

From: British Wittgenstein Society [bws@herts.ac.uk]

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Nota Bene

Derek McDougall considers the value of writing book reviews for the BWS.



There has always been a tendency to think of the subject of book reviewing as the province of the hack, a somewhat unprepossessing activity providing results of only ephemeral significance. It is a task therefore to be delegated in the academic field, say, to the junior lecturer, who may just find enough time away from the burden of his administrative duties to devote to the issuing of platitudes in praise of the work of his colleagues, or to condemning when he thinks fit the output of those of whom he may not previously even have heard.

By comparison, therefore, how different must appear the publication, especially in philosophy, of an original paper on a subject that is currently to the forefront of debate, one destined to provide its author with the reputation that a proper command of his subject will undoubtedly deserve.

About BWS

BWS is a British focal point for research and exchange of ideas among Wittgenstein scholars and students throughout the world.

This Newsletter will be sent exclusively to members of the BWS, on a regular basis, in order to draw attention to updates on the website, or to share as yet unpublished news.

Yet what philosopher would not admit, however grudgingly, to proceeding right away, if only on occasion, to the latest critical notice, or to the many pages of book reviews, on receipt of the latest issue of *M...* or *The P.....*? The reason is perfectly simple: having come to expect that the common run of papers in a given journal will perhaps be a little stale, a rehash of concerns only too often mulled over in the same rather conventional fashion, he finds by contrast that in reviews and critical notices he comes across the immediate engagement of one thinker with the ideas of another, an engagement often sufficiently stimulating to lead him to further - and hopefully deeper - reflections of his own.

For this reason, genuinely valuable book reviewing can succeed in making a contribution to the subject that often surpasses anything that a humdrum paper on its own could achieve. Take Cora Diamond on Crispin Wright (*The Philosophical Quarterly*, October

1981), Crispin Wright on Colin McGinn (*Mind*, April 1989) and Peter Winch on Saul Kripke (*The Philosophical Quarterly*, October 1983) as classics in the field of Wittgenstein studies which their authors saw fit to later reissue in collected editions of their papers because they recognised them to have the lasting significance that they undoubtedly achieve. The value of book reviewing lies precisely in this direct engagement with the work of another, and in the opportunity it affords to develop ideas of one's own.

Anyone who grasps the opportunity to contribute - warts and all - to the book reviews section of the BWS is bound to discover that in the course of exploring the often esoteric ideas of other authors, he is enabled to discover some new and often unanticipated thoughts of his own.

Books available for review are listed on the [reviews page](#).

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New videos

Our book reviews editor, Dr Constantinos Athanasopoulos, has made some videos of the second BWS Conference 'Wittgenstein and Naturalism'. They are now available for view if you missed the conference or want to hear some of it again. We have 6 clips (some quite substantial in length) and hosted on vimeo. They are:

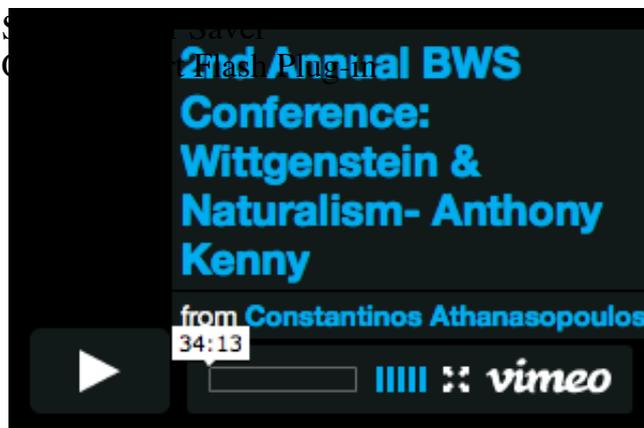
[Welcome by Dr Daniele Moyal-Sharrock](#)

[John Searle: 'Wittgenstein and the Background'](#)

[Lynne Rudder Baker: 'Does naturalism rest on a mistake?'](#)

[David Papineau: 'Phenomenal concepts and private languages'](#)

[Anthony Kenny: 'Which Wittgenstein? Which naturalism?'](#) (see below and allow blocked content to view)



[Meredith Williams: 'Master & novice in the later Wittgenstein'](#)

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BWS Conferences

Third BWS Conference

We are delighted that the Third BWS Conference this year will be hosted by the University of Southampton, on the theme 'Wittgenstein and Aesthetics'. It will take place on 28-29 June 2010. Here is the exciting list of confirmed guest speakers:

[Noël Carroll](#) (CUNY)

[Jean-Pierre Cometti](#) (Aix-en-Provence)

[Stephen Davies](#) (Auckland)
[Richard Eldridge](#) (Swarthmore College)
[John Gibson](#) (Louisville)
 Garry Hagberg (East Anglia)
[Bernard Harrison](#) (Utah, Sussex)
[Alex Neill](#) and [Aaron Ridley](#) (Southampton)
[Dawn Phillips](#) (Warwick)
 Ben Tilghman (Kansas State)

The booking form is now online at <http://www.humanities.soton.ac.uk/conferences/details.asp?id=223>. We are looking forward to seeing all of you there.

Information on getting there is at <http://www.soton.ac.uk/philosophy/home/location.html>

For updates, please visit the conference website at the [University of Southampton](#) or the Conference page on our own BWS website.

Second BWS Conference

Proceedings for the 'Wittgenstein & Naturalism' conference published in a special issue of the *American Philosophical Quarterly* (APQ) should be out in April 2011.

First BWS Conference

The Proceedings of the BWS Inaugural conference on 'The Third Wittgenstein' are still available to BWS members free online at <http://www.springerlink.com/content/0048-3893> but this is for a limited period only.

Philosophia Vol 37 No 4 / December 2009

'The Third Wittgenstein'

Proceedings of the BWS First Conference edited by Danièle Moyal-Sharrock.

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The lecture series

The 2010 lectures are:

[Spring Lecture 20 May 2010: Professor Dale Jacquette](#)

Title: Wittgenstein's Tractatus as Mystic Revelation

Registration is now open. Please email bws@herts.ac.uk.

[Professor Dale Jacquette](#) teaches at the University of Bern and researches on philosophical logic, metaphysics, and philosophy of mind.

forthcoming

[Autumn Lecture 2010: Professor Frank Cioffi](#)

Title: Was Wittgenstein right to call science a trap?

The speakers for the 2011 lectures can be announced - though the dates will be confirmed later.

[Spring 2011: Professor Sandra Laugier](#)

Title: The Importance of Importance: Cavell and Diamond on ethics

[Autumn 2011: Professor Bernard Harrison](#)

Title: tba

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.



Launch of Nordic Wittgenstein Society

We are delighted to announce the launch of the **Nordic Wittgenstein Society (NWS)** in March 2009 in Åbo, Finland. The purpose of the NWS is to promote Nordic research centered on, and related to, the philosophy of Ludwig Wittgenstein; to be a platform and forum for Nordic researchers in this field; to enhance the visibility of Nordic Wittgenstein research and to support and promote international exchange. Its central aim is to organise annual conferences in alternating Nordic countries (conference language: English).

We wish President Lars Hertzberg and Secretary Yrsa Neuman, as well as the Society's Board, every success.

For more information on the NWS, visit its website:
<http://www.nordicwittgensteinsociety.org/>

We have also been informed by Dr Kali Charan Pandey of Gorakhpur University that the establishment of an Indian Wittgenstein Society (IWS) is in process. We will keep you updated.

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The Wittgenstein House, Skjolden

Breaking news is an exciting new initiative to conserve the site of Wittgenstein's house at Skjolden.

The house has great biographical importance. It was designed in 1913/14 as Wittgenstein's workplace and used during 1936/7 while he wrote *Philosophical Investigations*. Wittgenstein attempted to return to it during his final illness. The house is also a significant work of architecture, specifically sited and detailed, and in its dialogue with Norwegian and Austrian vernaculars anticipates, in another register, aspects of the methodology of Wittgenstein's later return to philosophy. The house was removed and reconstructed in Skjolden in 1957. The original site has decayed and is in urgent need of remedial work. Both lack a protective conservation schedule.



ICOMOS and the international philosophical community, David Connearn and Dr Dawn Phillips are currently working in liaison with the new Nordic Wittgenstein Society and others to establish an information portal, and lobby for a program of comprehensive conservation planning for the site and its associated fabrics to be undertaken with a view towards assisting the return of the house to its original site.

For further information please contact davidconnearn@gmail.com or Dawn.Phillips@warwick.ac.uk

Photograph of the house by courtesy of Michael Nedo at the Cambridge Wittgenstein Archive

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The BWS website

Updates

We have completely reorganised all the links to other websites focussing on the works of Ludwig Wittgenstein.

There is now a section called [Scholars, papers, audio, video](#) which leads to:

- a list of scholars known for their work on Wittgenstein;
- some papers about him and his philosophy;
- streamed audio introductions and discussions;
- the video links we had before as well as the newly added conference lectures (mentioned above);



- one or two blogs.

The Methods of Projection blog has now been discontinued and we have taken over some of its links.

Please contact us if you know of new organisations.

The BWS website is designed and maintained by [Jane Dorner](#).

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