

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

This month's *Philosophy Pathways* focuses upon a trio of conundrums that would interest the wide-reading philosopher. The first article is 'On the definition of jealousy and other emotions in *Anarchy, State and Utopia*' by T.R. Edwards. The second article is provided by Sreetama Misra and is entitled 'Ethics and Knowledge: A Study from Russell's Perspective'. The third and final article is a response to the question 'Is it Immoral to Kill Animals?' by Dimitrios Haniotis. Within this editorial I have tried to briefly demonstrate how all of the arguments provided may be augmented by the inclusion of political philosophy, but particularly by employing a communitarian or societal stance. Now, I appreciate that this might not be immediately obvious or of interest to the authors of the articles but hopefully this widens the appeal of these articles.

Turning to the first article by Edwards, he examines a short tract from Nozick's *Anarchy, State and Utopia*: a tome that has had great influence upon libertarian philosophers. By employing logic, the author criticises Nozick's work noting that the 'first human to climb to the top of Mount Everest' is a situation in which only one person may claim this attribute and this situation is ignored within Nozick's theorising when considering emotions such as how jealousy may affect a person. Edward's criticism is valid but he has seemingly unwittingly uncovered a forceful argument that may be more applicable to political philosophy. To explain, if Edward's argument was furthered, then it could be argued that as a single person needs the assistance of others to climb Mount Everest, then *all* may join in sharing this achievement. Here, a communitarian argument countering Nozick's libertarian theorising may be realised. With the recent rise in popular libertarianism in the western world, opponents of libertarianism would do well to revisit *Anarchy, State and Utopia* to find anomalies such as this to construct their own arguments.

The second article is provided by Sreetama Misra and is entitled 'Ethics and Knowledge: A Study from Russell's Perspective'. Here, the writer supports an argument from Bertrand Russell's autobiography that 'Ethics is not a branch of knowledge'; and possibly more interestingly, the article also notes that Russell believed that ethics should not be a part of philosophy!

Support is provided for Russell's argument via two premises: the first being that ethics reflect human desires; and secondly that ethics are subjective. In the first premise, the author repeats David Hume's argument that 'that reason is the slave of passion'; augmented with Russell's own observation, that in times of war, ethics reduces to politics. Therefore the conclusion reached is that there can be no absolute ethical knowledge; although the author notes that ethical concepts can exist. The second premise notes that one person's vice is

another's virtue; and only when a single opinion dominates over others, do we realise a variant of, what may be termed, 'objectivity'.

In my humble opinion, as the study of ethics helps to steer society, then it does not matter where we study it; as long as we study it. Furthermore, although we do not gain 'absolute' ethical knowledge, we gain a 'relative' ethical knowledge that society agrees upon and it provides standards by which society may flourish. This whole process allows us to produce goods and gain knowledge, which should benefit everyone when they are disseminated. That said, the reader will undoubtedly form their own opinion here.

In the third article, Dimitrios Haniotis responds to the question 'Is it Immoral to Kill Animals?' Haniotis provides an impassioned argument that it is *indeed* immoral to kill animals. This is accomplished by a discursive structure and throughout, the piece is full of vivid imagery.

The essay largely takes a view that animal suffering is immoral. However, if we accept that differing societies have differing moralities, then we have to accept that some societies may approve of animals' suffering whereas some may recoil at this prospect. There is room, I feel, in this debate to refrain from taking the animals' side and adopting an anthropocentric stance; to explain, possibly people are now eating too much red meat, certainly in the western world, and this is damaging to the consumers' health; hence we should be killing less animals.

Haniotis also states that 'we can live without eating meat'. For me, there is often the tendency in philosophy to treat human beings as a homogenous mass and fail to realise peoples' differences. To elucidate, as people are omnivores, there will be some people who can live without meat, such as those who come from a vegetarian culture and are attuned to such a lifestyle. However, there are those who may come from a carnivorous culture and would not be able to live without meat as their physiology would suffer.

And so there you have it, an edition of *Philosophy Pathways* where the articles have provided me, at the very least, with food for thought. Hopefully, they will do the same for you.

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