

Indiana Philosophical Association: Fall Meeting

November 3, 2001

Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana
Sassafras Room in the Indiana Memorial Union

Program Schedule:

9:30 - 10:00 Coffee, etc.

10:00-11:00 "A 'Split Action' Solution to the Problem of Mental Causation."
William E. Jaworski, University of Notre Dame
Commentator: Tim O'Connor, Indiana University, Bloomington

11:00-12:00 "Did Aristotle Understand Moral Responsibility?"
Gianluca DiMuzio, Indiana University Northwest
Commentator: Carol Quinn, Miami University, Oxford Ohio

12:00-1:30 Lunch

1:30-2:00 IPA business meeting

2:00-3:00 "Identities Across Domains of Theories. A Problem of Quine's Accounts of Reference, Ontology, and Ontological Reductions."
Ronald Loeffler, University of Illinois at Chicago
Commentator: To be announced

3:00-4:00 "Epistemic Agency, Warrant, and Social Epistemology."
Shawn M. Graves, Ohio University
Commentator: Stephen Crowley, Indiana University, Bloomington

There is (pay) parking in the lot at the Memorial Union Building (where the meeting is to be held). Free parking is available on weekends on the various streets just off the campus.

Abstracts of Papers

A "Split Action" Solution to the Problem of Mental Causation."

William E. Jaworski, University of Notre Dame

Dual-attribute theories are committed to the conjunction of substance monism and property dualism, the claims, respectively, that physical substances are the bearers of mental properties, and that mental and physical properties are distinct. Dual-attribute theorists have trouble reconciling causal closure of the physical domain with common sense mental realism. I argue that they can do so by attending to the distinction between actions and the physiological events that realize them.

"Did Aristotle Understand Moral Responsibility?"

Gianluca DiMuzio, Indiana University Northwest

Some interpreters have denied that Aristotle regarded human agents as morally responsible, that is as truly deserving of praise or blame for their actions. If this was indeed Aristotle's view, then he did not differ significantly from Socrates and Plato, who notoriously held that the vicious person does not choose what is evil over what is good, but is simply mistaken as to what the good really is. The present paper rejects the thesis that Aristotle did not work with a recognizable notion of moral responsibility, that his conception of responsibility is comparable to those of modern and contemporary moral thinkers is proved by analyzing his views on anger, punishment, the formation of character, and the phenomenon of self-deception in moral matters.

"Epistemic Agency, Warrant, and Social Epistemology."

Shawn M. Graves, Ohio University

Social epistemology can be done in a number of different ways. One can focus one's inquiry upon the effect social conditions and relationships have upon standards of epistemic warrant, processes of belief formation, or the nature of testimony. Alternatively, one can also focus upon the role communities have in conferring expert status upon certain individuals or groups, or the division of cognitive labor and the social hierarchies therein. There are many projects that can be pursued within social epistemology; however, this does not suggest that each project yields plausible conclusions. I contend that social epistemology produces implausible conclusions when it is conducted with the intention of forming an account of primary epistemic agency and normative standards of propositional warrant. Mere social observation is insufficient for determining what ought to be the case. It is not plausible for one to move from description of social practices to an account of normative epistemic agency and normative accounts of warrant.

"Identities Across Domains of Theories. A Problem of Quine's Accounts of Reference, Ontology, and Ontological Reductions."

Ronald Loeffler, University of Illinois at Chicago

The English sentence "galaxies are huge clouds of molecules" implies *prima facie* that certain identities between objects in the domains of different sorts of theories hold; galaxies are objects in the domain of astronomical theories, molecules are objects in the domain of microphysical theories, and galaxies—the sentence seems to imply—are identical with certain huge clouds of molecules. This paper defends two negative claims concerning the philosophy of W. V. O. Quine. First, Quine's theory of reference and ontology seems to be incompatible with the possibility of such intertheoretical identities. Second, Quine's own attempt, in terms of his theory of an ontological reduction, to explain away that such intertheoretical identities fails. The two lines of argument, if sound, reveal significant tensions at the core of Quine's overall theory. In order to overcome them more hidden resources in Quine's body of work need to be found and employed.