

# *Letting the Truth Out: Children, Naïve Truth, and Deflationism*



BRIAN LIGHTBODY

## ***Abstract***

In their recent paper, “Epistemology for Beginners: Two to Five-Year-Old Children’s Representation of Falsity,” Olivier Mascaro and Olivier Morin study the ontogeny of a naïve understanding of truth in humans. Their paper is fascinating for several reasons, but most striking is their claim (given a rather optimistic reading of epistemology) that toddlers as young as two can, at times, recognize false from true assertions. Their Optimistic Epistemology Hypothesis holds that children seem to have an innate capacity to represent a state of affairs truthfully. In the following paper, I investigate the problems this research poses for deflationist theories of truth. Richard Rorty and Huw Price hold that the best way to understand truth or “the truth” is to understand the necessary conditions required for assertoric practice. Both philosophers present unique and very different deflationary theories when it comes to construing truth. I argue that neither philosopher’s approach is successful because they focus on truth and fail to recognize truthfulness as a norm of assertoric practice. I show that truthfulness is the elusive third norm of claim-based discourse and is consistent with Mascaro and Morin’s findings.

**Keywords:** *Pragmatism, Optimistic Epistemology Hypothesis, Deflationism, Rorty, Price, Kant*

## ***Introduction***

In their recent paper, “Epistemology for Beginners: Two-to Five-Year-Old Children’s Representation of Falsity,” Olivier Morin and Olivier Mascaro study the ontogeny of a naïve understanding of truth in humans.<sup>1</sup> Their paper is fascinating for several reasons, but most striking is their claim (given a rather optimistic reading of epistemology) that toddlers as young as two can, at times, recognize false from true assertions. Their Optimist Epistemology Hypothesis (hereafter OEH) holds

---

*Kriterion – Journal of Philosophy, AO, AO(AO): 1–26.*

<http://www.kriterion-journal-of-philosophy.org>

© AO The author

that young children have the conceptual understanding to treat, correctly, assertions that make false representations of a state of affairs as false. What's more, when toddlers are unable to identify false claims as untrue, the authors hypothesize that this is because young children reconstruct the testimony of some speakers, but especially primary caregivers, "in a way that makes them true."<sup>2</sup>

One could, of course, attempt to debunk the findings of Mascaro and Morin by claiming that the study used a relatively small number of children (about 50) and therefore constitutes a small sample size making any claims made either for or against OEH inscrutable. One might also argue that the methodology employed to test the responses of toddlers is open to several and competing interpretations. I, however, will forego these criticisms. Instead, I shall concentrate on their twofold hypothesis, namely, 1) that truth as propositional *adequatio*, (defined as a statement that truly reflects a state of affairs), is programmed into our species being (their Optimist Epistemology Hypothesis) and develops very early on in childhood and 2) that children attempt to re-interpret false statements made by primary caregivers because there is a survival advantage in doing so.<sup>3</sup>

The hypothesis, if correct, has far-reaching consequences within epistemology as a whole. To take but one entailment, fashionable pragmatic theories of truth which attempt to deflate truth and inflate justification or other normative features of assertoric discourse as promulgated by the likes of Richard Rorty and Huw Price, seem to be in jeopardy if OEH is true. Their respective positions offer pragmatic disquotational views of truth: for Rorty when someone states "that is true" or some other version thereof, what she really means is that the statement is highly justified. Price, in contrast, resists the temptation to provide an *Ursprung* explanation of truth (for reasons that will become clear later) and instead argues that truth is the necessary and only goal of all claim-based discourse.<sup>4</sup> Thus when someone states "That is true.", they are coronating the particular sentence as it were and, in effect, removing the proposition from further reproach.

In the following paper, I wish to explore three things. Firstly, I examine the respective arguments Rorty and Price employ to deflate truth. There are, of course, many different kinds of deflationism, but the standard pragmatic methods of deflating truth, as assiduously employed by Rorty and Price, stand out from other, semantic deflationary approaches (e.g., Minimalism) because they focus on the illocutionary effects of using 'true' and its cognates.<sup>5</sup> Next, I demonstrate that Price is correct in

stating that a key aspect of assertive practice is the goal-like aspect of truth: interlocutors, ideally, pursue truth together. Thirdly, I show how Mascaro and Morin's thesis undermines Price's "global expressivist" position. I argue that Price conflates the normativity of truthfulness with the end goal of investigative inquiry, namely, truth itself. Truthfulness and not truth is the elusive third norm of avowal practice. Finally, I demonstrate how an implication of the second claim of OEH namely, that, "vigilance towards misinformation could be an adaptive response to a child's increased social autonomy" is consistent with the further development of the ontogeny of truth in children as they mature into adults despite the tendency for some adults to be duped by ideology.<sup>6</sup> I conclude by supplementing Price's 3-D holographic metaphor (which is intended to demonstrate the necessity of conjoining subject and object aspects of naturalism in order to form a holistic whole) with a fourth dimension, time. To be a naturalist is to possess, act and practice an ethos and this ethos is defined by a subject's ongoing commitment to truth and truthfulness.

### ***Section I: Richard Rorty on Truth***

Rorty in "Science as Solidarity" writes, "There is nothing to be said about either truth or rationality apart from descriptions of the familiar procedures of justification which a given society—ours—uses in one or another area of inquiry."<sup>7</sup> Rorty's epistemic position is such that truth, the truth or Truth (whatever nominalization of truths one wishes to use) are not necessary to make statements. As a pragmatist, Rorty upholds the methodological rule of "no difference without a practical difference."<sup>8</sup> As Rorty himself explains this principle: "Pragmatists think that if something makes no difference to practice, it should make no difference to philosophy. This conviction makes them suspicious of the distinction between justification and truth, for that distinction makes no difference to my decisions about what to do."<sup>9</sup> For Rorty, the best way to understand epistemic concepts such as truth, warrant, evidence and so forth is to examine the linguistic vehicles utilized to transit these notions. The primary transport of such epistemic terms is assertions. Thus, by analyzing the conditions that make assertions and statements possible, one can determine the essential components of sentences that purport of truth.

Assertoric discourse, of which scientific and other forms of inquiry are a species, is defined by the acceptance, challenging and denying of claims.

For this practice to occur, it is imperative that such claims be taken seriously—assertions must be expressed by a sincere speaker/writer who gives assent to the statements with which she agrees. Second, the speaker or writer must justify her views with reasons. Sincerity and justification are clearly normative conditions and are therefore referred to as the first and second norm of claimed-based discourse. For Rorty, the above two constraints are the only normative components assertions require. The elusive third norm, truth, is not essential so holds Rorty when playing the game of stating, assenting to, and denying assertions.

What then of truth, the third norm, we may ask? According to Rorty, the notion of truth plays neither a metaphysical, epistemic, semantic, nor normative role when it comes to the practice of making assertions and denials. Truth has no metaphysical role to play because truth does not exist outside of our procedures of justification and discursive practices in which we know our way around.<sup>10</sup> Any notion where reality somehow existed beyond these procedures would be unknowable and hence of no practical purpose. Rorty proclaims that we must abandon the third dogma of empiricism which holds that there remains a division between the schemes we use to organize the sensory world and the content of the world that exists somewhere beyond these arrangements.<sup>11</sup> The model is self-contradictory; if we cannot in principle know what the world is like then we cannot claim that our perspectives describe the world as it is independently from those very perspectives because we would have no way to perform an accurate measurement of our schemas and no way of knowing what the schemas are mapping onto.

Turning now to the justificatory, truth has no epistemic role to play when examining the reasons for the holding of some assertion. When one argues that a claim is not true, one is not arguing that the speaker has not adequately viewed the real facts of the matter because one cannot "... separate out the world's contribution to the judgment forming process from our own."<sup>12</sup> What the person is, in effect, saying, so holds Rorty, is that the speaker is not justified; the reasons given to support some assertion are inadequate, or irrelevant, are inconsistent, are insufficient or are not appropriately weighted, etc. It is the notion of justification then which bears the epistemic and normative weight of assertoric discourse. Truth is not a load bearing notion, epistemically speaking. Given that justification has an enormous load to bear in Rorty's construal of avowal communication, it is prudent to examine Rorty's idea of justification in more detail.

Rorty makes clear, in *Contingency, Irony, Solidarity*, that justifica-

tion, for him, is not uniform but varies from discipline to discipline and, more importantly, from audience to audience. Rorty argues that the world, as we describe it, cannot be reduced to any particular model, idea or theory. The idea of holding perspectives on a singular reality where reality stands outside of these perspectives should be outrightly rejected. All there is, Rorty evinces, are a fixed number of “language games”—academic discourses and disciplines that determine the meaning of sentences and therefore of justified belief within that particular context. Rorty explains: “Uttering a sentence without a fixed place in a language game is, as the positivists rightly have said, to utter something which is neither true nor false—something which is not, in Ian Hacking’s terms, “a truth-value candidate.”<sup>13</sup> Philosophers should not view the different languages of academic disciplines as separate jigsaw pieces where the end-goal is to fit them together in a feeble attempt to unify both our language (and our knowledge) into one, grand, super-vocabulary. To view justification in this manner would entail that no statement is ever truly justified because all statements would be true only according to some angle or perspective on “the truth.” Holding this position would be disastrous because we would never be able to exorcize the ghosts of Descartes, namely, of discovering a method that would ground the sciences on some perfect, epistemically secure metaphysical foundation. Thus, according to Rorty, such questions such as “What is the place of consciousness in a world of molecules? Or “What is the relation of language to thought?”<sup>14</sup> Are ill-formed questions because they presuppose that the justificatory procedures accepted in one language game hold for another. Rorty himself best summarizes the upshot of this approach by writing: “. . . since truth is a property of sentences, since sentences are dependent for their existence upon vocabularies, and since vocabularies are made by human beings, so are truths.”<sup>15</sup>

Following Rorty’s first step of deflating truth one might claim that there are truths in physics, truths in history and truths in geology but no Truth or the truth. Holding there is but one Truth is to view the impossible. It would entail claiming that such statements—viewed through the optics of the academic discipline in which they are couched—are necessarily limiting perspectives on the world. However, if this were the case, then what constrains them? Thinking of Truth instead of truths is to engage in the perverse practice of Platonic nominalization which entails thinking of goods in terms of the Good. However, neither nominalization, whether it is the Good, the Truth or Beauty with a capital B, is particularly helpful and thus such notions remain vacuous when they are

allowed to operate detached from the conditions that make them possible.<sup>16</sup> “If . . . my doubts are unspecific and abstract as Descartes’—if they are such that I can do nothing to resolve them—they should be dismissed, as they were by Peirce, as ‘make-believe. Philosophy should ignore them.’”<sup>17</sup>

Turning to Rorty’s second and final deflationary step, it is clear that even little *t* truths do not exist. So-called truths refer to ‘facts,’ but so-called facts (sentence-shaped objects Strawson declares) are much like complex, linguistic nodes functioning within, and constituted by, a network of beliefs, positions, theories and observation reports within the particular academic discipline in which they are housed. “The problem is not with funny, Platonic, ‘hyper-objectivized’ facts,” Rorty asserts “but with any sentence shaped non-sentence, any putatively (in McDowell’s words) ‘non-conceptualized configurations of things themselves.’”<sup>18</sup> The problem, demonstrated and highlighted by the likes of Kuhn and others, is that one cannot isolate facts from theories nor theories from facts and thus there is no bright line distinguishing what data input from conceptual output is. “In so far as they are not-conceptualized, they are not isolable as input. But in so far as they are conceptualized, they have been tailored to the needs of a particular output-input function, a particular convention of representation.”<sup>19</sup>

Finally and now turning to the semantic, truth does not convey additional meaning to a proposition once one adopts a deflationary alethic schema or, conversely, once justification has been inflated to take truth’s place. One way to understand propositions in the semantic sense of the term is to interpret them along Tarskian lines. Thus, using Tarski’s T schema, the proposition, ‘Snow is white’ is true just in case snow is white. However, under a Rortian deflationary picture, such sentences may be interpreted, without loss of meaning as J schemas. The same sentence ‘Snow is white’ is justified just in case the speaker of the sentence provides direct sensory evidence, corresponding reasons, and so forth to warrant his claim. Warranted assertability preserves, without loss of meaning, so holds Rorty, the assignment of truth we typically give to sentences under a more metaphysically robust reading. “If assessment of truth and assessment of justification are, when the question is about what I should believe now (rather than about what I, or someone else, acted as we did), the same activity.”<sup>20</sup>

In deflating truth along all the above three axes, Rorty’s pragmatic model attempts to expose the real essence of truth, as it were, as nothing more than a convenient fiction; there are no epistemic, semantic, or

metaphysically interesting questions to be engendered upon pondering the question “What is truth?” in a typical Socratic, What is x? manner.<sup>21</sup> Truth, according to this view is just a property language-users use to confer a special status on some sentences and not others. However, in fact, what is meant by truth is intersubjective agreement, “justified to the hilt” as one astute commentator on Rorty’s work puts it, according to what a particular community deems to be warranted methods of inquiry and justification.<sup>22</sup> Justification, according to an audience, however, does not entail that epistemic warrant is simply *determined* by a community. As Rorty points out in an earlier paper, although . . . “justification is relative to an audience and that we can never exclude the possibility that some better audience might exist, or come to exist to which a belief which is justifiable to us would not be justifiable.”<sup>23</sup> Truth may be used in a disquotational, commending and cautionary tone, but make no mistake—in declaring a statement to be true we are not adding anything to the statement that justification cannot handle.<sup>24</sup>

Non-pragmatists have long pointed out problems with Rorty’s new construal of truth. Charles Taylor, for example, argues that Rorty is committed to scheme/content dualism and, therefore, is a representationalist after all because he advocates and defends a deflationist model of truth when dealing with input from the world as opposed to the traditional, metaphysical correspondence model. However, by defending one model as superior to some other, Rorty must hold the model defended in higher regard than the model rejected, so argues Taylor.<sup>25</sup> But on what grounds can Rorty justify this hierarchy? The only appeal Rorty can make to justify his position is to argue that the pragmatic model he endorses is a more *accurate* model when it comes to describing how subjects *actually deliberate* when they are engaged in assessing the claims of some speaker. That is, it is *false* to say that one is investigating the truth of some speaker’s assertions. What one is *truly* doing, Rorty implies, is evaluating how the speaker justifies her claims.

Perhaps Rorty’s best response to the above criticism is to hold the line against what he calls “metaphysical activism.” Metaphysical activists defend representationalism and therefore scheme/ content dualism “come what may” even though the position defended does not seem worth the trouble. Thus, Rorty concludes, raising finer, more critical analyses of realist intuitions is therefore futile because the pragmatist “. . . cannot appeal to neutral premises, nor to widely shared beliefs” between the two cultures.<sup>26</sup> Instead Rorty advocates a more rhetorical approach in his attempt to foment socio-cultural change by asking the metaphysical re-

alist such questions as: “What good do the intuitions you painstakingly salvage do us? What practical difference do they make?”<sup>27</sup>

In Rorty’s political work, *Achieving our Country*, he answers the above question and illuminates the political and social problems that occur when one nominalizes truth. For in maintaining that all assertoric discourse but especially those of a political and moral bent, needs to reflect some truth that stands outside of it, one endorses a totalizing, authoritarian system that enframes all dialogue and, thereby, subjects all forms of inquiry to external control. It is the undemocratic nature of such a Platonic, nominalizing truth that Dewey, Rorty’s intellectual hero, rejected the correspondence model, so Rorty avers. “The proposition”, Rorty declares, “was that democracy is the only form of moral and social faith which does not” (for Dewey) “rest upon the idea that experience must be subjected at some point to some form of external control: to some authority alleged to exist outside the processes of experience.”<sup>28</sup>

Elsewhere in *Achieving Our Country*, Rorty contends that a theocentric view of truth (the correspondence model) creates political “movements” in contradistinction to Rorty’s preferred political course of action, “campaigns.” Movements are problematic, according to Rorty, because they are destined to fail. As Howe contended, “they must always struggle but never quite triumph and then, after a time, must struggle in order not to triumph.”<sup>29</sup> Thus, in deflating truth, we thereby replace political movements with a series of campaigns which, unlike the former, tackle social and political issues from the ground up, encouraging input and dialogue at every step of the way. A movement, in contrast, allies itself with an *adequatio* theory of truth such that action in the name of the movement must match up with some pre-established extra-discursive true goal or state. However, this pre-ordained, uncontestable, end-goal Rorty contends, is a dangerous course of action indeed.

## ***Section II: Resisting the Ur-Urge of Pragmatism: Huw Price on Truth***

I now turn to Huw Price, another pragmatist who agrees with Rorty’s attempt to denominalize truth. Unlike like Rorty, Price does not succumb to the Ur-urge of the pragmatist, which is to equate truth with something else, to reveal the true nature of truth as such. Instead, Price ably resists the temptation of addressing truth on a meta-level entirely and instead remains fixated on the necessary pragmatic conditions for the making and denying of claims. His criticism of Rorty, then, takes



place from within the same pragmatic culture and, therefore, is more piercing than those posed by metaphysical realists. According to his analysis, when it comes to truth's normative role, there is no substitute: without truth, Price boldly states, "the wheels of argumentation would not engage."<sup>30</sup>

Price's idea of truth is that it serves as normative *friction*: it directs the course of discussion when claims are made. By holding to a standard that is *more* than just warranted assertion, speakers can and indeed must engage in dialogue with each stakeholder of a conversation regarding a course of action or position adopted. Without the search for truth as a guiding standard, contrary assertions would be inherently irresolvable because each person would use his or her personal evidence, reasons and so forth for the justification of some claim. Since, however, I can neither stand in my interlocutor's sensory space nor logical space of reasons as Sellars would say to view her evidence from her point of view, we would effectively shout past one another when either asserting or denying claims.<sup>31</sup>

Indeed, for Price, this idea of shouting past would not take place because interlocutors would immediately see no point engaging in substantive argumentation in the absence of truth. Since there is nothing objective to argue about, because an objective truth with which to appeal, does not exist, the very notion of argumentation would be incoherent and impossible to understand.

This last point is concretized by Price in his well-known fictional, inventive and ultimately impossible community of speakers called Mo'ans—speakers who do not believe in truth and thus offer *merely-opinionated assertion* (MOA)<sup>32</sup> Such speakers engage in dialogue and argumentation but never invoke the third norm (truth) in doing so. They "criticize each other for insincerity and for lack of coherence, or personal warranted assertability. But they go no further than this."<sup>33</sup> Agreement between two Mo'ans would not entail assent to a proposition believed to be objectively true, but rather function like an agreement of opinion that takes place in a "bar or restaurant" such as "Ditto" "Here, Here!"<sup>34</sup>

But agreement concerning what particular state of affairs Price now inquires? Surely Mo'ans who are in agreement with one another express agreement over some matter of fact and agree as to what the facts of the matter are. A Moan's opinion is about something after all, and the belief in the content or aboutness of a conceptual construal of some state of affairs entails that one accepts, at a minimum, the following theses. 1) That the belief assented to is justified and 2) that one's construal of the

belief is an accurate representation of the thing discussed. It is difficult to see how sincere agreement over anything important could take place if individuals did not give assent to the truth regarding the content of an interlocutor's statement or indeed to their own.

Disagreement in an M'oan community is perhaps even more perplexing. For Price, real disagreement in such a community would not occur because it would be otiose—if there is no objective matter of the topic at hand, and no epistemic purchase of objective reality to be had (truth as *adequatio*) then disagreement is either meaningless or something else entirely. Without a way to resolve the disagreement, Price avers, the mere approval and disapproval of assertions would lose their bite and thus enervate assertive discourse entirely by depriving it of one of its primary sources of motivation: the reward a community bestows on an argument or position accepted as true.<sup>35</sup> Although Price is not explicit in stating that assertoric discourse is an agonistic practice it is heavily implied in his paper and responses.<sup>36</sup> The agonistic aspects of discourse will be sharpened towards the end of this paper. In effect, I argue that while Price sees the principal agonistic struggle intersubjectively, I see it as intrasubjective.

The upshot of Price's account is that truth must remain the end-goal in the game of assertions for without truth, contrary assertions and denials would be too slippery and skate past each other without any encounter. "Without truth, Price declares, the wheels of argument do not engage; disagreements slide past one another."<sup>37</sup> It is only the normative desideratum of truth that compels those engaged in assertive practices to consider the sincerity with which others and themselves hold statements as well as the justificatory merits of statements made by others who hold such assertions as warranted and, therefore, likely to be true in that agent's subjective opinion. Truth as a third norm may not be as obvious as the other two because it is the ever-elusive holy grail of all statement-based discourse. However, for all its elusiveness, it remains a goal that all investigators seek to attain.

To my mind, Price has raised an essential condition of assertoric practice that Rorty overlooks. There are, however, troubling aspects to Price's answer to those who believe that truth is more than just a norm. One of the issues with Price's argument is that it is unclear what role truth would play, if any, once two speakers deflate truth to a normative position. If two interlocutors attempt to argue with each other while knowing that there is no metaphysical, no nominalized objective standard that can be reached then it seems difficult to imagine how an

argument would get off the ground. Surely participants in an argument need *to believe* in a realist metaphysics and an epistemic *adequatio* notion of truth for the initiation, sustainment and if required, possible resuscitation of inquiry. Once the illusion of truth as nominalized idea is rejected and only a pragmatic, normative ground remains then the jig is surely up, argumentation would not take place.

Price anticipates the above objection, but his response is on rather shaky ground. According to Price, those who recognize that truth is just “convenient friction” would still argue in exactly the same way before the ‘true’ structure of truth, as it were, was revealed. Price calls this objection the threat of “dialogical nihilism” and dispatches it quickly using, in my view, a rather questionable analogy.<sup>38</sup> He claims that seeking truth is analogous to seeking an individual who is sexually attractive or food that is savory: though we may believe that there are clear criteria that a person or food item would need to satisfy such that we call either one attractive our criteria are not causally efficacious. We do not act based on these criteria but rather invoke them to justify what we, presumably, are already biologically determined to find desirable.

Moreover, it may be the same with truth, Price declares. There may be a biological need to recognize the third norm as more than just a norm. The recognition of truth for what it truly is, namely as a biologically imposed norm, however, would not change the goal of propositional communication precisely in the same way that the recognition of why I believe some person or food item to be attractive would not weaken my desire for that person or object. Interlocutors would continue to pursue the truth of some matter just as diligently and energetically as before.

But if the pursuit of truth is analogous to the pursuit of food and sex, then can we not reduce truth to an evolutionary capacity in the Morin and Mascaro sense? Assuming Price is right, that is, once the curtain on truth is pulled back and the *real* picture on truth is revealed then surely the norm of truth is no norm at all. Truth becomes a hard-fact biological restriction, an evolutionary *a priori* necessary condition for the very possibility of argumentation. The idea of truth cannot simply be shaken off whether construed as “convenient friction” or “justification to the hilt” but instead must be adapted within prescribed contexts just as the children in Mascaro and Morin’s study group intuitively adapt to the false assertions made by their primary caregivers by reinterpreting these statements so as to make them true.<sup>39</sup> Truth, under Price’s model, sheds its normative skin and begins to adopt a metaphysically necessary descriptive quality.

Also, Price's analogy seems to contradict findings in experimental psychology and common-sense. The concept of cognitive transformation shows that belief and desire are a two-way causal conduit. Appetites may influence the belief one may come to have about an object which may make it more or less desirable than it otherwise would be and vice versa—belief can come to assess an object as less or more desirable depending on the features of the object on which one focuses.

What's more, there is voluminous empirical research confirming cognitive transformation. As one researcher wrote regarding appetite suppression:

“It became clear that delay of gratification depends not on whether or not attention is focused on the objects of desire, but rather on just how they are mentally represented. A focus on their hot features may momentarily increase motivation, but unless it is rapidly cooled by a focus on their cool, informative features. . . .it is likely to be excessively arousing and trigger the “go” response.”<sup>40</sup>

Parsing the conclusion of this meta-study, the researchers showed that appetites can be aroused or cooled depending on how agents think about the features of the objects desired. If one focuses on “hot” aspects of an object such as the crunchiness of one's favorites flavor of potato chips, then one is more likely to indulge the appetite.<sup>41</sup> If, however, one focuses on “cool” aspects such as the abstract shape a potato chip might take one is more likely to delay the satisfaction of the appetite or indeed negate it completely. The same could be said for the sexual appetites: focusing on the unappealing aspects of some individual makes that person less attractive overall and vice versa—delaying sexual appetites may make some person appear more desirable than he or she otherwise would be. If Price's analogy holds then truth is a biological need on the same level as either sex or food, and therefore our so-called “appetite” for truth would be subject to the psychological principle of cognitive transformation as well. But, if this is the case, then Price is wrong: two sophisticated arguers who know that truth merely is a norm and not an objective state of higher understanding would be disinclined to inquire into the nature of nature, they would lose their appetite for truth, just as reframing food appetites can change their hot or “go” properties.

The identification of nutritional needs and sexual appetites with truth is false in another way too. One can give up sex by becoming celibate or, give up foods that we may be biologically programmed to find highly desirable. Indeed, if one is sufficiently motivated one may give up food

altogether. However, can one give up truth? What would it mean to extricate truth from belief and correspondingly tether belief to some other concept? Take celibacy for example. The practice is often coupled but not always to some religious or spiritual belief set. Whether the celibate is a Catholic priest or Buddhist monk one is celibate because one believes that there are lower and higher perspectives on oneself. One can see oneself as a sexual creature, essentially, or one may choose to think of oneself through a different perspective (e.g. as a child of God in the case of the priest or if Buddhist to see sex as a Dharma, an illusion and form of thirst preventing one from true Enlightenment/Nirvana). In either case, one seeks to establish a higher, more profound, more truthful relationship to one's body and soul (or lack thereof in the case of the Buddhist), than that afforded by secular society. Sexuality can be transcended because the celibate believes in a higher calling, a higher truth.

Likewise, one can swear off certain foods high in fat or sugar because one recognizes lower and higher truths: that such foods are delicious but that these same foods will likely lead to an early death. In more extreme circumstances, there are those who have gone on hunger strikes to draw attention to a cause deemed more important than one's own existence. Bobby Sands, a member of the Irish Republican Army who died of starvation on the 66th day of a continuous hunger strike while in prison helps concretize this point: if Sands simply viewed the truth of his cause as stemming from a biological need it is doubtful that he would go to such extreme lengths to bring attention to it.

The question to be asked, then, is whether such extreme ascetics could view their practices as anything other than one motivated by a higher truth or indeed truth itself.<sup>42</sup> Phrased another way (and in Pricean influenced terms) could individuals who believed that *truth was merely biological* need, (TMB'ans) be celibates? Could TMB'ans go on hunger strikes? Could these types of ascetic practices be possible if one held the desire for truth to be nothing more than a glitch in our biological programming?

I would submit no because in order to engage in such practices one needs to view such rigorously severe exercises as something more than merely true according to one's biology. Freely denying one's basic biological need for food to advance some cause entails that the belief must be coupled to truth: no other coupling such as opinion, justification or even aesthetic criteria would provide the propulsion and continued impulsion for such a painful, excruciating practice. Truth cannot be a mere bio-

logical endowment on par with either sex or food because it is the desire for, and realization of, the truth that can negate the inclination of these other desires.

### *Section III: Global Expressivism: A Pricean Defense?*

One possible objection to the above line of argument is that it leads to other issues most notably “placement” or “location” problems. Such problems are, after all, one of the primary motivators for Price’s global expressivist position, and, as such, I would be remiss if I did not at least examine what these problems entailed. Price notes, that, given a particular framework of reality say, empiricism or physicalism, expressions that appear to be statements of fact are hard to place. “Where are moral facts to be located in the kind of world described by physics? Where is our knowledge of causal necessity to go, if *a posteriori* knowledge is grounded on the senses?”<sup>43</sup>

The expressivist solution to these claims, following Hume, is to argue that supposed moral facts, such as, “Stealing is wrong!” for example, are not facts all. That is to say, they do not reflect external states in the world but are really expressions of approval or disapproval presented by a subject for a myriad of purposes (e.g., communication, admonishment, etc) which then “stain and gild the world.”<sup>44</sup> The solution, Price avers, “.is to move these problem cases outside the scope of the general program in question, by arguing that our tendency to place them within its scope reflects a mistaken understanding of the vocabulary associated with the matters in question.”<sup>45</sup> Once one recognizes that said expressions have been placed under the wrong category all along, the problem disappears.

But there remains something troubling with this solution, Price notes. The issue is that it retains the representational language from which a true pragmatist wishes to free herself. Representationalism is reinforced because the answer cleaves language in two: scientific assertions represent the world, while statements made in other vocabularies, like ethics and aesthetics, do not. There are, then, two parts to a traditional expressivist or non-cognitivist position: an anti-representationalist aspect which Price contends is a negative thesis in that it claims that ethical (or aesthetic statements) are “non-referential, non-truth apt, non-descriptive, non-factual or something of the kind.”<sup>46</sup> And a positive thesis Price calls the expressivist in “that it expresses or projects from evaluative attitudes.”<sup>47</sup> The problem with the negative thesis is that

it is difficult to see how the expressivist can make metaphysical claims about the world as to which statements are capable of reflecting external states and which in principle cannot. If, after all, moral, aesthetic or even causal statements are in principle non-descriptive then an expressivist who holds the negative thesis is making a descriptive claim about such statements in claiming that they do not refer to the world. Price's expressivism solves this dilemma. It rejects this negative, representational aspect of traditional expressivism and instead embraces expressivism of a global kind where "global" refers to an assemblage of local vocabularies. "Expressivism," Price relates, "in its local varieties gives us an indication of what the theoretical conversation is going to be about, given that it is not to be conducted in a semantic key."<sup>48</sup>

Price argues that we can have the same robust arguments in ethics as we had before an expressivist turn, but that we are no longer talking about concepts such as "goodness" "seven" "cause" "knowledge" and "truth" do[ing] the job of referring—in other words, that they stand at one end of a relation of some significant kind."<sup>49</sup> In thinking about these terms as referring to distinct objects, we thereby open the door to placement problems. Price's adoption of the positive thesis, by itself, resolves this issue.

How then should we conceive of these terms? We should think of them in terms of how they are used, within a context, within their respective vocabularies. Price's global expressivism, then, is not a metaphysical position but simply denotes a collection of local discourses. Inquiries should be directed not along semantic lines but should be about ".the role and genealogy of evaluative and modal vocabularies—and these are questions about human behavior, broadly construed, rather than questions about some seemingly puzzling part of the metaphysical realm."<sup>50</sup> It is the asking of traditional philosophical questions like, "What really is truth?" that one engages in a metaphysical *aporia* because one is no longer asking how a term is used effectively, but what the term stands for, what is it about? It is this way of talking that leads to an unbridgeable chasm from linguistic use and the object that said use supposedly represents.<sup>51</sup> We must shift away from doing philosophy of language in a metaphysical key, Price exhorts, and instead recognize that we are "... doing something like anthropology."<sup>52</sup>

At present we seem to be at an impasse. An anthropological ground does not exhaust the uses of truth, especially in those cases where one is engaged in a Rortian movement, of the sort described near the end of section II. As already noted, if one believes that truth is grounded

on anthropological/biological need, it is doubtful that this belief will generate the type of momentum to move along one's quest to pursue higher, more profound truths. Yet, truth as *adequatio* does seem to be vulnerable to the sort of placement problems noted by Price. Perhaps his alternative, while certainly lacking in some respects, is preferable to an *adequatio* model. Is there a way through this impasse? In the next section, I demonstrate how a *rapprochement* of sorts may be enacted between Price and the position I have thus far expounded here.

#### ***Section IV: What then is truth?***

Is truth an evolutionary adaptation as Mascaro and Morrin suggest? Is it a norm, dispensable or indispensable depending on one's view, as the pragmatists argue or something else entirely? I would argue it is both. Truth, here understood as *adequatio*, appears to be an evolutionary adaptation, a transcendental condition that makes inquiry possible, but it is also a norm. More accurately stated, it is not truth *per se* that is a norm but truthfulness. Truthfulness, I submit, is the actualization of a latent capacity to judge the representation of a state of affairs accurately. For every investigation, inquiry and experiment or conversation with assertoric elements requires that the participants are truthful regarding their findings along with the presentation of said findings to others and, of perhaps greater importance, to themselves. Thus, *adequatio* provides humans the ability to view the world—at least from our distinct species perspective, which because it is a perspective does not make it any less true than some other—but it is truthfulness that must be practiced. To be truthful is to remain vigilant in avoiding distorting lenses through which to view the picture represented.

The authors hint at the distinction I am drawing here between truth as the capacity to present the world propositionally and truthfulness as the ability to judge what is presented by others and oneself when one is engaged in argumentation. As children develop, Mascaro and Morrin conjecture, they are much more likely to call informants out on false statements because “vigilance towards misinformation could be an adaptive response to their increased social autonomy, as they come to interact more and more with their peers.”<sup>53</sup> Self-deception, weakness of will, sub-optimal choosing are all examples of behavior which have been described as when an agent is not vigilant enough when it comes to processing the information before her.<sup>54</sup> How might we explain these and other phenomena where agents are neglectful when it comes to filtering



and analyzing the information freely available to them?

I think Mascaro and Morrin provide a clue to solving this question, unwittingly, by suggesting that there is a causal relationship between increased *social* autonomy and vigilance towards misinformation. Their explanation is only one half of the equation though, the *adequatio* side. What of the truthfulness side might we ask? I would argue that there is also a causal relationship between vigilance towards misinformation and *personal* autonomy. More accurately, truthfulness requires a special ethical relationship to oneself, (of which not everyone may be capable). A critical ethos such that one is committed to the strongest picture of *adequatio* one can muster (or endure) even if this entails that one rejects a well-justified (and therefore perhaps comforting) picture of reality already in place.

In thinking of personal autonomy as a critical ethos, I have in mind Kant's Enlightenment motto *Sapere Aude!* (Dare to Know). According to Kant, the Age of Knowledge was not so much a watershed in history that marked a turning towards and building up of Science (although this was an important aspect of it) but rather the cultivation and expression of an attitude. "Enlightenment, Kant writes,

"Is man's emergence from his self-imposed immaturity. Immaturity is the inability to use one's understanding without guidance from another. This immaturity is self-imposed when its cause lies not in lack of understanding, but in lack of resolve and courage to use it without guidance from another. *Sapere Aude!* "Having courage to use your own understanding!"—that is the motto of the Enlightenment.<sup>55</sup>

A key take away from this passage is the definition of immaturity: "the inability to use one's understanding without guidance from another." One is immature and therefore not autonomous if one cannot help but rely on others to make decisions for oneself because one lacks the cognitive ability for independent thinking. Here Kant does not use immaturity pejoratively. Immaturity is used pejoratively when, as Kant notes, the cause of using others for guidance stems from a lack of courage and/or laziness. "They (cowardice and laziness) are the reasons why it is so easy for others to set themselves up as guardians. It is so comfortable to be a minor. If I have a book that thinks for me, a pastor who acts as my conscience, a physician who prescribes my diet, and so on—then I have no need to exert myself."<sup>56</sup> In this case, Kant claims, the immaturity is self-imposed, and the agent is epistemically and morally blameworthy.

Relying on guardians for one's moral and epistemic cues because one lacks the courage or work ethic to discover truths for themselves, is to remain immature, benighted. However, this unfortunate predicament in which so many of us find ourselves fails to explain the Optimistic Epistemology Hypothesis. For clearly if Morrin and Mascaro are right, there is a waking up of our capacity very early on in normal, childhood, intellectual development to understand statements as accurate or inaccurate descriptions of states of affairs and to call those out who mispresent reality in our peer group. And yet this dual capacity for truth and truthfulness lies dormant again in many otherwise physically, emotionally and financially independent, cognitively sophisticated adults. What causes this renewed dormancy? What causes some of us, indeed the best of us (Kant himself!) to remain in dogmatic slumber?

I would argue that Kant's diagnosis of cowardice is largely correct but would add the following: cowardice is a kind of knee-jerk response to the gradual recognition of harsher and harsher truths, as we mature. As we age, we begin to realize the severe, tragic nature of life all around us. It slowly dawns on children that all those they love will die and that they too will also die. They begin to perceive, only dimly at first, that an unimaginable number of innocent lives suffer in this world without purpose and that there are evil people who do not always get their just desserts. As children begin to comprehend these truths, some require more powerful ideologies to numb and dull the species' naturally endowed truth-seeking capacities. Indeed, it is for this reason that Kant is especially critical of pastors in *What is Enlightenment?* Because it is uncritical, unenlightened religious teachings that provide one with ready-made dogmas for life's deepest and most heart-breaking questions. Utilizing Kant's insight I argue that truthfulness then, is a virtue, an activity, consisting, primarily, of fighting against epistemic cowardice which, if Kant is right, begins a downward moral spiral leading first to immaturity and, subsequently, subservience to a guardian.<sup>57</sup> Remaining truthful to the picture of reality before one requires a vigilant practice that, if given up, leads to personal heteronomy.

In advancing the position that truth as *adequatio* acts as a condition for the very possibility of assertoric practice, while truthfulness acts as a norm that stimulates argumentation—a principle that one may yet (and often does), fail to live up to, entirely in practice—do I not sidestep the placement problems articulated by Price? Perhaps, but I would maintain that the placement of evaluative, moral or model judgments within a physical universe is not a problem at all. It reflects a myopic

view of naturalism and one that Price himself rejects in some places. Let me explain.

Price's expressivism fails to consider, fully, the projection of evaluation on that other object of naturalism, namely the subject. Evaluative, aesthetic or modal judgments are not just projections superimposed on the world by a subject as naïve expressivism would have it but reflect the attitudes of the subject who holds them; attitudes are commitments that, if meaningful, have been projected first, on the mental screen, as it were, of the subject herself. They are reflected upon, questioned, challenged, reformulated, confirmed, and then reaffirmed because they were found to be accurate—truthful reflections of the subject who judges them to be true as they pertain to some aspect of the world. In this sense, such judgments are doubly reflective reflecting both the commitments of the subject and the domain of the world in which they are applicable. Because they are doubly reflective they may be doubly false—false in that the subject avows a norm but then fails to live up to it and false in another way too in that the norm does not apply to that domain of the world in which the subject thinks it operates.

Perhaps even more intriguing is that Price comes very close to adopting this dual projection view regarding his own expressivist position:

“But if language is not a telescope then what is it? As Brandom points out, a traditional expressivist option is the lamp. I think that modern technology allows us to make this a little more precise. Think of a data projector, projecting images onto an external screen. Even better, helping ourselves to one of tomorrow's metaphors, think of a holographic data projector, projecting three-dimensional images in thin air. This isn't projection onto an external, unembellished world. On the contrary, the entire image is free-standing, being simply the sum of all we take to be the case: a world of states of affairs, in all the ways that we take states of affairs to be.”<sup>58</sup>

Presumably, this holographic projector casts images from both subjects (in the form of expressive attitudes) *and* objects (in the form of physical properties) and thus advances Price's call for a true naturalism that conjoins both subject and object.<sup>59</sup> However, there is a crucial dimension missing—time. A more accurate metaphor is to recognize that the holograph produced by the projector is subordinate to the changing alethic relationship a subject has to the nature of the images projected. A true naturalism must include an *ethos* that helps generate inquiry, investigation and the challenging of one's current stock of beliefs continuously,

throughout the course of the subject’s life.

In conclusion, OEH is a compelling and illuminating theory offering a powerful explanatory narrative regarding how and why children view and reconstruct statements in their peer group. Morrin and Mascaro argue that truth as *adequatio* is a naturally endowed capacity in humans buttressed and contoured at times by natural selection and self-preservation. Yet if OEH is true, then it is inconsistent with pragmatic attempts to deflate *adequatio* notions of truth. The question I have asked throughout this paper is: Can pragmatic approaches to truth be saved in light of OEH? The answer to this question is a qualified yes: it is not so much truth that is a practice or norm, but rather truthfulness. Being truthful to the truth, that is truthful to the picture of reality one believes to be justified, is a kind of epistemic virtue which is infrequent to find and ever rarely practiced in full. Truth as *adequatio* is not a third norm but the end-goal of all declarative discourse. Truthfulness to *adequatio* becomes the third normative practice in assertoric discourse guaranteeing the initiation and sustainment of inquiry and argumentation alike.

### *Acknowledgements*

I would like to thank two anonymous referees for their helpful and insightful comments on an earlier draft of this paper.

### *Notes*

1 [10]

2 [10, p.4]

3 [10, p.4]

4 [14]

5 Both Rorty’s and Price’s respective versions of pragmatic deflationism differ from those of other philosophers who agree with the spirit of “anti-inflationism” but who nevertheless may be “deflationists of a merely b variety” to quote Paul Horwich. Andrew Horwat in his [6], uses Paul Horwich’s useful distinction between inflationism and deflationism of an a and b variety, which I will exploit here. According to Horwat’s reading of Horwich, “An inflationist is someone who believes that the concept of truth picks out a natural property (e.g., correspondence to the facts), and is therefore naturalistically reducible. A deflationist is someone who believes that the concept of truth either (a) does not pick out a property at all or (b) picks out a non-substantive property.” Horwat, [6, p.937]. Horwich conceives his project of deflating truth as one belonging to the b variety. He proposes to minimize truth—at least in its logical manifestations—by converting truth statements to his Equivalence Schema:

ES: ‘It is true that p if and only if p’. [7, p.6].

For example, “quarks really exist is true if and only if quarks really exist. [7, p.5] The purpose of ES is to exhaust the concept of truth in all its sentential manifestations whether these sentences are stated directly, as with the quark example above, or are used in more complex embedded phrases (e.g. if the statement quarks exist is true then . . .)

But there is a fatal flaw in this approach from a pragmatist perspective, as Horwat makes abundantly clear: Horwich’s book, *Truth*, “. . . has two significant deficiencies from a pragmatist perspective. The first is that despite its rhetoric, the book contains very little description of, or reflection upon, linguistic practice with ‘true’ and its cognates, in all its messy variety. The second deficiency of the book is that Horwich repeats several times Russell’s unfortunate canard that pragmatists think ‘p is true iff it is useful to believe that p’ (e.g. p. 34, p. 47). As a result, Horwich overlooks the best insights pragmatists have had to offer on issues of truth, assertion and inquiry, and their substantive interconnections, in favor of a familiar but misguided caricature of the views of William James and F.C.S. Schiller.” [6, p.936].

The upshot of the pragmatist critique is that Horwich’s overall strategy to minimize truth may be successful with respect to truth’s semantic content but is insufficient when it comes to minimalizing truth’s illocutionary aspects. In other words, true and its cognate terms may very well be content equivalent to ES but they are not force equivalent. To see why consider the following statement and reasoning provided by Horwat: (‘to assert p is to take responsibility for the truth of p’) is unobjectionable and yet—for a Minimalist—inexplicable, since it does not submit to ES.” [6, p.948] What Rorty and Price do, in opposition to Horwich, is to present a more nuanced and, therefore, more encompassing deflationism of truth in all its myriad *uses*.

6 I use ideology to denote when one is suffering from false consciousness. False consciousness may be defined as i) an individual has false beliefs which legitimize oppressive social institutions, and ii) an individual is also blocked in some way from recognizing the false beliefs they hold (through the media, the educational system, repressive sexual laws, etc). Thus, false consciousness, as I am using the term here, includes non-religious and religious interpretations. See [12, p.217].

7 [17, p.11]

“Nietzsche has caused a lot of confusion by inferring from “truth is not a matter of correspondence to reality” to “what we call ‘truths’ are just useful lies.” The same confusion is occasionally found in Derrida, in the inference from “there is no such reality as the metaphysicians have hoped to find” to “what we call ‘real’ is really real. . . Such confusions make Nietzsche and Derrida liable to charges of self-referential inconsistency—to claiming to know what they themselves claim cannot be known. See [18, p.8].

8 See [14, p.229].

9 [19, p.281]

10 [19, p.295]

11 The labelling of the third dogma is often called scheme/content dualism. See [4].

12 [19, p.295]

13 [18, p.18]

14 [18, pp.11f]

15 [18, p.21]

16 See Rorty’s reply to Price’s paper [14], [21, p.255].

17 [19, p.281]

18 [19, p.295]

19 [19, p.295]

20 [19, p.281]

21 In using the term convenient ‘fiction,’ I do not take Rorty’s approach to be ‘fictionalist’ in the sense invoked by Bradley Armour-Garb and James Woodbridge. In their work, *Pretense and Pathology: Philosophical Fictionalisms and Their Applications*, they make use of philosophical fictionalism “. . . in order to resolve well-known puzzles and paradoxes in philosophy of mind, language and epistemology.” ( See [3, p.687]). Like Horwich who focuses on the content side of truth and not on the force side, Armour-Garb and Woodbridge argue in favour of “. . . semantic pretense-involving fictionalism –‘SPIF’, for short – over an alternative pragmatic PIF of the sort developed by Fred Kroon (2001, 200h)” ([3, p.688]) “In general, a SPIF account of some apparently problematic discourse will apply a particular notion of fiction (make-believe) to implement semantic redirection away from a face-value reading of the sentences of the discourse.” ([3, p.688]) For example, the sentence: “Captain Ahab does not exist.” on a face value reading is incoherent—“Captain Ahab” appears to be a proper name and thus refers to some definite person. In taking up this reading, we are both claiming that such a person exists and does not exist. But by taking up a SPIF account, we can make sense of this claim by employing a pretense—we are using *Moby Dick* by Herman Melville as a fictional frame of discourse to situate the placement of the sentence “Captain Ahab does not exist.” Thus to say that, “Captain Ahab does not exist” presupposes this fictional frame of reference and therefore, “. . . generates what we call the serious content of that utterance, viz., what it can be used to say about the real world outside of the make-believe.” [3, p.688].

Turning to SPIF and truth, Armour-Garb and Woodbridge propose that ‘True’ performs an anaphoric function within a fixed fictional pretense. That is, truth is a representational aid used to facilitate expression. For example, one might respond to someone who quotes Benjamin Franklin’s “Fish and visitors stink after three days” with “That’s very true!” ‘True’, here, is used to give assent to the original statement without having to repeat Franklin’s idiom all over again. Despite appearances to the contrary, the word true does not pick out a substantive property much like the pronouns ‘he’ or ‘she’ do not pick out some identifiable subject unless there is a prior pretense that explains what these terms refer to. As Armour-Garb and Woodridge put it, “True thus appears to express a substantive property when in reality there is no such property and *a fortiori* there is no such property and no such property for the truth predicate to express” See [2, p.71]. For example, “X is reflective” or “X is conductive” are statements that describe substantive, testable properties of some object but to say that X is true does not pick out a discernible property existing independently of the frame of reference in which it is embedded. It appears that when we engage in “truth talk” that we are picking out a property like in those instances with the sentences above. But for Armour-Garb and Woodridge, “There are no pretense-free use of truth locutions because pretense is invoked in their basic functioning.” “Why Deflationists Should be Pretense Theorists (and Perhaps Already Are)”, [2, p.72]. The same problem with Horwich’s account of exhausting the semantic content

of ‘true’ as equivalent to ‘endorsement’ appears once again. From a pragmatist perspective, the real question is whether such a construal can exhaust the force-equivalent uses of truth. For example, how would a fictionalist account of truth handle sentences where ‘true’ acts as an intensifier such as: “He is a true hero!” Because of limitations of space, I cannot address the inadequacies of a fictionalist account in this paper.

22 [5, p.53]

23 [19, p.283]

24 [19, p.283]

25 [23, p.270]

26 [19, p.300]

27 [19, p.300]

28 [20, pp.28f]

29 [20, p.119]

30 [14, p.245]

31 Wilfrid Sellars, “In characterizing an episode or a state as that of knowing, we are not giving an empirical description of that episode or state; we are placing it in the logical space of reasons, of justifying and being able to justify what it says.” [22, p.159].

32 [14, p.238]

33 [14, p.238]

34 [14, p.238]

35 [14, p.241]

36 See Huw Price, [15, p.258]. See also [14, p.241] where Price writes: “The third norm makes what would otherwise be no-fault disagreements into unstable social situations, whose instability is only resolved by argument and consequent agreement—and it provides an immediate incentive for argument in that it holds out to the successful arguer the reward consisting in her community’s positive evaluation of her dialectical position.”

37 [14, p.241]

38 [14, pp.246f]

39 [10, p.4]

40 Quoted in [11, p.81].

41 See Mele’s extended discussion of this phenomenon in [11, pp.81–85].

42 I recognize that there may be many different reasons to practice celibacy, hunger strikes or other extreme ascetic exercises that at first glance may seem to have nothing to do with the distinction I employed between lower and higher truths. One might practice celibacy for practical reasons that are psychologically and/or socially based (e.g anxiety disorder, commitment fears etc). But whatever reason one gives to justify the practice of some exercise there must be a recognition, on behalf of the agent engaged in said practice, that the reasons he tells herself are true.

43 Huw Price, “One Cheer for Representationalism” in [16, p.312]. Also see section 2 of “The Semantic Foundation of Metaphysics” in [16, pp.254–259] for more on this problem.

- 44 [8, p.294]
- 45 Price, “One Cheer for Representationalism”, [16, p.312]
- 46 Huw Price, “The Semantic Foundations of Metaphysics”, in [16, pp.260f]
- 47 Price, “The Semantic Foundations of Metaphysics”, [16, p.261]
- 48 Price, “One Cheer for Representationalism”, [16, p.308]
- 49 Price, One Cheer for Representationalism, [16, p.314]
- 50 Price, “One Cheer for Representationalism”, [16, p.315]
- 51 Huw Price, “Naturalism Without Representationalism” in [16, p.189]. Using true or truth to refer to a natural object according to Price commits a fallacy of equivocation between use and mention: “An expression of the form “Snow is white is true” contains a use masquerading as a mention.” ( 190) .
- 52 Price, “One Cheer for Representationalism, [16, p.315]
- 53 [10, p.15]
- 54 Socrates is the first philosopher to conceive weakness of will or akrasia as a failure to measure correctly. In the Protagoras he famously declares that weakness of will does not exist because we are never overcome by pleasure or fear but instead have failed intellectually: “Well then my good people: Since it has turned out that our salvation in life depends on the right choice of pleasures and pains, be they more or fewer, greater or lesser, farther or nearer, doesn’t our salvation seem first of all to be measurement which is the study of relative excess and deficiency and equality?  
“It must be.”  
“And since it is measurement, it must definitely be an art, and knowledge. “  
“They will agree.” Protagoras 357B in [13, p.786]. A contemporary explanation of weakness of will and procrastination for that matter can be found in the work of George Ainslie. Ainslie argues that humans are biologically programmed to “discount the future”, that is, we choose a lesser reward now rather than denying immediate gratification for the sake of a larger reward in the future. This explanation, as way of accounting for sub-optimal phenomena such as weakness of will and procrastination, is also a cognitive failure to process information correctly. See [1].
- 55 Immanuel Kant, “An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment? (1784)” in [9, p.41].
- 56 [9, p.42]
- 57 [9, p.44]
- 58 [16, p.28]
- 59 [16, p.5,11]

*Brian Lightbody*  
*Professor, Department of Philosophy*  
*Brock University*  
*St. Catharines, Ontario*  
*500 Glenridge Aveune, L2S 3A1, USA*  
 <[blightbody@brocku.ca](mailto:blightbody@brocku.ca)>



## References

- [1] Ainslie, George. “Procrastination: The Basic Impulse”, *The Thief of Time: Philosophical Essays on Procrastination*. Ed. Chrisoula Anderou and Mark D. White. Oxford University Press, 2010, 1–27.
- [2] Armour-Garb, Bradley and Woodbridge, James. “Why Deflationists Should be Pretense Theorists (and Perhaps Already Are)” in *New Waves in Truth*, Ed(s) Wright and Pedersen. London, PalGave-Macmillan, 2011, 59–77.
- [3] Armour-Garb, Bradley and Woodbridge, James. “*Pretense and Pathology: Philosophical Fictionalism and Their Applications*, Summary” *Analysis* Reviews October, 2018, 687–691.
- [4] Davidson, Donald. “A Coherence Theory of Truth and Knowledge.” In *Truth and Interpretation Perspectives on the Philosophy of Donald Davidson*. Basil Blackwell, 1986, 307–319.
- [5] Gutting, Gary. “Rorty’s Critique of Epistemology” in *Richard Rorty* Ed(s). Charles Guignon and David Hiley. Cambridge University Press, 2003. 41–60.
- [6] Horwat, Andrew. “Constituting Assertion: A Pragmatist’s Critique of Horwich’s *Truth*.” *Synthese*, (195) 935–954.
- [7] Horwich, Paul. *Truth*. Oxford University Press, 1990.
- [8] Hume, David, *Essays, Moral, Political and Literary*, edited by E. F. Miller. Indianapolis, Liberty Classics, 1985.
- [9] Kant, Immanuel. ”An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment? (1784)” in *Perpetual Peace and Other Essays*. Trans. Ted Humphrey. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1983, 41–48.
- [10] Mascaro, Olivier and Morin, Olivier. “Epistemology for Beginners: Two-to Five-Year-Old Children’s Representation of Falsity,” in *PLOS ONE* 10 (10), October 2015, 1–20.
- [11] Mele, Alfred. *Backsliding: Understanding Weakness of Will*. Oxford University Press, 2012.

- [12] Owen, David. “Criticism and Captivity: On Genealogy and Critical Theory” in *European Journal of Philosophy* 10:2, 2002, 216–230.
- [13] Plato: *Plato Complete Works*. John Cooper Ed. Indianapolis, Indiana: Hackett Publishing, 1997.
- [14] Price, Huw. “Truth as Convenient Friction”, in *Naturalism and Normativity*, Ed(s). Mario De Caro and David Macarthur. New York: Columbia University Press, 2010, 229–252.
- [15] Price, Huw. “Price: Reply to Rorty’s Further Remarks (Feb. 2008)” in *Naturalism and Normativity*, 256–262.
- [16] Price, Huw. *Naturalism Without Mirrors*, Oxford University Press, 2011.
- [17] Rorty, Richard. “Science as Solidarity” in *Dismantling Truth: Reality in a Post-Modern World*, Ed (s). Hilary Lawson and Lisa Appignanesi. New York: St. Martin’s, 1989.
- [18] Rorty, Richard. *Contingency, Irony, Solidarity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.
- [19] Rorty, Richard. “Is Truth a Goal of Enquiry? Donald Davidson versus Crispin Wright” *The Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 45 No. 180, July 1995, 281–300.
- [20] Rorty, Richard. *Achieving Our Country*. Harvard University Press, 1998.
- [21] Rorty, Richard. “Rorty Further Remarks” (Feb. 2005) in *Naturalism and Normativity*, 254–256.
- [22] Sellars, Wilfrid. *Science, Perception, and Reality* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul), 1963.
- [23] Taylor, Charles. “Rorty in the Epistemological Tradition”, in Alan Malachowski (ed) *Reading Rorty* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990)