

BOOK REVIEWS

classical utilitarianism. Although there are suggestions of this neutrality in the tradition, it is safe to say that most perfectionists have not generally been thought of as consequentialists. The nearest case who comes to mind is Moore, whose account of the good is not perfectionist by Hurka's standards (interestingly, there is not a single reference to Moore in the entire book). Like utilitarianism, Hurka's perfectionism is formulated in an exclusive form, leaving no room for rival values. This is not because Hurka regards it as defensible as such (on this question he is noncommittal), but because he thinks that its strengths and limitations will both be most visible if it is developed in this pure form. If in the end pure perfectionism is found to be too exclusive, then perfection will need to take its place alongside other values in a mixed theory. Hurka is adamant that it deserves at least this place; his strongest criticisms are therefore reserved for perfectionism's equally uncompromising rivals—namely, welfarist theories such as utilitarianism.

Hurka has done a remarkable job of building an elegant and attractive version of perfectionism. Written with admirable rigor and clarity, his book will surely remain the definitive treatment of the theory by an analytic philosopher for a very long while. By presenting perfectionism in the best possible light he has done a great service to the theory's supporters and critics alike: the former by providing them with welcome resources for defending their ground and the latter by enabling them to locate real, rather than merely apparent, points of weakness. The central idea of perfectionism—that those states or activities that develop our nature constitute goods independently of any satisfaction or happiness they might occasion—is one that seems perennially appealing. In the end, pure perfectionism is likely to be unpalatable to many because of its indifference to the intrinsic evil of pain or suffering (and, for that matter, the intrinsic good of pleasure or happiness). But it will stand as a formidable challenge to the claims of welfarist rivals, a challenge they will ignore at their peril.

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The Philosophical Review, Vol. 104, No. 1 (January 1995)

DIVINE HIDDENNESS AND HUMAN REASON. Cornell Studies in the Philosophy of Religion. By J. L. SCHELLENBERG. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993. Pp. x, 217.

This book provides a careful and thorough treatment of an interesting challenge to traditional theism, a version of the problem of evil that we might think of as a problem of *epistemic* evil: if the perfectly loving God of

theism exists, why hasn't he seen to it that more people believe in him? Recognizing that almost certainly no one has direct voluntary control over whether she believes in God, Schellenberg sees the central question this way: if a loving God exists, why has he failed to provide evidence of his existence sufficient to produce theistic belief in all serious, epistemically inculpable investigators of theism?

Pressing this question as a challenge to theism obviously requires showing (A) that the existence of God entails, or makes likely, the total absence of what Schellenberg calls "reasonable nonbelief" and (B) that reasonable nonbelief nevertheless occurs. Schellenberg quite sensibly spends most of his time arguing for (A), since surely (B) ought to be the far less controversial premise. Indeed, I would regard as paradigm cases of reasonable nonbelief the atheism of such careful and sympathetic philosophers of religion as William L. Rowe and Paul Draper, to cite just two examples.¹ To his credit, though, Schellenberg devotes the whole of chapter 3 to explicating (B) and defending it against objections, in particular the Calvinistic objection that unbelief arises from cognitive defects caused by sin and, thus, is always epistemically culpable. He trenchantly criticizes what he calls the "epistemic isolationism" inherent in objections of this Calvinistic sort—an isolationism embraced, incidentally, by those champions of "Reformed epistemology" who would hold the theist accountable only to the relevant epistemic paradigms of her own theistic community.²

In setting out his basic argument, Schellenberg makes it clear that he construes "evidence sufficient for producing theistic belief" quite broadly. Theistic evidence, on his view, includes not only the public, propositional evidence supplied by theistic arguments but also the more private evidence supplied (even constituted) by personal, nonsensory experience of God. In fact, Schellenberg sees the potential evidential force of religious experience as the most promising divine means of eliminating reasonable nonbelief. By stressing the potential value of experiential evidence, he meets the Reformed epistemologist and the defender of experiential justification of theistic belief on their own terms. If personal experiences of the di-

¹See, for example, Rowe, "The Empirical Argument from Evil," in *Rationality, Religious Belief, and Moral Commitment*, ed. Robert Audi and William J. Wainwright (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986), 227–47; and Draper, "Pain and Pleasure: An Evidential Problem for Theists," *Noûs* 23 (1989): 331–50.

²"The Christian will of course suppose that belief in God is entirely proper and rational; if he does not accept this belief on the basis of other propositions, he will conclude that it is basic for him and quite properly so. Followers of Bertrand Russell and Madelyn Murray O'Hare may disagree; but how is that relevant? Must my criteria, or those of the Christian community, conform to theirs? Surely not. The Christian community is responsible to *its* set of examples, not to theirs." Alvin Plantinga, "Reason and Belief in God," in *Faith and Rationality*, ed. Alvin Plantinga and Nicholas Wolterstorff (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1983), 16–93; 77.

vine—including both intense focal experiences and the sustained, background “awareness” of God—are a legitimate (maybe even the best) ground of theistic belief, then why hasn’t God, desiring to relate personally to all human beings, produced such experiences in all those whom inculpable investigation has left unconvinced of his existence?

Schellenberg devotes more than half the book to assessing an impressive range of reasons theists have offered, or might offer, for the existence of reasonable nonbelief. He takes up John Hick’s famous assertion that the moral freedom God wants us to have requires that we maintain complete “cognitive freedom” regarding God’s existence, the sort of cognitive freedom that unambiguous evidence for theism would destroy. Based on a careful reading of Hick, Schellenberg acquits the former of the familiar charge of having embraced doxastic voluntarism. He comes down, instead, in favor of the other familiar objection to Hick: that moral freedom, the freedom to disobey God or to remain indifferent to the truth of theism, does *not* require cognitive freedom about the existence of God; after all, “The devils also believe, and tremble” (James 2:19). Moreover, he argues, even persons convinced of the truth of theism can retain a relevant form of cognitive freedom, the freedom to deceive themselves about the moral and behavioral implications of God’s existence.

The book goes on to examine Richard Swinburne’s version of the argument from cognitive freedom, as well as a host of other theistic explanations of reasonable nonbelief that I have space merely to mention: a Pascalian argument that divine hiddenness (i) curbs a natural human tendency to relate to God in arrogant and presumptuous ways and (ii) stimulates us “to search for God with due contrition and humility” (138); Kierkegaardian arguments from the importance of religious passion and subjective “inwardness”; Bishop Butler’s assertion that hiddenness serves a vital role in the intellectual and moral “probation” God wants us to undergo; an argument from the supposed value of religious diversity, a diversity that clear evidence for monotheism would allegedly threaten; a Leibnizian argument that we can have no coherent moral complaint about God’s behavior toward us (including his hiddenness), for if God had behaved differently *we* would not exist—some other set of persons would; and, finally, an argument, suggested by Swinburne, that divine hiddenness contributes to human moral autonomy and responsibility. Schellenberg’s criticism of these arguments is always meticulous and often decisive.

As its author recognizes, among the book’s most interesting features is the argument it contains for the untenability of agnosticism. If we can expect the loving God of theism to have put his existence beyond all reasonable nonbelief, then even a rough parity between theistic and atheistic evidence is itself evidence against theism, since we should expect that the public and private evidence available to inculpable investigators will clearly

favor the existence of God. Therefore, anyone who regards the evidence for and against theism as roughly equal should recognize that this rough equality counts against that very agnosticism and in favor of atheism. Schellenberg's argument thus benefits from a kind of recursive reinforcement: sound reasons for even doubting theism become positive reasons for disbelieving it, reasons for disbelieving theism become reasons for still stronger disbelief, and so on.

Schellenberg's important contribution deserves to provoke debate, and no doubt it will. He has produced the kind of painstaking, well-argued, and sympathetic treatment of this topic that most philosophers who come down on the side of atheism, myself included, would have lacked the patience to write.

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The Philosophical Review, Vol. 104, No. 1 (January 1995)

WHITE QUEEN PSYCHOLOGY AND OTHER ESSAYS FOR ALICE. By RUTH GARRETT MILLIKAN. Cambridge: MIT Press, Bradford Books, 1993. Pp. xii, 387.

In her first book (Millikan 1984), Ruth Millikan advanced a remarkably important and original account of language and cognition. She has continued to develop this account in her more recent papers, fourteen of which are collected in this book, ten of them previously published, and the others new or mostly new. Unlike the earlier book, these papers contain neither her general views about language, nor her accounts of any specific linguistic devices; they also contain less of her ontological and epistemological views. Instead, they focus on the philosophy of psychology and biology. Their aim is to explain the fundamental features of her account of cognition, in a way that more clearly reveals their intuitive motivation, and is more explicitly related to problems on the forefront of the contemporary debate. As a result, these papers are more accessible than the earlier book, and invaluable as an introduction to Millikan's account of cognition. The earlier book remains, however, the official exposition of the theory; on some crucial points, the papers in this new book are significantly less detailed and precise. Any serious assessment of her theory will still have to consult the earlier book.

The introduction to this new book sets out the profound and audacious thought that motivates Millikan's theory. Philosophers have proposed many different reductive naturalistic accounts of what it is for mental states to have the representational content that they have. But most of these