Summary by John Preston of ‘Are there Moral Hinges?’ – the Third Lecture of the Ludwig Wittgenstein Lecture Series -- given by Professor Rom Harré on 2 November 2009

In On Certainty, Wittgenstein uses examples of what he calls ‘hinges’ for working through epistemological issues that arise in resolving the grammatical errors G. E. Moore perpetrated in his uses of ‘know’, ‘believe’, ‘certain’, etc. Nearly all his examples are concerned with life in the material world of time, space and things. Wittgenstein’s later writings certainly display an overall and pervasive atmosphere of normativity, but are any of the implicit norms of hinge-practices moral?

‘Hinges’, like ‘concepts’, do not appear in propría persona anywhere but are realised in practices, and expressed in doppelganger propositions. This scheme fits into a progression in Wittgenstein’s thought of means for ensuring the orderliness of discourses: from logic, through grammar, to hinges.

Some hinge-practices are regulative, but some are constitutive of forms of life – and doppelganger hinge-propositions as expressions of norms fall into parallel types. Moral hinges are realised in hinge-practices that are moral, and are expressed in hinge-propositions that are empirical. Moral practices are person preserving, person enhancing, and permit autonomous choice of actions. Whether a hinge-practice is moral is shown by how that practice is contested.

What should we make of Hume’s Principle that an ‘ought’ cannot be deduced from an ‘is’ if the practice the axiological character of which we are considering has an empirical proposition as a doppelganger? Does not that make the root hinge a misbegotten being
that is both normative and factual? Or perhaps the seemingly empirical doppelganger is covertly evaluative after all? However, the relation between hinge-practice and hinge-proposition is not deductive. If the practice is normative and the proposition is contingent and they are derived from a common hinge then Hume’s Principle is outflanked.

Professor Harré’s project is to explore the possibility that certain empirical hypotheses are the propositional doppelgangers of moral practices. His examples serve to test the hypothesis that there are hinges that escape Hume’s critical aphorism.

The final draft of the lecture will be posted on the website as soon as available.

Publishers' Offers

Springer Netherlands

The Proceedings of the BWS Inaugural conference on ‘The Third Wittgenstein’ are now published.

Philosophia Vol 37 No 4 / December 2009
‘The Third Wittgenstein’
Proceedings of the BWS First Conference edited by Danièle Moyal-Sharrock.

Philosophia is offering BWS Members free access for 'several months'. Visit http://www.springerlink.com/content/0048-3893. Remember free access is for a limited period only. Unfortunately two of the speakers did not provide papers for the Proceedings.

Ashgate

The Ashgate reduction to members ended at the end of October, but the publishers are running an end-of-year philosophy sale. Details of the offer can be found at http://www.ashgate.com/PhilosophySale

BWS Conferences

Second BWS Conference

A report of the conference in June 2009 at the University of Hertfordshire can be downloaded on this link.

Third BWS Conference

The Third BWS Conference will be hosted by the University of Southampton, on 28-29 June 2010. The theme is ‘Wittgenstein and Aesthetics’. Here is the list of confirmed speakers so far

Principal organisers

Ray Monk and Genia Schönbaumsfeld

Speakers

Noël Carroll (CUNY)
Stephen Davies (University of Auckland)
Richard Eldridge (Swarthmore College)
Garry Hagberg (UEA)
Jerold Levinson (University of Maryland)
Alex Neill (Southampton)

For updates, please visit the conference website at the University of Southampton or the Conference page on our own BWS website.
The lecture series

We now have a title for the next lecture, and please note that the date has changed. Put it into your new diaries.

**Spring Lecture 20 May 2010: Professor Dale Jacquette**
**Title:** Wittgenstein's Tractatus as Mystic Revelation

Professor Jacquette teaches at the University of Bern and researches on philosophical logic, metaphysics, and philosophy of mind.

**Autumn Lecture 2010: Professor Frank Cioffi**
**Title:** Was Wittgenstein right to call science a trap?

All lectures will be followed by a wine reception. These are complimentary, but advance registration is required once the announcement has been sent, so do check back to the website for details.

The BWS website

**Updates**

The [Publications](http://www.editor.net/BWS/newsletter/newsletter6.htm) page ends the first decade of the millennium with the 98th published book about Wittgenstein or his philosophy to be posted on the website. If you know of any publications that have fallen through the net, please contact [j.m.preston@reading.ac.uk](mailto:j.m.preston@reading.ac.uk) - perhaps we can round it up to 100. We do need a picture of the jacket, though.

Members who have not been able to watch the *Logic Lane* videos may be pleased to note that two of them are now available for download from Professor Chanan's webservice at the repository at Roehampton University. Others will be available during 2010. Check on our [Videolinks page](http://www.editor.net/BWS/newsletter/newsletter6.htm).

We welcome new reviewers contributing to the archive of comment on recent books on Wittgenstein. Contact [ca356@cam.ac.uk](mailto:ca356@cam.ac.uk) if you would like to write a short review or a longer critical appraisal. If you would like to review a book that is not listed, we will try and get it for you.

The BWS website is designed and maintained by [Jane Dorner](http://www.editor.net/BWS/newsletter/newsletter6.htm).

Happy Christmas from the web editor

Jane Dorner wishes members of the BWS a thoughtful Christmas with her version of the Liar's Paradox, Popper's Black Swan and Jourdain's Paradox. Hover your mouse over the figure to see the other side of the card. Your interpretation of it will depend on what your own view of the existence of Father Christmas is, and therefore whether the three statements can co-exist. (You may have to allow blocked content to get the animation to work.)
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