but for some reason don't apply in practice. Find a suitable place or places to work - not too hot or cold, comfortable (but not too comfortable), distraction-free – and arrange the materials you need for the current task around you for convenient access. Don't work where you sleep. Try to have a regular special place where you write, be that the office, desk at home, or a particular spot in the library.

Draw on your support network. Collectively, your friends, relatives and colleagues have a vast capacity to read or proof-read your work and to help you stay focussed and meet your deadlines. There are also people within College and the University to help you stay on track, for example by dealing with stress. Keep in mind the ultimate goal. Many students will tell you that the satisfaction of seeing your complete, printed and (temporarily) bound thesis is one of the highlights of doing a PhD, and for some people submitting it for examination can be even more rewarding than hearing "Congratulations Dr [your name]" at the end of the viva. I suggest you plan your celebrations to include something really nice as a reward to yourself soon after submitting your thesis to the Exam Schools. It is an impressive achievement, and you will be entitled to grin about it for days or weeks after that, with knowing smiles from your friends and colleagues who got there before you and wistful anticipation from those who are still on their way there.

★

Some useful books:
"How to write a thesis", Murray (ISBN 978 0 335 21968 3 / 0335207189)
"How to get a PhD", Phillips and Pugh (ISBN 033520550X)
"The Research Student's Guide to Success", Cryer (ISBN 0335206867)
"Your PhD companion", Marshall and Green, (ISBN 1857039483)
"The unwritten rules of PhD research", Rugg and Petre (ISBN 0335213448)

Appendix

Here you can find a list of all the past speakers at the St Anne's Lunchtime Discussion Groups, as well as the list of speakers at the Subject Family Events 2009-10.

St Anne's Lunchtime Discussion Groups: Past Speakers
Arts and Humanities Discussion Group, 2009-2010

Tim Gardam
Principal of St Anne's College
'Broadcasting in a Digital World'

Dr Tristram Hunt
Lecturer in History, Queen Mary University of London
'Manchester, Engels and the Making of Marxism.'

Prof Sheila Rowbothom
University of Manchester
'Edward Carpenter: A Life of Liberty and Love'

Prof Tony Shaw
Professor of Contemporary History, University of Hertfordshire
'George Orwell, the CIA and Cold War Movies'

Prof Sally Shuttleworth
Head of Humanities Division, University of Oxford
'Defending the Humanities'

Isabel Vasseur
Director of ArtOffice
'Developing the Public Art Movement in Britain'

Michael Sibly
Secretary of Faculties and Academic Registrar, University of Oxford
'What are universities for, and who should pay for them?'

Dr Mark Wheeler
Reader in London Metropolitan University
'The Hollywood- Washington relationship and celebrity political engagement.'

Michael Stanley
Director of Modern Art Oxford
'During the exhibition the gallery will be closed: place and context in contemporary art.'

Dr Julian Stallabrass
Reader in The Courtauld Institute of Art
The Branding of the Museum.'

Sue Sharpe
Freelance Social Science Researcher
'Modern Motherhood: Pleasure and Pressure.'

Dr Gareth Davies
Fellow and Tutor in American History, St Anne's College
'Hurricane Katrina in Historical Perspective: The History of American Responses to Natural Disasters.'

Dr David Smith
Vice-Principal and Librarian of St Anne's College
'The St Anne's Book of Hours and other Library treasures'?

Prof Patrick McGuinness
Professor of French and Modern Literature, St Anne's College
'Modern War Poetry'

Dr Adrian Bingham
Senior Lecturer in History, University of Sheffield
'Sex, sensation and scandal? Reflections on historical research into the popular press.'

Dr Branwen Hide
Liaison and Partnership Officer at the Research Information Network
'The Future of Research? Research in a digital age.'

Dr Andrew Klevan
University Lecturer in Film Studies, St Anne's College
'Internalising the Musical.'

Dr Matthew Reynolds
Fellow and Tutor in English Language and Literature, St Anne's College; Leverhulme Major Research Fellow 2006-9
'Designs for a Happy Home: A Novel in Ten Interiors.'

Dr Pierre Purseigle
Lecturer in Modern History, Director of the Centre for First World War Studies, University of Birmingham. Visiting Lecturer (Maître de conférences), Institut d'Etudes Politiques, Paris
' Uneasy Balance: Reflections of a First World War Historian on Scholarship and Memory.'

Jackie Ashley
Columnist & political interviewer, The Guardian
'The Cameron-Clegg Coalition - Can it Last?'

James Attlee
Author of *Isolarion: A Different Oxford Journey*, Tate
'The Art of Everyday Life.'

★

Sciences Discussion Group, 2009-2010

Prof Armand Leroi
Evolutionary Developmental Biology, Imperial College London, Author and TV presenter
'The War Against Banality And Untruth.'

Prof Dame Louise Johnson FRS
Molecular Biophysics Laboratory, University of Oxford
'Women in Crystallography: Why so Many?'

Dr Chris Lavy
Nuffield Department of Orthopaedic Surgery, Oxford
'African Children with Physical Impairment - Can we be scientific and apply numbers?'

Prof Ian Goldin
Director of the James Martin 21st Century School, Oxford
'Challenges of the 21st Century'

Prof Steve Jackson
University of Cambridge & BBSRC's Innovator of the Year
'Commercialization of academic science: How actively should this be pursued and how can an individual academic scientist get the balance right?'

Dr Michael Bonsall
Reader in Zoology and University Lecturer in Mathematical Biology
'What is the role of scientific information in Government?

Dr Matthew Freeman, **FRS**
Head of Division of Cell Biology, MRC Laboratory of Molecular Biology Cambridge; Member of the Executive Committee of the Campaign for Science and Engineering (formerly Save British Science)
'Making a CaSE for science, or how to punch above your weight when lobbying government.'

Prof Brian Cox
Royal Society URF, School of Physics and Astronomy, University of Manchester & Large Hadron Collider at CERN; also TV presenter and former keyboard player with rock bands Dare and D'Ream
'The importance of "BIG science"'

Prof John Mumford
Professor of Natural Resource Management and Head of Centre for Environmental Policy at Imperial College London, Chairman of GB Non-native Species Risk Analysis Panel
'How we do invasive species risk analysis, well and almost well.'

Prof David Macdonald DSc FRSE
Professor of Wildlife Conservation, Director of WildCRU, University of Oxford
'Of mice and men - a view of wildlife conservation.'

Prof Sir Tim Hunt FRS
Nobel Laureate in Physiology or Medicine 2001; Group Leader, Cancer Research UK London Research Institute
'How to win a Nobel Prize!'

Joseph Winters
Senior Press officer, Institute of Physics
'*Making Science News.*'

Dr Evan Harris
MP for Oxford West & Abingdon, Liberal Democrat Science Spokesman (2005-); sits on the House of Commons Science and Technology Select Committee (2003-), and the Joint Committee on Human Rights (2005-)
'Science and Policy.'

Prof Marian Stamp Dawkins
Professor in Animal Behaviour, Department of Zoology, University of Oxford
'The future of farming.'

Prof Sunetra Gupta
Professor of Theoretical Epidemiology, Department of Zoology, University of Oxford; Novelist & translator
'Adventures in science & literature.'

Prof Sir Martin Taylor FRS
Professor in Pure Mathematics, University of Manchester; recent Physical Secretary and Vice President of the Royal Society; Member of Council of EPSRC; Incoming master of Merton College, Oxford (from Oct 2010)
'The Scientific Century: securing our future prosperity.'

Prof Charles Godfray FRS
Hope Professor, Department of Zoology, University of Oxford; President, British Ecological Society; member, NERC Council; Chair, the Lead Expert Group of the Foresight Food and Farming Project
'Food Security: The Challenge of Feeding 9 Billion People.'

★

Subject Family Events: Past Speakers, 2009-10

Wednesday 18th November 2009

Ms Hilary Kalmbach, DPhil Student:
'History as a Hobby in Interwar Egypt: Memoirs, Modernity and the Taqwim Dar al` Ulum Yearbook'

Dr Brian Ball, Tutor in Philosophy:
'Meaning, Truth, and Existence'

Dr Martin Harry, Fellow and Tutor in Music:
'From Grundriß to Aufriß: The impact of Stalinist architecture on my composition Eingestellt'

Wednesday 25th November 2009

JC Gonzalez, Graduate Student in Zoology:
'Conserving Rainforest Birds in the Philippines: the Hottest of Hot-Spots'

Dr Andrew Goodwin, Fellow and Tutor in Chemistry:
'Atomic Yoga: the Science of Flexibility'

Dr Richard Bomphrey, EPSRC Career Acceleration Fellow, Research Fellow, St Anne's College
'Aerodynamics and Flight Performance in Insects'

Tuesday 9th February 2010

Dr Imogen Goold, Fellow and Tutor in Law:
'Do You Own Your Body Parts?'

Nicholas Randel, MPhil Comparative Government*:
'Judicial Politics in New Democracies: Case Studies from Southern Africa'*

Ben Newton, MSc Education: *'Educational Responses to Flooding in New Orleans and Hull'*

Wednesday 25th February 2010

Christina Mayer, DPhil student:
'Malarial Proteins: How do they look and what do they do?'

Vaughan Dutton, DPhil student: *'Few come out though many go in: Fever mortality in the Royal Navy anti〼 slavery squadron, West Coast of Africa'*

Dr Peter Judge ,Stipendiary Lecturer in Biochemistry: *'The Viral Ion Channels of HIV-1 and Influenza A'*

Special Guest external dinner speaker Professor Chris Lavy, Visiting Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery at the Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre: *'Setting up a Hospital and Surgical Research Centre in Malawi – the academic, the practical and the romantic'*

Monday 10th May 2010

Jim Thompson, DPhil student: *'A novel structure for low cost silicon photovoltaics'*

Dr Isabelle Comte, post-doctoral researcher:
'Galectin-3 modulates adult subventricular zone neuroblast migration'

Dr Renata Pieragostini, Junior Research Fellow in Music at St Anne's: *'Medieval composers as witnesses of political events: an episode in the Western Schism and an English motet'*

★

STAAR Submission Guidelines

The activities of the vibrant research community here at St Anne's inspired us to collect a wide range of articles into a multi-disciplinary e-journal. We want to encourage academic debate between the SCR, MCR and JCR, help you build up your research profile, and give others an insight into your work.

- We are looking for submissions of up to 2,000 words* in length. Your article should give an overview of your subject area, your interests, and of the contribution that your research is making to your field, as well as any illustrations or photographs.
- We are also looking for short reports of up to 500 words on prizes or scholarships, research trips, conference papers or seminars.
- We welcome reviews of up to 500 words of the MOLT gallery exhibitions, St Anne's music recital series and recent books published by St Anne's fellows.
- The journal is aimed at a broad audience, so please ensure that your article is accessible for non-specialists.
- If you are an undergraduate with a fascinating essay, a postgraduate with an intriguing thesis, or a Fellow with some thought-provoking research, then please get in touch!
- Please read the checklist for submissions.
  * Word count intended as a guide.

For questions and further details please contact:
staar@st-annes-mcr.org.uk

The STAAR editing process
STAAR carries out both factual and stylistic editing. Where appropriate, the article will be reviewed by specialists, including the SCR if they wish. The editing changes will be discussed with you by email correspondence. For these reasons, we ask you to submit your contributions as a word document.

Note on STAAR Copyright
Publishing in STAAR will not prevent you publishing elsewhere.
Please contact your department for appropriate style guide.
All photographs and images are the property of their respective authors unless otherwise indicated.
© 2010, STAAR – St Anne's Academic Review, St Anne's College

Web: http://www.st-annes-mcr.org.uk/staar.php

STAAR: St Anne's Academic Review

Issue 2 – Autumn 2010