New Books

This very worthwhile and interesting book by Greg Currie and Ian Ravenscroft is about imagination—specifically about our ability to use our imagination to shift perspective and to recreate other people's mental states. It is in three parts. I will say something about each of these, and then I will make a few general comments before ending with a question.

Part I is called 'Imagination and Its Circle'. If I imagine seeing an orange, this is a state of 'recreative imagination': it is an imagining that has as its 'counterpart' a state of visual perception. Currie and Ravenscroft very helpfully distinguish here between the character and the content of an imagining. The notion of character would seem in part to be concerned with phenomenology, and also with the psychological role that the imaginative state's counterpart plays. Visualizing (imagining seeing) an orange has a visual character, but the imagining need not have a vision as part of its content (p. 12); it could have the same content as seeing an orange. Visualizing an orange differs in character from imagining (or supposing) that there is an orange in front of me; the latter is a kind of propositional imagining: specifically it is a belief-like imagining, belief-like in character, having the same content as a belief that there is an orange in front of me. And, we find out in Chapter 4, motor imagery (imagining throwing an orange) has as its counterpart, not the movement itself, but the experience of movement. Currie and Ravenscroft say that there are also such states as desire-like imaginings, which have desires as their counterpart.

In the second chapter, the 'family and friends' of imagination are discussed: fantasy, supposition, and so on. Currie and Ravenscroft's discussion of pretence is especially interesting, and important for what follows in later chapters. They insist, surely rightly, that pretending is primarily a kind of behavioural recreative state, whereas imagining is a kind of mental recreative state. And one can pretend without imagining: I can pretend to be friendly (as many of us often do), or to be trying to win (as Bond did when playing golf with Goldfinger), or to believe that my redeemer liveth (as Tartuffe did), and I can do these things without imagining anything.

Part II, 'Simulation in a Generalized Setting', gets into what Currie and Ravenscroft call the 'simulation programme'. It's 'central commitment' is worth quoting in full: it consists of a 'belief in the existence of states of recreative imagining [the existence claim], their role in our everyday understanding of minds [the explanatory claim], and their capacity to reduce the amount of psychological theorizing that we need to attribute to people in explaining their mentalizing capacity [the economy

claim]' (p. 51). Currie and Ravenscroft's main focus in this 'programme' is on propositional recreative imaginings (belief-like and desire-like), rather than on perceptual imaginings, although they have a lot of interesting things to say about the latter. Accordingly, the explanatory and the economy claims attempt to show that the simulation programme in respect of propositional recreative imaginings is to be preferred to the appeal to some sort of psychological theory to explain how people predict what other people will decide to do in some given set of circumstances.

However, Currie and Ravenscroft do not claim anything like hegemony for simulation: 'wherever a simulation is a simulation of a bit of thinking that counts as theorizing, the simulation ought to count as theorizing' (p. 61). The central role for simulation is in simulation of decision-making in practical reasoning: this is because deciding what to do is not theorizing, so 'if decision-making isn't theorizing, then surely simulated decision-making isn't theorizing either' (p. 63). My question at the end will concern the reach of simulated decision-making.

Part III is called 'Development and Disorder'. The 'development' chapter is concerned with the very difficult empirical issues surrounding the development in young children of the ability to get a grip of the psychological states of other people. Currie and Ravenscroft return to pretence, and the relation between pretence and imagination. We see again that not all pretence involves imagining. Where imagining *is* involved in pretence, Currie and Ravenscroft discuss the question of whether the pretend behaviour is motivated by beliefs and desires which are guided by imaginings, or whether the pretend behaviour is motivated directly by imaginings—by belief-like imaginings and desire-like imaginings. This is a conceptual question as well as a phenomenological one; of course, someone who believes in the dogma that all intentional action is necessarily motivated by belief and desire will find the answer obvious, but not all of us think that the dogma is true. Maybe the right answer is that sometimes pretence is motivated in one of these ways, and sometimes in the other (consider the ways in which one might pretend to be trying to win). In the end, this is pretty much how Currie and Ravenscroft come out: with a disjunctive claim (p. 131).

There seems to be good empirical evidence that children's ability to engage in pretend play and their ability to 'mind-read' (to use Currie and Ravenscroft's term) are strongly correlated. But it is far from clear what the developmental relation is between the two: for example, does pretence causally influence the ability to mind-read through the practice of imaginative skills, or are imaginative pretence and mind-reading common effects of an already established imaginative skill? Currie and Ravenscroft are, sensibly, unwilling to draw any definite conclusions, leaving it that 'our current empirical and conceptual understanding suggests at least the following: imagination makes a substantial contribution to pretence and to mind-reading' (p.131).

In order to tease apart the possible causal stories about the role of imagination in mind-reading, philosophers have drawn considerably on

empirical research into autism and schizophrenia, and there are two chapters in Part III that are devoted to these disorders. Both, Currie and Ravenscroft say, are disorders of the imagination (or at least they *include* such disorders). But they are different kinds of disorder: autism is an impoverishment of imagination; and schizophrenia is a failure to control and monitor imagination. On schizophrenia, they put forward an interesting view: that delusions are 'unrecognized imaginings' (p. 170): 'the person with schizophrenia is failing to monitor the autonomous generation of her imaginings, and in consequence it seems to her that these thoughts are not imaginings at all' (p. 173). As Currie and Ravenscroft point out, those of us who are not like this are able to engage emotionally with works of fiction, getting thoroughly 'involved', but can readily leave our imaginings behind when we put the book down. And this raises a question which it would be interesting to know the answer to: do schizophrenics show that they engage emotionally and imaginatively with fictions just as we do, but that they fail to *disengage* as we do? If there were empirical evidence to this effect, then this would support Currie and Ravenscroft's position.

The final part. consisting of just one chapter, is 'Emotions in Imagination' (not quasi-emotions' any longer, some of us will be glad to hear). Unlike beliefs, emotions, Currie and Ravenscroft say, do not have imaginative counterparts. Belief-like imagining is belief-like in character, but '[t]here is no imagining that has an amusement-like character; there is only being really amused' (p. 190). If your being amused is part of the content of what you imagine, then this, imagining that you are amused, is just belief-like imagining. Whereas, if you imagine something, and are amused at what you imagine, then this is real amusement and amusement-like in character; in this way imagination is 'transparent' to amusement. And the example is supposed to generalize across all emotions. Pain, they say, is unlike emotions in both these respects: it has an imaginative counterpart whereas emotions do not (imagining a painful occurrence can 'generate unpleasant bodily states that seem to act as imagined substitutes for pains' (p. 190)); and imagination is not transparent to pain, whereas emotion is ('you cannot be really hurt by imaginary blows' (p. 190)). I myself (and I am not sure about this) wonder whether Currie and Ravenscroft are being too Procrustean about emotion here: some cases seem more like what they say about pain; for example. if you imagine being frightened by a snake, you feel no real fear (like pain, imagination is not transparent to fear in this case), but your imagination does generate 'unpleasant bodily states' (like pain, the fear has an imaginative counterpart in this case). Other cases, however, are indeed not like this. The book ends with a brief and punchy discussion of our negative emotions in response to fictional tragedies.

This book, which includes some reworked material previously published by the authors, will be very helpful to anyone who is working in this field, and much to be recommended. It is full of good ides, only a few of which have been touched on here. However, it would not really be suitable for someone below the level of a well-informed graduate student, because

it presupposes a lot of technical knowledge (for example, knowledge of the twin-earth thought experiment is presupposed on pages 18–19), and also because much of the discussion is really addressed to those who are already in the debate (for example, the discussion of the theory-theory debate in Chapter 5). The book will prove, I think, especially useful to those who are, like Currie and Ravenscroft, interested in what they call 'mechanisms' (as contrasted to 'capacities'), and in the kinds of empirical research that are relevant in substantiating Currie and Ravenscroft's hypothesis that the mechanisms for belief-formation and decision-making are 're-used' in modelling belief-formation and decision-making in recreative imagination.

Let me now end with my question. I don't like ballet. Jones adores it. I am trying to work out what Jones will decide to do when he hears that *Swan Lake* is on at Covent Garden, and that the cheapest available ticket is £150, which he can barely afford. Will he decide to go for it, buy the ticket, and pretty much starve for a couple of months; or will he decide he really can't afford it? (I leave to one side the possibility of last-ditch *akrasia*, and the question of whether he will do what he decides to do.) Is recreative imagination meant to reach to such a case?

Poor Jones is faced, effectively, with two 'competing' syllogisms. There is the syllogism of the ballet-lover: all opportunities to go to the ballet should be pursued; this is such an opportunity; therefore I should pursue this. And there is the syllogism of the impoverished: all single non-necessary expenditures of over £100 should be avoided; this is such an expenditure; therefore I should avoid this. What will Jones decide to do? Currie and Ravenscroft rightly insist that the decision as to what to do is not deducible from these syllogisms, so this ought to be just the territory for simulation rather than for theory. But it is not clear to me just how my simulation of Jones deliberation is supposed to deliver up an answer for me in such a case.

The success of my recreative imagining depends essentially on my adjusting for the fact that Jones and I are not 'relevantly alike' (p. 53). Let me put the point in terms of desires and desire-like imaginings, rather than in terms of syllogisms, where desires as such need not enter into the picture. To simulate successfully, I need to have the right desire-like imaginings about going to the ballet and about not going hungry (the belief-like imaginings are relatively straightforward here), where 'right' just *means* having desire-like imaginings of a strength that match Jones' actual desires (remember that I myself find the ballet to be devoid of all appeal). But— and this is my question—how can I do this? If I know which desire is 'stronger' (for example, that Jones' desire to go to the ballet was 'strong' enough to 'win' against the desire not to go hungry), then I will already know what he will decide to do without needing to simulate (leaving aside complications with deliberative *akrasia*). But if I don't know which desire is 'stronger', then simulation cannot properly get off the ground.

It would be a pity if the role of simulation in our finding out what others will decide to do, and will do, were limited to those cases where being 'relevantly alike' is a realistic assumption, or to those cases where it

is just *obvious* what someone will do (for example, where someone desires a drink of water, and believes that going to the tap is the best means of getting a drink of water, and has no 'competing' desires). For the interesting and challenging cases in our everyday psychology—just those where theory seems especially hopeless—are cases where the other person himself is *trying to decide* in the face of 'competing' desires or syllogisms, and where the other person is not relevantly like the person trying to make the prediction. Perhaps these cases are just beyond the reach of recreative imagination.

Perhaps what I need to know in such a case is not the strength of Jones' desires; after all Jones *himself* doesn't know that. Rather, I need to know something about Jones' character (and knowing this is not knowing a bit of theory, unless theory is taken in a very etiolated sense). Is Jones the sort of chap who tends to say 'Hell, I'll go for it' when tempted by expensive things that he wants a lot, such as the ballet, or a night in the pub with his mates, or a dinner on his first date with a girl? If I know this, then I can make an informed inductive inference about what he will decide to do on this occasion, given that I know that he wants to go to the ballet a lot. This seems to me to be how we predict what people will do in many kinds of case. This method of prediction is not only theory-like. It is also not simulation-like, in that it does not involve modelling the prediction on the actual deliberative process: we do not normally ourselves actually deliberate about what to do by making an inference from our own state of character ('I am the sort of person who does such-and-such on this type of occasion; therefore I will do such-and-such on this occasion'). And sometimes, as Sartre suggested in *L'Existentialisme est un Humanisme*, we can sometimes know what someone else will do better than he knows himself.

This, I repeat, is a question (from a friend of Currie and Ravenscroft's overall approach), rather than a challenge (from someone who thinks that simulation has got too big for its boots). And it is a question I feel sure Currie and Ravenscroft can answer, given the resources at their disposal, so ably demonstrated in this book.

Peter Goldie

Ontology, Identity and Modality
by Peter van Inwagen
Cambridge University Press, 2001, pp 261.

Peter van Inwagen's book *Ontology, Identity and Modality* is a collection of previously published papers in metaphysics, together with a specially written introduction. It covers topics ranging from the existence of fictional characters and why there is anything at all, to the persistence conditions of material objects and the nature of necessity, possibility and actuality. Some of the papers are well known, others less so; all display a characteristic care in argument that provides a model of how to conduct discussion in metaphysics.

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1. The underlying concern of the book is what Quine calls 'the ontological question'—the question of what there is. But van Inwagen begins by considering certain prior definitional and methodological issues that fall within a discipline he refers to as 'meta-ontology' (ch. 1). As he makes plain, even though he disagrees with some of Quine's answers to the 'ontological question', he regards himself as essentially a Quinean about the meta-ontological issues, endorsing a number of theses about them that he thinks Quine either does or would subscribe to. These include the following:

1. 'being is the same as existence' (15),[1]
2. 'being is univocal' (16), and
3. 'the single sense of being is adequately captured by the existential quantifier of [first-order predicate] logic' (18).

But they also include a thesis that van Inwagen thinks cannot be usefully stated in a single sentence, but which he takes to involve 'the best way—the only reasonable way—to attempt to answer … "the ontological question"' (22). At the heart of this thesis is Quine's criterion of ontological commitment, what van Inwagen takes to be 'the most profitable strategy … to get people to make their ontological commitments—or the ontological commitments of their discourse—clear' (28). And this involves in the first instance translating the relevant stretches of discourse as accurately as possible into standard quantifier-variable notation. In itself of course this need not reveal the ontological commitments of the piece of discourse, much less answer Quine's question about a particular object or class of objects. But if its translation entails (say) '$\exists x F x$' or '$\exists x\, x = a$', then we may conclude that the piece of discourse is committed to the existence of Fs or the object a. And if we know that the piece of discourse is true, we will have answered Quine's question in favour of such things.

   Now of course there are many pieces of discourse whose translations into the language of predicate logic are both highly plausible as translations and entail sentences of the form '$\exists x F x$' or '$\exists x\, x = a$';[2] and of course many such pieces of discourse are themselves indisputably correct. Equally, however, for other pieces of discourse, it can be quite difficult to establish either of these things.[3] Indeed, the two tasks are not always separable. For example, although it is natural to translate a sentence such as 'The moon will be revisited' as '$\exists x[x$ is a time & the moon will be revisited at x & x is after now]'—which trivially entails '$\exists x[x$ is a time & x

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[1] Numbers in parentheses are page references to the book.

[2] Sentences whose natural translation is of one of these two forms, such as 'There are coelacanths', form one group; subject-predicate sentences, such as 'King Arthur lived on Bodmin Moor', form another.

[3] Van Inwagen nicely exposes the problems of translation even with such innocuous sentences as 'Every planet is at any time at some distance from some star'.

is after now]'—scepticism about the reality of the future may encourage someone to reject either the original sentence or its translation.

So there is certainly no mechanical procedure for answering Quine's question. However, reflection on the considerations above does suggest at least one informal way of doing so. And it is one which van Inwagen himself would surely endorse.[4] Stipulating that a statement in ordinary language *says of an F or an object a that it exists* if its immediate translation into the language of the predicate calculus trivially entails '∃xFx' or '∃x x=a', we may formulate it as the following thesis:

> (O) We should accept as existing anything that appears to be said to exist by statements in ordinary language that we accept, unless we have good reason to think otherwise.

In effect, this thesis tells us to take at face-value apparent existence claims that we accept, unless we have good reason not to. In the example involving tense, properly grounded scepticism about the reality of the future would provide us with such a reason.

Although van Inwagen explicitly formulated most of this methodological framework only after the majority of the essays in the book had been written, it nevertheless informs a good deal of them, at least implicitly. And by concentrating on the principles that make it up—the meta-ontological theses above—we can, I think, obtain a good sense of the richness, vitality, depth and humour of the book. I shall focus my attention on theses 1–3, together with thesis (O).[5]

2. Suppose for the moment that thesis 1 is correct: that being is the same as existence—or as van Inwagen puts it, there is no 'substance to the distinction' (15) between existence and being. And now consider thesis 2. The first thing to note about it is that it tells us that it is being itself rather than the word 'being' that is univocal. But although the idea that univocity can apply both to words and to what words express has had a long and for the most part honourable history traceable at least to Aristotle, it is hard to imagine Quine subscribing to it. At the very least, it would be for him a particularly glaring example of use-mention confusion. Quine aside, however, I see no harm in speaking of univocity in this equivocal way—though I myself shall here use it only in connection with words—if they are related by something like the following principle. Let e be an expression

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[4] See e.g. his comments on Lewis, pp. 206–7.

[5] Note that in ch. 1, Van Inwagen endorses a fifth thesis, that 'being is not an activity'. He dismisses opponents of it by suggesting—rightly to my mind—that they are confusing the being of a thing either with such specific activities as its enduring or its getting older, or with the nature of the thing. I would only add that even if the being of a thing were its nature, it would not follow in general that being was an activity. For although a thing's having a certain nature may require it to *engage* in certain activities, that hardly makes having that nature an activity in itself.

with a certain circumscribed set of uses. Then what e expresses is univocal with respect to those uses just in case e itself is univocal in those uses.

Secondly, van Inwagen takes the primary opponent of the thesis to be Ryle, who claimed that 'existence' (or 'being') means something different when applied to objects in different categories of thing. Ryle's main argument seems to have been that a sentence that lists as existing things in different general categories—coelacanths, angels, fractions and hot-rods (say)—is simply a zeugma. And van Inwagen's response is short and convincing: there are circumstances in which it is perfectly proper to list as existing things drawn from any number and variety of categories; at worst Ryle's lists are merely conversationally infelicitous. Furthermore, as he points out, if Ryle were right, number terms would also have to be equivocal. For the claim that coelacanths exist (say) is tantamount to the claim that the number of coelacanths is one or more—and the same is true of angels, fractions and hot-rods. But number terms are not equivocal, or at least not in this way.

Ryle's position is definitely wrong, and for the reasons that van Inwagen indicates. However, it is not the only position from which a case might be made for something like the equivocity of 'exists'.[6] In particular, there is a certain amount of linguistic evidence to suggest that 'exists' is a first-level predicate, true of individuals, in singular existential claims such as 'Caesar no longer exists' or 'That little green man exists', said by someone in the presence of a very small man in green make-up to a group of doubtful drunks; while it certainly isn't a first-level predicate in general existential claims such as 'Coelacanths still exist' said by a delighted biologist. One nice piece of evidence derives from an appeal again to number. For while it certainly makes sense to say that the number of coelacanths is one or more, it does not in the ordinary way of speaking make sense to say that the number of that little green man is one or more. It is true that the claim 'That little green man exists' is equivalent to, and in some sense paraphrases, the claim 'The number of things *identical to* that little green man is one or more'—the corresponding paraphrase of the claim 'Things

[6] Some philosophers may be tempted to use either substitutional or higher-order quantification to show that 'exists' is ambiguous. Thus advocates of the former may take 'exists' to connote one thing—objectual quantification—when it is understood as quantification into transparent name frames, and another—substitutional quantification—when it is understood as (say) quantification into opaque contexts. And proponents of higher-order quantification could, *mutatis mutandis*, argue more or less analogously. However, van Inwagen thinks substitutional quantification is not even intelligible (ch. 2), and so he can hardly be expected to view it as a convincing interpretation of any uses of 'exists'. And since, adapting a Quinean aphorism, he thinks that so-called higher-order quantification is 'attribute theory in sheep's clothing' (4)—i.e. it is merely first-order quantification over attributes—he can reply that again we have no ambiguity.

identical to that little green man exist'. But that no more shows that 'exists' is a second-level expression in 'That little green man exists' than does the fact that 'Fred Astaire knew how to waltz' is equivalent to, and in some sense paraphrases, 'Fred Astaire knew how to dance the waltz', shows that 'waltz' is univocal in those sentences.

Now if such considerations are right, not only is thesis 2 doubtful, so also are theses 1 and 3. To see this, consider first how van Inwagen argues for 3. His strategy is to indicate, by successive paraphrases, that e.g. '∃x x is a dog' is an acceptable paraphrase of 'There is at least one dog'. But if by 1 there is no 'substance to the distinction' between being and existence, then 'There is at least one dog' is tantamount to 'Dogs exist'. Hence '∃x x is a dog' is also an acceptable paraphrase of 'Dogs exist'. From this, van Inwagen concludes that the sense of 'exists' and 'there is' is 'adequately captured by the existential quantifier'.

Here, however, everything depends on the relevant notion of an acceptable paraphrase. In one sense of the expression, '∃x x is a dog' is clearly an acceptable paraphrase of both 'There is at least one dog' and 'Dogs exist'. And despite familiar difficulties, 'It is no longer the case that ∃x x = Caesar' and '∃x x = that little green man' are (in the same sense) acceptable paraphrases of 'Caesar no longer exists' and 'That little green man exists' (perhaps via 'No longer is there such a thing/person as Caesar' and 'There is such a thing/person as that little green man'). But again, just as the fact that 'Fred Astaire knew how to waltz' is an acceptable paraphrase in this sense of 'Fred Astaire knew how to dance the waltz' does not entail that 'waltz' means the same thing in both sentences, so the fact that 'It is no longer the case that ∃x x = Caesar' and '∃x x = that little green man' are paraphrases of 'Caesar no longer exists' and 'That little green man exists' does not allow us to conclude anything about the sense of 'exists' in those sentences. For that we would need a finer-grained conception of 'acceptable paraphrase' according to which the components of a paraphrase—or at least relevant components—are also paraphrases of the corresponding components of the original. And we have not been offered a reason for thinking that any of the above are paraphrases according to this finer-grained conception. I myself am inclined to think that 'exists' in 'Dogs exist' does have the same sense as 'there are' in 'There are dogs' and as the existential quantifier in '∃x x is a dog',[7] but to doubt that in 'That little green man exists' it has the same sense as 'there is' and the existential quantifier in 'There is such a thing/person as that little green man' and '∃x x = that little green man', since 'exists is a first-level predicate in 'That little green man exists'. But all such matters need careful consideration, and I doubt, for anything that van Inwagen says, whether we are in a position to conclude either that there is no 'substance to the distinction' between being and existence, or that 'exists' (if not 'being') is univocal and its unique sense adequately captured by the existential quantifier.

[7] At least, in the latter case, if one ignores the change in grammatical number.

3. I remain unconvinced therefore by theses 1–3. Let us now turn to thesis
(O). On the face of it, this is an innocuous proposal with pleasantly benign
consequences. Thus our straightforward everyday talk about ordinary
living things like you and me that appears to represent us as three-dimen-
sional animate objects persisting from one moment to the next would for
van Inwagen pass the test embodied in thesis (O). (Indeed, various reasons
for thinking that it doesn't—and that in fact we are not three-dimensional
persisting objects, but amalgams of time-slices—are beautifully under-
mined by chs. 7–8). Moreover, he also remains unperturbed by the
prospect of certain kinds of abstract objects—fictional characters (ch. 3),
for example, and possible worlds (chs. 10–12)—provided these things are
understood properly.[8] However, this apparent atmosphere of motherhood
and apple pie is abruptly shattered when we discover (ch. 5) that although
animate things like you and me exist, ordinary inanimate material objects
such as Descartes' left leg and (more distressingly) slices of apple pie do
not.[9] For in their case he thinks that we have very good reason for not
taking our ordinary talk about the existence of such things at face value.

His reasoning here is embodied in a puzzle he considers about material
objects (ch. 5), a consequence of which is that Descartes has no left leg.
Initially he argues against an apparently sound metaphysical principle
about material objects that he calls the Doctrine of Arbitrary Undetached
Parts (DAUP): 'for every material object M, if R is the region of space
occupied by M at time t, and if sub-R is *any* occupiable sub-region of R
whatever, there exists a material object that occupies the region sub-R at t'
(75). In an attempt to refute the principle, he argues as follows. Let L be
Descartes' left leg at some particular moment t, and let D-minus be the
material object that occupied at t 'the region of space that was the set-
theoretic difference between the region occupied by Descartes and the
region occupied by L' (80). (That there is such an object follows from
DAUP.) Now suppose that L is removed from Descartes and annihilated.
Then, according to van Inwagen, the following claims are all true:

   (a) The thing that was D-minus before t = the thing that was D-minus
        after t
   (b) The thing that was D-minus after t = the thing that was Descartes
        after t
   (c) The thing that was Descartes after t = the thing that was Descartes
        before t
   (d) The thing that was D-minus before t ≠ the thing that was Descartes
        before t

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[8] Only if possible worlds are taken to be proposition-like entities—and
certainly not if they are taken to be fusions of concrete objects, as sug-
gested by David Lewis—will they pass the test.
[9] Motherhood, on the other hand, may well be acceptable to him, given
his belief in attributes; see fn.3.

But by the transitivity of identity, we obtain a contradiction. So D-minus does not exist, and DAUP is therefore false. All very straightforward, it seems. But then he provides the *coup de maître*. For if L exists, then it would be arbitrary not to allow D-minus to exist as well. (Indeed, according to van Inwagen, it's merely a social accident that we're not interested in D-minus type things.) Whence if D-minus does not exist, neither does L: there is no such thing as Descartes' left leg.

Faced with this conclusion, most of us would suppose that there was either something wrong with the original derivation, or that L's existence doesn't entail D-minus'. After all, much of our ordinary talk about legs seems to commit us to the existence of legs. But this is not van Inwagen's response. For, he claims, all the objections to the argument above that he knows of 'involve principles or lead to conclusions that … are more objectionable than the proposition that Descartes' left leg did not exist' (83). Examples of such principles for him include the denial of the transitivity of identity (which would prevent the contradictory conclusion being drawn), and the claim that numerically distinct objects can be so only by virtue of having distinct modal or temporal properties (which would allow one to deny (b)). In short, therefore, in spite of our apparent commitment to left legs and such like—explicitly revealed in the natural predicate logic translations of sentences such as 'Descartes' left leg was healthy'—there is good reason to think otherwise.

4. Now there is insufficient space to investigate van Inwagen's argument in detail here. Indeed, a full and proper investigation would require discussion of conclusions he reaches elsewhere[10] to the effect that although there are living things, there are no ordinary composite non-living objects at all—no chairs or television sets or mountains. However, two consequences that emerge from other things we have observed in this collection are worth noting. First, if we juxtapose his conclusion about ordinary inanimate composites with his views about fiction, it follows that although 'in the strict philosophical sense' (87) of 'there is' and 'thing', there is no such thing as the city of Oxford, the claim that there is such a thing as Christminster, Thomas Hardy's fictional representation of Oxford, is true.

Secondly, one of the arguments he uses against Ryle seems to hold here too. Thus, suppose Professor X looks into her living room and sees her cat sitting on a rug; and suppose further that she utters the following two sentences:

(1) There's a cat in my living room
(2) There's a rug in my living room

According to van Inwagen, only (1) is true and equivalent in canonical notation to a sentence of the form:

(3) $\exists x[x$ is an F & x is in my living room];

[10] In his book *Material Beings*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990).

and in that sense only (1) is both true and equivalent to a sentence of the form:

(4) The number of Fs in my living room is one or more.

Of course, that doesn't mean that there isn't a paraphrase of (2) of a different form which is true; and van Inwagen certainly thinks there is.[11] Furthermore, to avoid denying the obvious fact that (2) is in some sense equivalent to

(5) The number of rugs in my living room is one or more,

he may say that there is a corresponding paraphrase of (5) which is also true. (Perhaps it's the same paraphrase.) But this means that number claims of the form of (4) are equivocal: sometimes they are equivalent to sentences of the form of (3), and sometimes they are not. And it was in part by using a similar such consequence that van Inwagen hoped to dispose of Ryle's view.

In spite of its oddity, the first observation is probably something that van Inwagen would accept; how he would respond to the second I am less clear. What I *am* sure of is that this superb collection will be obligatory reading for all serious students of metaphysics.

S. G. Williams

World Without Design
By Michael C. Rea.
Oxford University Press. 2002, pp vii and 245.

In *World Without Design*, Michael Rea presents an intriguing and potentially very important argument that the status of naturalism as the philosophical orthodoxy is without rational foundation, since it cannot, by its own lights, sustain two of the most generally accepted tenets of the naturalistic worldview, that of materialism and that of realism about material objects. Moreover, if certain standard anti-dualist arguments are accepted, the naturalist's situation is worsened because there is no longer a way to justify realism about other minds. If Rea is correct, then the choice is a stark one: one may abandon the realist and materialist claims in favour of non-realist, anti-realist or idealist ontology; or one may supplement naturalism by admitting additional forms of evidence which permit those claims to be justified. Rea argues that the latter horn of the dilemma is more plausible than the former, proposing a form of theism that he calls 'supernaturalism' which recognizes religious experience as legitimate evidence in addition to the sensory evidence permitted by naturalistic science. If the world is treated as the product of intelligent design, he concludes, both realism and materialism can be salvaged, and the knowledge

[11] cp *Material Beings*, ch. 11.

that many philosophers are convinced we have about the structure of the external world is justifiable once again.

Rea begins by characterizing what naturalism involves by tracing its historical roots and discussing two philosophers, John Dewey and W. V. Quine, whom he considers to be 'pillars of the naturalistic tradition', those whose work did most towards bestowing upon naturalism the status of near-orthodoxy that it is granted today. There are numerous formulations of naturalism and it is variously treated as being a metaphysical, an epistemological, or a methodological thesis, but these disparate accounts may be roughly unified by their mutual acceptance of the assumption that the methods of science, and those alone, are the basic sources of evidence of what there is in the world, and it is upon this formulation that Rea concentrates throughout his discussion.

He emphasizes that naturalism is distinct from three philosophical views, empiricism, materialism and pragmatism, with which it has often been closely associated. Empiricism cannot be identified with naturalism, even though most naturalists are also empiricists, since it is conceivable that the methods of science could provide support for the claim that substantive, non-analytic truths could be known a priori, or that non-sensory evidence of telepathy or clairvoyance could find a scientific role, should their existence be well-enough confirmed. Materialism too is neither identical with, nor implied by naturalism, since the truth of materialism is an empirical matter for the naturalist; naturalism is committed to materialism only insofar as the sciences are also so committed. Finally, the pragmatism to which early American naturalists were committed should also be treated as distinct from naturalism, since pragmatic accounts of meaning and truth are also compatible with forms of anti-realism—perhaps more so than with realism—such as with the view Rea labels 'constructivism' which maintains that the sortal properties of non-abstract, non-mental objects are not intrinsic to anything and are somehow dependent upon a human mind or minds, or the theories they construct.

However, it is not clear that the distinction Rea draws between naturalism and pragmatism is as clear cut as the other two, since it is not based upon a distinction between pragmatism and naturalism as such, but upon the compatibility of pragmatism with the denial of the realism about material objects. Although there is no doubt that many naturalists do adhere to such realism, Rea's argument ultimately aims towards the conclusion that naturalists are committed to some form of constructivism or idealism since they cannot justify realism about material objects, views which may well bring pragmatic theories of truth and meaning in their wake. So if Rea's later arguments are sound, then it may not be possible to consistently maintain naturalism while denying pragmatism, thus he has given no reason to think that the two views come apart—rather than their being different aspects of a broader view—except insofar as this position is one which some philosophers have actually, but erroneously, maintained. As it stands, this complaint is merely a call for more clarification of his distinction, but in the context of the historical discussion I think he has

missed an interesting and illuminating point. Rea's target is not naturalism *simpliciter*, but the conjunction of naturalism and realism, and the latter was not an ontological commitment that the American pragmatist-naturalists were inclined to make, except those such as C. S. Peirce who also endorsed a brand of theism in order to ground his claim that a community of inquirers were fated to attain knowledge of the objective world. Even the later Quine, whom Rea follows Christopher Hookway in interpreting as having abandoned the pragmatist inclinations of his earlier years, was no ally of the realism about types of material objects—and hence properties or attributes—that Rea later examines. It seems then that Rea's 'pillars of the naturalist tradition' are not obviously guilty of his accusations against naturalism—being either theists or non-realists—and the real problems for naturalism arise once it is isolated from its pragmatist roots and given ontological import that the methods of science cannot sustain.

Rea goes on to examine no less than sixteen more statements of naturalism from the twentieth century, arguing that naturalism cannot strictly speaking be treated as a substantive philosophical thesis at all, but must be accorded the status of a *research programme*, since it cannot be formulated in such a way as to be justifiable according to the constraints which it sets upon what counts as legitimate evidence; the epistemic legitimacy of all and only the methods of science does not admit to justification via the scientific method. He defines a research programme as a shared set of methodological dispositions which cannot be accepted on the basis of evidence—since it sets the boundaries of what evidence counts as legitimate—but may be rejected on that basis, although the evidence does not determine which revisions must be made. Thus, recommendation of the adoption of one research programme instead of another cannot be a matter of deductive philosophical argument; naturalism—nor any other research programme for that matter—cannot be a view that one rationally ought to hold. So, by his own admission, the arguments of Rea's book will fall short of showing naturalism to be self-defeating however successful they are, and can only point to pragmatic considerations which warn against its adoption and to the unattractive consequences of holding that view.

The argument against naturalism focuses upon the consequences which Rea thinks it has for the justification of the belief in realism about material objects and is related both to the age-old problem of material constitution and to more recent sceptical arguments about property realism raised in metaphysics and the philosophy of science. He calls it 'The Discovery Problem' and it concerns the possibility of the naturalist ever discovering the intrinsic modal properties of objects via naturalistic means, a discovery which we need to make if we are untangle the problem of material constitution which arises when an object A and an object B share all material parts at the same time. Am I a collection of particles, or a human being, for instance? To answer that there are two objects rather than one seems ontologically extravagant, a case of double vision, but to say one object is present rather than another—whichever object it is—

requires that one know that there is an object with the modal properties of a collection of particles rather than one with the modal properties of a human being (or vice versa). The non-trivial modal properties are important here because different types of objects have different persistence conditions; certain objects can undergo changes that others cannot. A human being cannot survive being crushed down to the dimensions of a sugar cube, for example, while the collection of particles can survive such a change. Yet the methods of science provide no obvious way of discovering which intrinsic modal properties the world contains, and realism about material objects can only be treated as a basic assumption at the price of greater metaphysical commitment than the alternative of denying it. So the realist-naturalist has, Rea concludes, no rational grounds upon which to base his realist beliefs.

The next two chapters explore naturalistic responses to the Discovery Problem: firstly, the suggestion that intrinsic modal properties can be discovered via the empirical discovery of proper functions in nature; and secondly that, although realism about material objects may not be open to empirical justification, it may be sustained on the basis of pragmatic considerations that it provides the best explanation of the 'uniform clustering of explanatorily rich properties in nature'. The former response is inadequate, Rea argues, since the discovery of proper functions in nature, of matter objectively arranged so as to perform a certain function, is itself susceptible to a version of the Discovery Problem. If there are proper function phenomena in nature, there is no naturalistic way to discover which there are.

For the latter, pragmatic response, Rea develops arguments from recent work by Crawford Elder in order to investigate the plausibility of presupposing realism about material objects on pragmatic grounds and thereby justifying our practice of forming beliefs about intrinsic modal properties via the discovery of Aristotelian essences. Rea argues that this approach has two main weaknesses: firstly, that even if the pragmatic aspect of Elder's approach works and is capable of justifying some of our beliefs about intrinsic modal properties, it is not—by Elder's own admission— sufficient to account for all of them. In particular, there are good reasons to believe that individual organisms and biological species lack the requisite Aristotelian essences to be covered by Elder's account, there being no one sort of functional organization common to all members of one species which is not also found in others. This failure to account for realism about biological kinds is a deficiency that many realist naturalists might be uneasy about, but it remains open for naturalists to provide an alternative, realist account of biological kinds, or to rest content with a non-realist account of them while retaining realism about other kinds of material objects. However, even this latter concession is not sufficient to preserve realism, Rea urges, since there is a second, more general difficulty with the pragmatic defence of naturalist realism: the pragmatic grounds upon which realism has been presupposed generally do not provide the required epistemic justification—they are not conducive to

truth—unless one also accepts a pragmatic theory of truth. However, if one does that, Rea argues, one is committed to a view that he calls 'near-theism', that '(i) there exists a necessarily existent rational community [an individual, or community of individuals capable of thought or reasoning] and (ii) necessarily there exists an omniscient community' (p. 147). Again, this is a commitment that most naturalists will be unprepared to make. Moreover, those naturalists who take pragmatic justification alone to be well enough grounded by its role in our scientific practices to provide a reliable guide to ontology are not doing realism any favours either, since the naturalist-realist is confronted by simpler, competing explanations of why this should be the case. On the one hand, the success of pragmatic considerations as a guide to fundamental ontology can be supported for a realist by opting for a version of the theism that Rea ultimately espouses. On the other, pragmatic success can easily be explained by non-realists, since there is no miracle of ontological discovery to be explained when ontology is imposed rather than discovered and ontological commitment is determined relative to an empirically adequate theory.

At this point, Rea turns away from his assault on naturalist realism to consider the alternatives available to non-theists: anti-realist constructivism, which retains the naturalist constraint on legitimate evidence at the cost of realism about material objects; and intuitionism, which retains realism at the cost of naturalism by admitting substantive a priori, intuitive truths alongside the methods of science. Constructivism is unattractive, he suggests, because it threatens to slide into idealism, since it can sustain neither materialism, nor realism about other minds. The arguments here are rather briefer than the protracted criticism of naturalism yet they still leave the constructivist with a case to answer. Materialism is incompatible with constructivism, Rea argues, because the latter implies that 'no material object can exist unless some stuff stands in some particular relation to a mind' which, if minds are material, implies that no mind can 'come into existence unless some minds already exist and develop to a point where they can conceive of matter in the ways necessary to bring minds into existence.' (p. 163)

I think, however, that some constructivists may have a way out here, since the argument relies on a conflation between the constructivist's requirement that there can be no types of objects—including material objects—unless they are related in some particular way to a mind, with there being no particular objects nor stuff to be classified, and hence nothing to do the classification either, unless these stand in some relation to a mind. However, there seems no reason why the constructivist would have to endorse this latter, stronger requirement, and with it embrace full-blown anti-realism or verificationism, as long as she can make sense of a minimal form of realism about herself and the external world. If this can be done, the constructivist can claim that it is the types of objects that are brought into existence, rather than the stuff, and perhaps also particulars, that are classified. It is not implausible to suggest, furthermore, that a particular mind that is sufficiently developed to classify some of the world

according to sortal concepts need not be able to bring itself under a sortal concept, namely that it is of the type *mind*. Minds that think of themselves as minds, and classify themselves as such alongside other minds, are not required for constructivism, so Rea's regress does not get off the ground; and the question of the truth of materialism becomes an empirical matter concerning whether things of the type mind, or mental processes, stand in suitable relations of identity or dependence to more obviously material objects such as brains. Moreover, if this argument fails to show the incompatibility of constructivism and materialism, the conclusion that the naturalist will also have to give up realism about other minds is also blocked. There may be other difficulties associated with constructivism, but it seems that the constructivist can avoid the unpalatable consequences which Rea thinks the view implies.

The argument against intuitionism is more thorough and involves an application of Alvin Plantinga's 'evolutionary argument against naturalism' to conclude that rational intuitions—except logical, mathematical and perhaps conceptual truths—are epistemically unreliable unless intuitionism gives rise to evidence that warrants belief in a cosmic designer; so the addition of rational intuition as a basic form of evidence cannot save realism from the discovery problem by itself. Plantinga's argument has many detractors, being an attack on the likelihood of our attaining reliable knowledge given the conjunction of atheism and evolution and thus, by reductio, for theism. But Rea's more limited application is far more compelling, since it only pertains to knowledge of necessities known through conscious episodes 'not involving memory, sense perception, or inference,' and, whether one believes in a cosmic designer or not, it does seem plausible that the conjunction of atheism and evolution is unlikely to be conducive to substantive, non-logical and non-conceptual a priori knowledge.

Finally, Rea sketches his positive view that the Discovery Problem can be avoided and realism saved at several points along the route he has taken through different formulations of naturalism, if one also accepts evidence of the existence of some sort of supernatural being as basic. This need not be belief in the God of traditional theism, he suggests, 'but something close will be required' (p. 213), a being who may make an entrance to salvage the proper function response to the Discovery Problem, the intuitionist response, and the pragmatic theory of truth. Nor need supernaturalism be treated as an article of faith, Rea suggests, and he cites both the design argument and the ontological argument as potential warrant for the adoption of theism. There is much more to be said here about the workings of supernaturalism, as Rea admits, but he considers the main target of the book to have been well enough established: naturalism, especially combined with realism, is not the stable doctrine that many of its proponents claim.

I will not be one of those whom Rea persuades to adopt his favoured research programme of supernaturalism, but whether one is ultimately convinced or not is somewhat beside the point. This book raises many interesting challenges for naturalists and realists; it is well-argued and

well-referenced, covering a broad range of metaphysical and epistemolog-
ical standpoints concisely and eloquently, and anyone who wishes to resist
the force of Rea's arguments would be advised to assess the danger they
pose to her own position.

Sophie R. Allen

A History of Philosophy in America 1720–2000
By Bruce Kuklick
Clarendon Press, Oxford, 2001

In this book Bruce Kuklick, author of the wonderful *The Rise of American
Philosophy* (1977), which focused more narrowly on the 'golden age' of
philosophy at Harvard, traces the history of American philosophy,
discussing the ideas of major thinkers in considerable detail, but also say-
ing something of the social context in which each writer was working.
Thus he deliberately avoids that kind of history of ideas approach for
which philosophical ideas are simply historical phenomena to be explained
with little reference to their claims upon our reason, while also setting
them in the larger historical context in which they came to birth as purely
philosophical commentators usually fail to do.

The story begins with the Calvinist theology of Jonathan Edwards, and
some of his intellectual heirs, over a period in which theology was a more
intellectually thorough enterprise than philosophy. (Edwards was
undoubtedly an interesting thinker however appalling one finds his
predestinational outlook.) But as theology became more problematic with
the impact of Darwinism, and other unsettling scientific developments,
philosophy became more important. However, the philosophers still found
it their duty to play something of a role of theologians, defending some
form of religious faith against the threat of science. It was at Harvard that
American philosophy first became intellectually thorough (above all, in the
persons of William James and Josiah Royce, and with C. S. Peirce on the
academic margins). But these men still addressed themselves especially to
something close to religious apologetic and sought to inspire their readers
spiritually and morally (readers whom Royce, incidentally, addressed as
'thou'). Also they thought it their duty to say something about social prob-
lems, but their efforts in this direction, as Kuklick sees it, were pretty fee-
ble. James, for example, appealed to the rich and the poor to empathise
more fully with each other believing that this would lead to more peaceful
relations between them. Royce even wrote on racial problems but not, as
Kuklick sees it, to much effect (though I must say that I find his discus-
sion of this worthy). The trouble was that 'Royce and James were in the
first generation of successful American academics, self-satisfied and
uncritical of the social order.' (p. 171) But though rather contemptuous of
this aspect of their thought Kuklick brings out the importance of their
work on the more technical questions of philosophy, (which they, Peirce
mostly apart, dealt with, however, in a manner successfully designed to be

intelligible by educated people in general) and gives sufficiently thorough expositions of their main contributions, mostly with helpful clarity. In mild support of their contribution to less abstract matters, I would say that *if* religious debate is important James's and Royce's very different contributions to it are both of permanent importance. And although James thought of Royce's philosophy as complacently finding a place within the Absolute for all the worst evils, it is worth remembering that Royce came from a far less comfortable background and had some experience of human toil outside the academy and the drawing room.

Kuklick's main discussion of Royce, James and Peirce, (each with his own version of pragmatism cum idealism) even at their most abstractly metaphysical, shows how the 'concerns of American theology in the eighteenth and nineteenth century still showed through Harvard pragmatism in its "classic" period' (p. 176). He also hints at the distortion of James's thought by subsequent commentators who strive to free it from this infection. (Somewhat in this connection he rightly points out that in spite of the embarrassment it causes to some of James's more positivist admirers panpsychism was the only possible conclusion to be drawn from his main epistemological and metaphysical premises.)

With Dewey, first at Chicago and then at Columbia in New York, pragmatism or instrumentalism was used a good deal more determinedly to deal with social issues. But other philosophers who followed his lead in this (like Sidney Hook) were not first rate philosophers, and the role philosophy had once inspired to fill in the public sphere was taken over by such 'public intellectuals' as Walter Lippman.

Between the two world wars philosophy became more and more professionalized and philosophers only addressed fellow philosophers. In this phase important movements were those of the new realism and of critical realism (of which the British remain too ignorant). These attacked idealism and pragmatism, new realism by claiming that in knowledge the object known became an actual part of the knowing process without owing anything of its character to it (and continuing quite independently before and after this) while the critical realists claimed that the mind included only the essence of the object of its thought, not the object itself. The new realism was derived from James's radical empiricism shorn of its idealist and panpsychist connections. The materialist thought of Sellars père and Sellars fils represented another attempt to defeat idealism and pragmatism. Altogether Kuklick sees American philosophy as at a low ebb during this period. Its retreat from serious concern with public matters is exhibited in the contrast between philosophy in the two world wars, about the first of which philosophy had something to say while in the second little.

American philosophy was revivified by such refugees from Nazi Germany as Carnap, Reichenbach and Tarski and changed thereby into an 'analytic philosophy' which dealt only with conceptual issues in epistemology, logic and science and kept still clearer of anything of broad human interest. (This increasingly narrow concern was associated also with the development of strong links between Harvard and Oxford philosophy.)

Quine, for instance, said in 1979 that 'the student who "major[ed]in philosophy primarily for spiritual consolation is misguided and is probably not a very good student"; philosophy did not offer wisdom nor did philosophers "have any peculiar fitness for helping … society"' (p. 267). A. J. Ayer in Britain made similar remarks rather earlier.

There was considerable opposition to this narrowing of philosophy's concerns but this came from the general intelligentsia or from Literature and Sociology departments not from official philosophers. Two strands of this opposition were what is known as 'Continental Philosophy', seeking its inspiration in Sartre and Heidegger etc. and the social thought of the Frankfurt school which had moved to New York. Though most of the Frankfurt scholars returned to Germany after the war Fromm and Marcuse remained as influential figures in American thought, the latter especially attracting those who despaired of the aridity of analytical philosophy.

Relating itself to neither of these, analytic philosophy sometimes became quite dogmatic and intolerant, as shown by the way such an importantly innovative thinker as Thomas Kuhn was sent by the philosophers to the History, rather than the Philosophy department, at Berkeley (p. 272).

With John Rawls's work on justice analytical philosopher at last said something of political and social importance. Even so Kuklick thinks that Rawls was concerned only with concepts and took no account of historical reality, employing the philosopher's favourite tool of imaginary examples rather than social realities.

The top figures in analytical philosophy were almost all based at Harvard and this and its perceived limitations produced a *ressentiment* at Yale, Emory and Northwestern which found expression in what Kuklick calls philosophical pluralism. This included a revival of interest in the great past figures of American philosophy such as James, Royce, Peirce, Dewey, and Santayana.

Kuklick says something about the attempts to develop a materialistic metaphysics within the bosom of analytical philosophy, and a concern with the problem of reference, exemplified especially in the causal theory thereof associated especially with Putnam and Kripke. The book ends with a sketch of the outlook of Rorty which Kuklick sees as taking up the thread of pragmatism where James and Dewey had left it (I cannot really agree with this) and putting philosophy once more in the public arena.

The author traces the narrative of American philosophy without declaring the cards in his own hand, beyond a somewhat negative view of the feebleness of its treatment of social issues in 'the golden age' and its ignoring of them in the age of analytic philosophy.

This valuable book both gives useful accounts in their own terms of the official philosophical positions of main figures in American philosophy and relates them to factors such as the philosophers themselves hardly spoke of, such as the rivalry between philosophy departments and the role of academia in American society. It is a fascinating voyage from Jonathan Edwards to Richard Rorty.

<div align="right">**T. L. S. Sprigge**</div>