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Peter van Inwagen (ed.), *TIME AND CAUSE: Essays Presented to Richard Taylor* (Dordrecht-Holland/Boston: D. Reidel, 1980), x + 313 pp., \$34.00.

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This is an important book tightly packed with ideas and arguments covering a fairly large range of topics. The opening chapter is J.J.C. Smart's "Time and Becoming" and this seems very appropriate. Richard Taylor is best known for his work on time. Arguably the most fascinating metaphysical problem concerning time is that of "becoming" and one of the ablest and most persuasive advocates of the Russellian view of this issue is Professor Smart.

As is known the majority of analytic philosophers hold with Russell that the transient view of time is wrong; there is no such entity as the moving NOW; time remains still and monadic predicates such as "is in the future," etc., do not stand for real properties and may be defined in terms of predicates like "before" and "after" which denote permanent temporal relations.

Smart repeats some arguments against the rival view he has used previously. There is however one new argument which seems far more vulnerable than any of the interesting arguments he has advanced in the past:

The notion of pure becoming is connected with that of events receding into the past and of events in the future coming back from the future to meet us. This notion seems to me unintelligible. What is the "us" or "me"? It is not the whole person from birth to death, the total space-time entity. Nor is it any particular temporal stage of the person. A temporal stage for which an event E is future is a different temporal stage from one for which event E is present or past. (p. 6)

Smart is of course right that of any person of whom we said that he was born at  $t_1$  and died at  $t_2$  we cannot say that there is some point of time earlier than  $t_1$  or later than  $t_2$  which he also occupies, without contradicting ourselves. Such a person is confined permanently and unchangingly to the interval  $t_1$ - $t_2$ . He is also correct in claiming that we cannot assign motion to any given temporal part of a person without contradicting ourselves since any temporal part of a person which is at  $t$ , is at  $t$  and never anywhere else.

Yet this objection is based on a complete misunderstanding of the transient view. Surely when I say that a given event  $E$  is approaching us, the “us” is meant to refer not to a particular temporal stage of ourselves but to that constantly varying temporal part which momentarily coincides with the NOW. A person who stretches from  $t_1$  (the time of his birth) to  $t_2$  (the time of his death) will have the NOW moving across the whole interval  $t_1$ - $t_2$ . When the NOW is at some point  $t$ , between the extremities  $t_1$  and  $t_2$ , then that person’s temporal part at  $t$  constitutes a momentarily privileged part that is directly experienced in contrast to all other parts which are either remembered or anticipated. Thus when I say “event  $E$  is approaching us” this is to be construed as saying that our variable temporal part at which the NOW momentarily resides keeps moving closer and closer to  $E$ .

D.M. Armstrong in his “Identity Through Time” sets out to explicate the two main views concerning the identity of particulars through time. On one of the views (which Armstrong confesses to have dismissed earlier as nonsense) a particular  $P$  does not consist of non-overlapping phases that are mere *parts* of  $P$ . It is the very same  $P$  we have encountered yesterday that we are encountering today; the self-same individual continues to remain itself through any length of time.

An advocate of this view could not be blamed if he lost interest at the very start of the discussion, believing that Armstrong does not begin to understand his position. Armstrong opens his discussion by examining the following possible objection to the view just stated.

Things which differ in their properties are different things. But if the two phases are different things, they are not the same thing. (p. 69)

For example  $P$  may have temperature  $\Theta_1$  at time  $t_1$  but  $\Theta_2$  at  $t_2$ . Thus we cannot be facing the same individual at  $t_1$  and  $t_2$ .

However, an adherent of the view in question, could among others, point out that the principle of the non-identity of discernibles that seems to be invoked is of no relevance here. Surely one and the same thing is allowed to have more than one property as long as these are not incompatible with one another. The properties of having  $\Theta_1$  at  $t_1$  and  $\Theta_2$  at  $t_2$  are, of course, not contraries. There is thus no reason why the same  $P$  could not be characterized by both.

Sydney Shoemaker has contributed an ambitious essay “Causality and Properties” investigating the basic nature of properties. After declaring that every property is a cluster of conditional powers, he says:

But the converse does not seem to hold; not every cluster of conditional powers is a property. If something is both knifeshaped and made of wax, then it will have among others, the following conditional powers: the power of being able to cut wood conditionally upon being knife sized and made of steel (this it has by virtue of being knifeshaped) and the power of being malleable conditionally upon being at a temperature of 100°F [this it has in virtue of being made of wax]. Intuitively, these are not common components of any single property. (pp. 124-5)

Why? This is the answer provided by Shoemaker:

I suggest, then, that conditional powers X and Y belong to the same property if and only if it is a consequence of causal laws that either (1) whatever has either of them has the other or (2) there is some third conditional power such that whatever has it has both X and Y. (p.125)

I find this hard to understand. Suppose  $P_1$  = able to fly;  $P_2$  = mammal; then there are many individuals exemplifying  $P_1$  without  $P_2$  and vice versa. Assuming that

$$(x)(P_1x \ \& \ P_2x \equiv \text{Bat } x)$$

then clearly we would treat  $P_1$  and  $P_2$  as components of a single property. On the assumption that there is no third property implying  $P_1$  and  $P_2$ , is the explanation that here we have the term 'bat' denoting everything with  $P_1$  and  $P_2$  whereas there happens to be no single word designating knife-shaped objects made of wax?

Unfortunately the article contains many assertions that are not merely unexplained but seem quite unexplainable. Shoemaker, for instance, begins by distinguishing between "real" or "genuine" properties and what he calls "mere Cambridge" properties. A certain typewriter could, for instance, have the property of being one hundred miles from a burning barn. But he implies that it would be a mistake to place this property in the same category as the typewriter's property of weighing over five pounds.

Virtually everyone would agree that the distinction was valid. One might for instance point out that even the closest inspection of the typewriter would give us no clue of its having the first kind of property. Also the typewriter may lose the first kind of property—as when firemen extinguish the fire burning in the barn—without anything acting upon the typewriter.

Shoemaker offers a few examples of non-genuine properties:

Mere-Cambridge properties will include such properties as being "grue" (in Nelson Goodman's sense), historical properties like being over twenty years old and having been slept in by George Washington, relational properties like being fifty miles south of a burning barn . . . (p. 111)

In fact there seems absolutely no reason for believing grue to be any less real than green or blue. To see the sharp contrast between a perfectly full-fledged property like grue and what is merely a Cambridge property let us divide all typewriters in the world into two sets:

Set  $A_1$ : Those which have the (Cambridge) property of being within a radius of 50 miles of a burning barn.

Set  $A_2$ : Those which lack this property.

No reasonable person would expect the slightest systematic differences between the members of these two sets. Obviously we do not anticipate discovering any additional feature characterising all the members of  $A_1$  and none of  $A_2$ , since the two sets cannot be said to be set apart by any genuine property.

Suppose, however, that 50% of emeralds we have looked at since  $t$  has passed were blue (and thus verified to *be* grue) and belong to what we shall call Set  $B_1$  while the rest of the members of Set  $B_2$  were green. Surely we shall feel strongly that  $B_1$  and  $B_2$  contain substantially different types of stones and expect to find more features belonging to members of one set and not to others. Individuals belonging to genuinely different species are expected to possess all sorts of differences.  $B_1$  representing the species of grue stones and  $B_2$  that of green stones will inevitably be thought of as substantially different from one another. To be grue is to be fundamentally dissimilar to being green.

Marshall Swain in his "Causation and Distinct Events" describes lucidly the counter-factual analysis of causal dependence. He enunciates the principle:

- ( $\phi$ ) An event  $e$  causally depends on an event  $c$ , just in case if  $c$  had not occurred  $e$  would not have occurred.

He cites a number of objections that have been raised against ( $\phi$ ) and argues that these can be met if ( $\phi$ ) is conjoined with

- ( $\psi$ )  $c$  and  $e$  are not causally connected unless neither event is a compound event of which the other is a component.

His arguments are straightforward and convincing. However, some of his unargued for presuppositions may cause one concern. Swain trustingly conforms to the unexplained, unfortunate, received opinion according to which there is something special about counterfactuals which sets them wide apart from plain predictive conditionals. But surely instead of ( $\phi$ ) we could just as well have:

- ( $\phi^*$ ) An event  $e$  causally depends on an event  $c$ , just in case if  $c$  is not expected to occur then  $e$  is not expected to occur.

J.L. Mackie is another philosopher who has uncritically held this view. He presents "All persons in this room speak English" as a paradigm of an accidental generalization since it fails to imply the counterfactual "If K. were in this room he would speak English." On the other hand, "All objects acted on by a force, accelerate" expresses a causal connection between force and acceleration, since it is true that if this ashtray were subject to a force it would accelerate.

In fact, however, the relevant feature of a statement expressing a causal connection is that, unlike mere accidental generalizations, its assertion extends beyond the scope of its observed instances. But in order to bring this out we could just as well refer to a causal statement's power to support conditional predictions as to its power to support the appropriate counterfactual.

In addition, one would be entitled to complain that the attempt to distinguish between the two kinds of generalizations with the aid of any conditional is to put the cart before the horse. Surely we know that the first statement does not support its conditionals only because we already

know that it is not a law but merely an accidental generalization, and not the other way round. The reason it becomes clear to us that we are confronted with our accidental generalization essentially lies in the method whereby its credibility has become established. The acceleration statement has been established by induction which is inherently a method that carries us beyond the observed and leads to the conclusion that a given regulatiry is obeyed universally in the future as well as in the past. Accidental generalizations are never the conclusions of inductive reasoning; they are established by actually observing that a given property belongs to all the members of the claim to which the generalization has ascribed that generalization, and beyond which it does not go. The inability to support a conditional referring to an individual not now a member of that fixed group merely illustrates this point.

Among the many highly interesting things Keith Lehrer has to say in his "Preferences, Conditionals and Freedom" he offers a definition of determinism that differs from the time honored, classic definition:

The problem of how to define determinism is far from trivial. One method is in terms of possible worlds. By this method, assuming a notion of a logically possible world, we may say that determinism is true in the actual world if every possible world having the same laws of nature as the actual world and sharing a temporal slice with the actual world, that is, being identical to the actual world at some time, is identical to the actual world at every other time. This condition assures that, given the state of the world at any time, the state of the world is determined at every time by the laws. (p. 197)

It seems to me that upon realizing the intimate connection between the laws of nature and the initial conditions Lehrer's suggestion may be considerably improved. Let me explain. Consider the fact that in the actual world no physical signals are thought to exist that travel faster than light. Does this feature of our world represent a law of nature or rather some inevitable result of the initial conditions that happened to prevail at zero hour? The principle that no speed higher than that of light is attainable is commonly taken to amount to one of the fundamental laws of nature. Let us think, however, for a moment of a possible world *W* in which this law is violated because *W* contains a number of peculiar particles  $\psi$  — which do not exist in the actual world and which are capable of travelling at any velocity. Let us stipulate that *W* is in every other respect as similar to our world as possible. A number of philosophers seem likely to be inclined to maintain that the actual world and *W* are not nomologically congruent.

Suppose that I asserted that in fact the actual world and *W* were nomologically congruent, except that *W* happened to start out with  $\psi$  — particles which are the kind of particles that travel faster than light in every universe in which they exist. It is just that our universe was not blessed with a single  $\psi$  — particle at its birth. I might even venture further and contend that since the actual world and *W* are nomologically congruent, if we had any  $\psi$  — particles in our world they would be travelling here too at any speed. On every known analysis of counter-factuals this

statement would be regarded as true. I would insist then that in fact there is no actual law of nature prohibiting speeds exceeding that of light, it is just that we do not happen to have the appropriate particles capable of doing so, particles that are logically as respectable as any. This of course commits us to treating Special Relativity as constituting no laws, and all the fascinating features assigned to our universe by Einstein's Theory as essentially due to the peculiar initial conditions prevailing at the inception of the universe, namely, the absence of  $\psi$  -particles.

Thus we should ask ourselves the question: what does it involve to provide a description of the initial conditions prevailing at  $t_0$ , at the beginning of a given universe? Obviously it necessarily involves a full characterization of all the particulars existing at  $t_0$ . But clearly I will not have described fully a particular unless I have described all of its properties, meaning, unless I have described all the laws it obeys. Suppose, for example, that there is a world  $W^*$  that is identical with the actual world except that in  $W^*$  there is one law governing electrons which is not the same as in our world. It should be obvious that our world and  $W^*$  do not consist of identical matters. Our world has one kind of electron whereas  $W^*$  has a somewhat different kind of electron.

What I have just said amounts roughly to something fairly commonly accepted among philosophers, namely that when we ascribe a property  $P_1$  to an individual of kind  $K$  we roughly mean that there is a certain law  $L_1$  implying that under conditions  $C_1$  that individual will exhibit behavior  $B_1$ . Parallel implications are carried by the ascription of property  $P_2$  to the same individual. A complete characterization of the individual in question involves a full description of  $P_1, P_2, \dots, P_n$  which is the full set of properties possessed by that individual. Obviously a wholly adequate description of this set requires a complete description of  $L_1, L_2, \dots, L_n$ , i.e., the set of laws associated with  $P_1, P_2, \dots, P_n$ . It follows therefore that in order to provide a complete description of the state of the universe at a given moment, or what has been called a "slice" of the universe we must offer a full description of all the particulars contained by the universe at that moment. This involves a description of all their properties and therefore all the existing laws of nature.

Thus "determinism" lends itself to a more simplified definition than generally envisaged, because of the intimate connection between the intrinsic character of an individual and the laws to which it is subject. This connection implies that it is not possible for two worlds to have identical initial conditions and yet be governed by different laws. Clearly then, all that Lehrer needs to say is that "determinism is true in the actual world if every possible world sharing a temporal slice with the actual world at  $t$  is identical to the actual world at any time later than  $t$ ."

The book also contains R.M. Chisholm's "Beginning and Endings," I. Thalberg's "Fatalism Toward Past and Future," M. B. Naylor's "Fatalism and Timeless Truth," H.N. Castaneda's "Causes, Energy and Constant Conjunctions," M. Brand's "Simultaneous Causation," Carl Ginet's "The Conditional Analysis of Freedom," T. Duggan's "Habit,"

Raymond Martin's "Explanatory Controversy in Historical Studies," R.M. Martin's "Fact, Feeling, Faith and Form," J. Feinberg's "Absurd Self-Fulfilment," P. van Inwagen's "Philosophers and the Words 'Human Body'." Some of these are of considerable philosophical importance. To do them even just partial justice would have required at least three times the space taken up by this review.

R. M. Hare, *Moral Thinking: Its Levels, Method, and Point* (New York: The Clarendon Press, Oxford University Press, 1981), viii + 242 pp., \$19.95 cloth, \$7.95 paper.

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In this book, R. M. Hare extends his well-known theory of ethics in two main ways. First, while in *Freedom and Reason* he emphasized the formal elements of moral thought, and only tentatively suggested that these might combine to yield substantive moral conclusions, Hare now aligns himself squarely with utilitarianism. The earlier freedom to choose the basic action-guiding principles which reason will make universal has given way to a more constrained freedom to reason along a single utilitarian path determined by the logic of moral concepts. And, second, to disarm standard objections to utilitarianism, to illuminate various moral phenomena, and to guide our future moral thinking, Hare now advances a "two-level" approach to moral thought akin to some versions of rule-utilitarianism. Of these two new developments, the assignment of different questions to different levels of moral thought is sensible but neither original nor as conclusive as Hare thinks. The attempt to forge a firm link between universal prescriptivism and utilitarianism is bold and exciting, but, I think, ultimately unsuccessful.

Let us begin with the two-level approach. As Hare tirelessly reminds us, most standard objections to utilitarianism are at bottom appeals to intuition. They appeal to such firm convictions ("fixed points of moral judgment," etc.) as that promises should be kept, people treated justly, goods distributed fairly, etc. Since utilitarianism seems to imply that we should *not* keep promises or be fair or just when alternatives acts will bring more happiness or preference-satisfaction, it is held unable to accommodate the intuitive starting points of ethical theorizing. But, as Hare notes, this line of objection is doubly inconclusive. It is inconclusive first because it naively assumes that our moral intuitions reflect genuine insights and not merely parochial attitudes induced by social conditioning; and, second, because it ignores the fact that utilitarianism itself calls for the inculcation of just such attitudes. Given the many well-known obstacles to accurate on-the-spot utility calculations, true utilitarians will choose to in-