

the Absolute' . . . proves partial and inadequate . . . because we experience a disparity between each category and what we somehow already know the Idea to be" (pp. 89f.). This is too hasty. Not every definition offered by Socrates's interlocutors builds on the previous attempt. In the *Republic*, Thrasymachus's definition of justice as "the interest of the stronger" does not build on its predecessor, nor is it obvious that its rejection depends on prior knowledge of the meaning of the term "justice." Socrates here begins to alter the meaning of "justice" into something different from (albeit intelligibly related to) the ordinary meaning of it that his interlocutors "recollect." Conversely, each of Hegel's categories somehow builds on, or emerges from, its sublated predecessor. But the sublation of a category does not invariably depend on our prior implicit knowledge of the Idea or the Absolute. Being, for example, simply passes over into nothing. Our acceptance of this may depend on our prior knowledge of the meanings of "being" and "nothing," but it is hard to see how it requires knowledge of the Idea. In general, Socrates seems out of place in the Hermetic tradition, which owes far more to neo-Platonism and its sublime disregard of Socratic dialectic.

However, these are relatively minor complaints. This is an excellent book. It performs a significant service by its uninhibited exposure of Hegel's dark side. It attempts to understand Hegel, or at least one aspect of him, instead of presenting him as a paragon of political correctness.

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Virtue Epistemology. Edited by Abrol Fairweather and Linda Zagzebski.
New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2001. Pp. ix + 251. \$45.00.

In the second half of the twentieth century, many moral philosophers came to regard epistemology, like metaphysics, as a kind of "dismal science" whose entanglements we should try avoid as much as possible. Recent work in virtue ethics has challenged this antipathy to metaphysics, and the new possibilities opened up by virtue epistemology are likewise challenging the view that epistemic theory's problems are intractable and irrelevant for ethics. Building on pioneering work by Ernest Sosa, Lorraine Code, and James Montmarquet, Linda Zagzebski's *Virtues of the Mind* argued that a systematic account of intellectual virtue could overcome not only the dispute between foundationalism and coherentism but also the standoff between internalist and externalist accounts of knowledge. This distinguished new collection by Fairweather and Zagzebski, most of which emerged from a 1999 conference, demonstrates the spreading popularity of the virtue-based approach to knowledge and rationality and the diversity of voices within this movement. Together the papers give a good sense of how the field has developed and how things stand today. Thus the collection is invaluable for any graduate seminar on epistemology, even if the course is not focused on the virtue approach. Some of the papers would also be valuable in courses on virtue ethics, for these fields have been closely linked. Robert Audi's paper on "Epistemic Virtue and Justified Belief," for example, examines these parallels in detail and argues that moral and intellectual virtue both require externalist elements.

Just as string theory seems posed to overcome some of the most intractable dilemmas in twentieth-century physics, virtue-based conceptions of knowledge and rationality may finally offer a way towards a "unified theory" in epistemology. In particular, as Simon Blackburn's contribution collection nicely explains, the virtue

approach promises to overcome the idea that knowledge or (more broadly) rationality consists solely in having belief-forming capacities that are rightly related to reality *or* in having internal justification in the form of an argument, account, or appropriate evidence for one's beliefs. "It is absurd to see a happy relationship to reality as any kind of *rival* to sensitivity to propositional confirmation" (p. 19). Blackburn's paper emphasizes that virtue epistemology must distinguish itself from any simple form of reliabilism, even if it does not take justification in the internalist sense as the key to knowledge. The problem is that if making us reliable judges is what makes traits internal to our cognitive character into intellectual virtues (or components thereof) then virtues are defined as dispositions tending to desirable consequences. Blackburn tries to solve this problem, but we should remember that in ethics, as in epistemology, the idea that virtue is prior to other concepts can be taken too far. As MacIntyre has argued, the virtues must be defined in terms of their function in our lives, which means that their value is relative to the value of their function as we conceive it, without this necessarily implying consequentialism. In fact, taking a cue from MacIntyre's analysis of moral virtue, we might think of various intellectual virtues as indispensable preconditions for different kinds of *epistemic practices* and for the unity of one's intellectual life.

The different contributors to this volume, however, do not all agree on what the defining functions of intellectual virtue are. For example, Goldman thinks that enabling maximum truth-possession is the final criterion and even that justification gets its value from performing this function. Sosa disagrees, arguing that some truths are not interesting or important enough for rational beings to be required to care about them (pp. 49–50). Instead, justified beliefs require that we care that our intellectual practices are generally truth-conducive, and this has to trace to elements of our character that involves a reliable access to our environment that is not "wholly accidental" (p. 58). But Fairweather argues quite convincingly that lack of an appropriate desire for truth can prevent beliefs from constituting knowledge. Fairweather recognizes that there may be "more to epistemic motivation than the desire for truth," but he insists that this motive is still central to the value we place on epistemic justification (p. 70). Still, Sosa's insight that not every truth is important is vindicated by Hookway's argument that epistemic virtues involve the ability to avoid the "framing problem" in inquiry and deliberation by considering the most relevant questions and to be motivated to conform our beliefs to the most important considerations (pp. 194–5). Epistemic virtue will involve confidence in our intuitive judgments, without having exhaustively to apply rules for checking beliefs. It also involves this confidence not being misplaced (p. 195).

This last condition implies that epistemic virtue has an externalist component (p. 195), a thesis with which several other contributors (such as Audi, Lehrer, and Greco) concur. Using an idea from Reid, Greco argues that epistemic justification does not require the agent to be moved by cognitive rules (as specifying potentially conscious properties) in forming justified beliefs (p. 129). He adds that some promising connectionist models of cognitive processing (such as those realized in neural nets) allow for justified beliefs to be formed at the "subrepresentational level" (p. 133). The processing accomplished by an entire network may not be programmable in algorithmic form: in other words, we may not be able to represent arrival at the conclusion in terms of a series of rule-governed steps (p. 135). This analysis suggests a very interesting potential relationship between recent innovations in artificial intelligence and virtue epistemology. Greco argues that epistemic justification also requires that the belief be formed in a responsible manner or that it be subjectively praiseworthy (pp. 137–38). But justification and intellectual virtue, on Greco's

proposal, still require externalist reliability. Internalists will ask in response if it is fair to deny intellectual virtue to an agent who is trying his hardest or using all his cognitive capacities to the best of his abilities but is without success due to uncontrollable external factors (for instance, an evil demon). Another problem is that it is not clear that Greco's connectionist net, however reliable, amounts to *an agent*.

This takes us to Linda Zagzebski's new essay "Must Knowers be Agents?" about counterfactual-intervener cases and knowledge. Zagzebski extends to epistemic contexts her earlier arguments that "what Frankfurt-style cases show is that whereas alternate possibilities are not strictly necessary, they are usually associated with responsibility because they are a sign of something that really *is* necessary—the presence of agency" (p. 148). In parallel, she argues that avoiding a true belief in an alternative scenario where it would be false is not strictly necessary for the agent to get credit for her true belief in the actual sequence, or probably even for this belief to count as knowledge, but such counterfactuals are ordinarily true of beliefs that deserve credit and constitute knowledge because "they are a sign of something deeper," namely, that "her agency is central to the acquisition of the belief. Causal processes that bypass her agency take away epistemic credit, and they also take away her knowledge" (p. 149). Too much possible or actual manipulation by an intervener might defeat her epistemic agency by making her unreliable. Of course, an intervener could also make someone have only true beliefs, but Zagzebski considers reliabilist replies to this. She concludes that if true beliefs were just implanted in us and not gained through use of our own powers, natural or enhanced, this would not be knowledge in our ordinary sense.

The lesson that Zagzebski seems to draw from this is that something akin to *agent-causation* must be involved in forming true beliefs that deserve credit or that constitute knowledge. An effective agent's beliefs are reliably reached "through the exercise of her own power." Reliability, like the satisfaction of counterfactual conditions, is only "a sign of what we are looking for," namely, that the belief thus "really belongs to the agent" (p. 151). Reliability by itself is not enough to make up for the lack of agency, however, and operative agency can produce knowledge even in cases where the agent is not fully reliable (p. 152). Even in cases of simple perceptual knowledge, Zagzebski argues that agency operates in the potential to reflect on perceptual beliefs. Likewise, if our agency is operating, we should be able reflectively to endorse or to repudiate decisions and beliefs that seem to occur suddenly or impulsively (as they probably would seem if caused by an intervener). And if the intervener operated at the second-order level of endorsement, then it would probably destroy agency, thus defeating responsibility and knowledge (p. 153).

This seems to bring Zagzebski very close to the view that I have defended elsewhere in response to Frankfurt and Fischer. The view (with epistemic analogs inserted) is that in cases where the agent is responsible for an act (or gets credit for a belief) that they could not have avoided because of some independent ensuring condition, their responsibility (or epistemic credit) *traces* to prior exercises of their agency, in the past or at higher-orders, that they *could* have avoided. Now Zagzebski does not go quite this far. It seems that on her model, an agent's reflective endorsement of a belief caused by external manipulation (or perhaps by sensual stimuli) could incorporate it or make that belief *the agent's own* as long as her identification with the belief is a sufficiently virtuous exercise of her reflective powers. Maybe this could happen without her being able to avoid this reflective endorsement or identify otherwise. But this is not so clear. For what, in the end, distinguishes between the agent's endorsement being self-determined by an exercise of her powers and its being caused by external influences *if not* the power to bring about an alternative identification, or

at least to avoid endorsing the belief? It is this kind of thought that leads Timothy O'Connor to conclude that agent-causation implies relevant alternative possibilities (see *Persons and Causes*, p. 81f).

Although Zagzebski brackets this question (see p. 157n23) without accepting my sort of libertarian tracing condition, I think that this makes it hard for her to respond to Fischer and Ravizza's argument that an agent can take responsibility for some psychological mechanism that operates to produce action in the actual sequence even if the process of taking responsibility were itself causally determined. The agent takes responsibility if her beliefs about herself are based "in an appropriate way on the evidence," and this is consistent with causal determinism since "most of us do not object to the idea that external circumstances casually determine our *beliefs*," as opposed to our motivational states (see *Responsibility and Control*, p. 238). Yet Zagzebski obviously does object to this idea, and the parallel she has drawn between responsibility and epistemic credit suggests that the process of identifying with beliefs could not itself count as *the agent's own* if it were causally determined. To show this, however, she will have to say more about what the agent's own epistemic power consists in and how we can distinguish it from other forces operating in the environment. Without the ability to actualize alternatives, or at least to avoid actualizing the one we bring about in the actual sequence, it is not clear that this distinction can be maintained. Contrary to the prevailing view today, autonomy may turn out to require liberty or freedom in the true "libertarian" sense as a power to achieve different results without altering prior or existing conditions. If so, then the reasons to prefer a virtue epistemology, which Zagzebski and her colleagues so convincingly defend, may also become reasons to accept a libertarian account of agency in general.

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The Tensed Theory of Time: A Critical Examination. By William Lane Craig. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2000. Pp. 297. \$123.00.

Together with its companion volume, *The Tenseless Theory of Time: A Critical Examination*, this book presents a comprehensive study of the main debates in the philosophy of time, including Craig's own contribution to these debates. Craig is an A-theorist (and more specifically, a presentist), so in writing these two volumes, he aims not just to provide the academic world with a systematic account of the debates, but also to argue against any non-presentist account of the metaphysical nature of time and in favor of his brand of presentism. Part one of this book examines arguments in favor of an A-theory of time, B-theoretic responses to them, and Craig's assessment of these responses. Two main arguments receive this treatment, the argument from the ineliminability of tense and the argument from our experience of tense. In part two, Craig considers arguments against an A-theory of time, and here the focus is first McTaggart's paradox and then on a number of the remaining objections to presentism and to the notion of the flow of time.

Craig presents what he calls the A-theorist's "fundamental argument," the argument from the ineliminability of tense, as follows:

1. Tensed sentences ostensibly ascribe ontological tenses.
2. Unless tensed sentences are shown to be reducible without loss of meaning to tenseless sentences or ontological tense is shown to be superfluous to human thought and action, the ostensible ascription of ontological tenses by tensed sentences ought to be accepted as veridical.