BEYOND THE MARGINS
Reflections of a Feminist Philosopher
LINDA A. BELL

Incorporates memoir in the context of philosophical and political theory and argument.

Presenting essays rich with her own personal experiences, philosopher Linda A. Bell examines not only her own life but also problems arising from ways that living affects thinking. She reflects on her own experience in order to challenge a variety of provocative claims, including: that affirmative action harms those it is designed to help; that suicide, while perhaps acceptable for some with fatal diseases, is otherwise a manifestation of mental illness; that women are to blame for male violence toward them if they don’t leave the relationships; that a low profile is the best path to success for women in academe; that women are treated fairly in academe, perhaps even better than men; and that “political correctness” is a recent and aberrant move away from respect for freedom of speech. Although drawing from experience as she creates and critiques theory, Bell argues against the icon that it is the bedrock of theory.

“In an extraordinary mixture of personal autobiography and theory, Linda A. Bell writes passionately of her outrage at the injustice she suffered as a woman bent on becoming a philosopher; her theoretical essays are remarkable for their balanced thought. …” — Hazel E. Barnes, author of The Story I Tell Myself: A Venture in Existentialist Autobiography

Linda A. Bell is Professor of Philosophy and Director of the Women’s Studies Institute at Georgia State University. She is the author of Visions of Women; Sartre’s Ethics of Authenticity; and Rethinking Ethics in the Midst of Violence: A Feminist Approach to Freedom; and the coeditor (with David Blumenfeld) of Overcoming Racism and Sexism.

A volume in the SUNY series, Feminist Philosophy

FEATURED TITLES

EXPERIENCES BETWEEN PHILOSOPHY AND COMMUNICATION
Engaging the Philosophical Contributions of Calvin O. Schrag
RAMSEY ERIC RAMSEY AND DAVID JAMES MILLER, EDITORS

Leading scholars address the work of American philosopher Calvin O. Schrag.

Providing developments and advancements concerning the thought of Calvin O. Schrag, this book includes the first full-length interview with the American continental philosopher and covers his long and illustrative philosophical contribution to thinking about the consequences of communication. The influence of Schrag’s work is significant and broad, and these nine thought-provoking pieces by leading scholars whose work has been influenced by his philosophy presents the best contemporary thought on communicative praxis. Encompassing questions of democracy, the public and private spheres, and relations inside organizational structures, to questions of giving and ethics, rhetoric and narrative, suffering and love, this is a wellspring of insight and provocation for both those already familiar with Schrag’s work and those seeking a keen invitation to his many critical reflections.

Ramsey Eric Ramsey is Associate Professor of Communication Studies and Faculty Director of the Barnett Honors College at Arizona State University West. He is the author of The Long Path to Nearness.

David James Miller has degrees in Philosophy and Cultural Studies from Purdue University.

A volume in the SUNY series in the Philosophy of the Social Sciences Lenore Langsdorf, editor

For a list of contributors, see page 57.
LAUGHING AT NOTHING
Humor as a Response to Nihilism
JOHN MARMYSZ

Explores the concept of nihilism and argues that it need not imply despair, but can be responded to positively.

Disputing the common misconception that nihilism is wholly negative and necessarily damaging to the human spirit, John Marmysz offers a clear and complete definition to argue that it is compatible, and indeed preferably responded to, with an attitude of good humor. He carefully scrutinizes the phenomenon of nihilism as it appears in the works, lives, and actions of key figures in the history of philosophy, literature, politics, and theology, including Nietzsche, Heidegger, Camus, and Mishima. While suggesting that there ultimately is no solution to the problem of nihilism, Marmysz proposes a way of utilizing the anxiety and despair that is associated with the problem as a spur toward liveliness, activity, and the celebration of life.

"Marmysz is original, insightful, and displays a keen knowledge of the typologies of nihilism, deftly tracing, among other things, the historical, existential, and political uses and misuses of the word. This is one of the best books I have read." — Weaver Santaniello, author of Nietzsche and the Gods

"Engagingly written, well-organized, and succinctly argued, this book shows how humor can bring the threat of nihilism into new, less disabling perspectives and teach us how to find affirmative, hopeful lessons in its outlook." — Donald A. Crosby, author of A Religion of Nature

John Marmysz teaches Philosophy at Corning Community College.

KANT ON CAUSATION
On the Fivefold Routes to the Principle of Causation
STEVEN M. BAYNE

An in-depth examination of the nature of Kant’s causal principle.

Kant famously confessed that Hume’s treatment of cause and effect woke him from his dogmatic slumber. According to Hume, the concept of cause does not arise through reason, but through force of habit. Kant believes this can be avoided through the development of a revolutionary new cognitive framework as presented in the Critique of Pure Reason. Focusing on the Second Analogy and other important texts from the first Critique, as well as texts from the Critique of Judgment, the author discusses the nature of Kant’s causal principle, the nature of his proof for this principle, and the status of his intended proof. Bayne argues that the key to understanding Kant’s proof is his discussion of objects of representations and his investigation into the requirements for an event being an object of representations that enable him to develop his proof of the causal principle.

“This book contains extremely intriguing and promising insights, and it discusses very important neglected topics.” — Andrew N. Carpenter, Kaplan College

“Bayne’s book, which focuses on Kant’s argument for causality in the Second Analogy, is especially valuable because it presents the vast literature on the topic in terms of contrasting argumentative strategies, points out objections that each strategy must face, and offers a novel reconstruction of Kant’s argument. Since these discussions are clear and accessible to those who are not Kant scholars, Bayne’s book represents a significant contribution.” — Eric Watkins, University of California, San Diego

Steven M. Bayne is Visiting Instructor of Philosophy at Fairfield University.

A volume in the SUNY series in Philosophy
George R. Lucas Jr., editor
**ART, ORIGINS, OTHERNESS**  
Between Philosophy and Art  
WILLIAM DESMOND

*Addresses the end of art and the task of metaphysics.*

Though our time is often said to be post-religious and post-metaphysical, many continue to seek some encounter with otherness and transcendence in art. This book deals diversely with the issues of art, origins, and otherness, both in themselves and in philosophical engagements with the works of Plato, Kant, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, and Heidegger. Addressing themes such as eros and mania, genius and sublime, transcendence and the saving power of art, William Desmond tries to make sense of the paradox that too much has been asked of art that now almost nothing is asked of it. He argues that there is more to be said philosophically of art, and claims that art has the power to open up mindfulness beyond objectifying knowledge, as well as beyond thinking that claims to be entirely self-determining.

“This book is a passionate questioning of the place of art in relation to ‘transcendence,’ and specifically to religion and philosophy (especially metaphysics).”  
— Véronique M. Fáti, author of *Vision’s Invisibles: Philosophical Explorations*

“The pleasure in reading Desmond has as much to do with the rigor of his thought as it does with the felicitous and creative ways in which he expresses his insights. The turns of phrase he employs and the concrete examples which he so often introduces not only make his ‘abstract’ thought more vivid and compelling but also add to the pleasures of reading his texts.”  
— Jere Paul O’Neill Surber, University of Denver

William Desmond is Professor of Philosophy and Director of the International Program in Philosophy, Institute of Philosophy, at Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium. He is the author of many books, including the award-winning *Being and the Between; Ethics and the Between,* and coeditor (with Joseph Grange) of *Being and Dialectic: Metaphysics as a Cultural Presence,* all published by SUNY Press.

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**WHAT HAPPENS TO US WHEN WE THINK**  
Transformation and Reality  
MICHAEL GELVEN

*Explores the transformation humans undergo when they do metaphysics.*

Author Michael Gelven suggests that thinking metaphysically transforms us, and consequently the nature of metaphysics itself is transformational. Using concrete existential phenomena such as the learning process, how children mature into adults, and how fear can develop into courage, he establishes an understanding of metaphysical transformation.

“Gelven’s book is an analysis of the very nature of philosophical thinking. Clearly inspired by certain canonical figures, such as Plato, Kant, and Heidegger, it is ultimately an original exploration of this theme. The author’s originality and insightfulness is, perhaps, best illustrated in his analysis of the transition from childhood to adulthood—an issue that is rarely addressed by philosophers. By explicating the basic structure of this transition, Gelven shows that there is a genuinely metaphysical, rather than merely physical, psychological, or sociological aspect to the move from childhood to adulthood. Here Gelven breaks new ground.”  
— Mark Basil Tanzer, author of *Heidegger, Decisionism, and Quietism*

Michael Gelven is Distinguished Professor of Philosophy at Northern Illinois University and the author of many books, including *Truth and the Comedic Art,* also published by SUNY Press, and *A Commentary on Heidegger’s Being and Time, Revised Edition.*
THE CONNECTIVITY HYPOTHESIS
Foundations of an Integral Science of Quantum, Cosmos, Life, and Consciousness
ERVIN LASZLO
Foreword by Ralph H. Abraham

Provides the foundations of a genuine unified field theory.

Ervin Laszlo, widely regarded as the founder of systems philosophy and general evolution theory, introduces the foundations of a genuine unified theory of the world in this pioneering treatise on the new sciences. In contrast to other unified theories that center mainly on physics, Laszlo’s embraces quantum, cosmos, life, as well as consciousness. He delineates the principles of a new physics of universal connectivity and puts forth the corresponding metaphysics, discussing the implications for such philosophical issues as the nature of matter and mind, freedom and morality, and design versus evolution. This landmark book lays the groundwork for the non-materialist and non-reductionist yet rigorous paradigm that is likely to signal the next revolution in science: the “paradigm of universal connectivity.”

“This is a brilliant summary of the major conceptual challenges for the Cartesian-Newtonian paradigm, which has dominated Western scientific thinking for the last three centuries. Laszlo outlines the areas in quantum physics, astrophysics, biology, and psychology where these disciplines encountered observations that they could not account for. But he does not stop there; he offers an elegant interdisciplinary model that could help to reconcile the existing paradoxes. Ervin Laszlo is a world-class scientist and his contributions are groundbreaking. This is an outstanding book.” — Stanislav Grof, author of Psychology of the Future: Lessons from Modern Consciousness Research

Ervin Laszlo is Founder and President of the Club of Budapest International and Founder and Director of the General Evolution Research Group. He has authored or edited over seventy books, including The Creative Cosmos: A Unified Science of Matter, Life and Mind; The Whispering Pond: A Personal Guide to the Emerging Vision of Science; The Interconnected Universe: Conceptual Foundations of Transdisciplinary Unified Theory; and Macroshift: Navigating the Transformation to a Sustainable World.

UNDERSTANDING UNDERSTANDING
RICHARD MASON

A study of the scope and limits of understanding.

How is understanding to be understood? Are there limits to understanding? What of importance, if anything, could lie beyond understanding? And do we need to understand knowledge before we can know about understanding? Richard Mason’s argument is that a critical theory of understanding, modeled on past theories of knowledge, cannot be workable.

Understanding may bring wisdom: an uncomfortable thought for many philosophers in the twentieth century. Yet philosophy aims at expanding understanding at least as much as knowledge. How we understand understanding affects how we understand philosophy. If we put aside a narrow view of understanding based upon a cartesian model of knowledge, we may gain a more liberal, open understanding of philosophy.

Mason’s treatment of these fascinating problems offers a clear and lucid dialogue with a number of contemporary philosophical schools and with philosophy’s past. His discussions include the thought of Hume, Henry James, Heidegger, Frege, Charles Taylor, Michael Oakeshott, Wittgenstein, Gadamer, James Joyce, and the Guyaki Indians. This fascinating book contributes to the work of many of these traditions as well as to the nature of understanding in areas as diverse as physics, music, and linguistics.

“The topic is fascinating and obviously central to philosophy. It brings together an eclectic set of thinkers.” — Michael P. Hodges, coauthor of Thinking in the Ruins: Wittgenstein and Santayana on Contingency

Richard Mason is a Fellow of Wolfson College at Cambridge. He is the author of Before Logic, also published by SUNY Press, and The God of Spinoza.

A volume in the SUNY series in Philosophy
George R. Lucas Jr., editor
FOR LOVE OF MATTER
A Contemporary Panpsychism
FREYA MATHEWS

A bold and original work in ecocosmology and metaphysics.

In For Love of Matter Freya Mathews challenges basic assumptions of Western science, modern philosophy, and environmental philosophy, arguing that the environmental crisis is a symptom of a larger, metaphysical crisis. Western science rests on the premise that the world is an inert backdrop to human presence rather than a communicative presence in its own right, one capable of dialogical congress with us. Mathews explores the transformative effects of a substitution of the latter, panpsychist premise for the former, materialist one. She suggests that to exist in a dialogical modality is to enter an expanded realm of eros in which the self and world are mutually kindled into a larger, more incandescent state of realization. She argues that any adequate philosophical response to the so-called “environmental crisis” cannot be encompassed within the minor discipline of environmental philosophy but must instead address the full range of existential questions.

“The most important thing about this book is that it is an attempt to develop, in a modern ecological and psychoanalytically sophisticated context, a new version of very ancient and often now disparaged views of the world. The kind of materialist philosophy the author describes and attacks remains dominant and largely unquestioned. She questions it, in a philosophically informed and thought-provoking way.”
— Clare Palmer, author of Environmental Ethics and Process Thinking

Freya Mathews is Senior Lecturer of Philosophy at La Trobe University. She is the author of The Ecological Self and editor of Ecology and Democracy.

A volume in the SUNY series in Environmental Philosophy and Ethics
J. Baird Callicott and John van Buren, editors

JOHN DEWEY
AND ENVIRONMENTAL PHILOSOPHY
HUGH P. MCDONALD

A comprehensive look at how John Dewey’s ethics can inform environmental issues.

Hugh P. McDonald’s John Dewey and Environmental Philosophy breaks new ground by applying Dewey’s insights to a new approach to philosophy of the environment, the concern for the rights of animals; the preservation of rare species, habitats, and landscapes; and the health of the whole ecology. The book summarizes much of the current literature on environmental ethics, concentrating on the writings of major figures in the movement: Tom Regan, J. Baird Callicott, Holmes Rolston, and Bryan Norton. The heart of the book consists of a detailed analysis of Dewey’s ethics, his theory of intrinsic value, and his holistic approach to moral justification. Arguing against the idea that Dewey’s philosophy is anthropocentric, McDonald makes a strong case that using Dewey’s philosophy will result in a superior framework for environmental ethics.

“McDonald displays a deep understanding of Dewey’s philosophy and skillfully and imaginatively builds convincing arguments on Dewey’s behalf.”
— Tom Colwell, New York University

Hugh P. McDonald teaches philosophy at several colleges in the New York City area, including New York City Technical College and New School University. He is the author of Political Philosophy and Ideology: A Critique of Political Essentialism.

A volume in the SUNY series in Environmental Philosophy and Ethics
J. Baird Callicott and John van Buren, editors

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www.sunypress.edu

August / 224 pages
$18.95 paperback
ISBN 0-7914-5808-3
$57.50 hardcover

September / 279 pages
$22.95 paperback
ISBN 0-7914-5874-1
$68.50 hardcover
ISBN 0-7914-5873-3
ETHICS AND SELFHOOD
Alterity and the Phenomenology of Obligation
JAMES R. MENSCH

Argues that a coherent theory of ethics requires an account of selfhood.

According to James R. Mensch, a minimal requirement for ethics is that of guarding against genocide. In deciding which races are to live and which to die, genocide takes up a standpoint outside of humanity. To guard against this, Mensch argues that we must attain the critical distance required for ethical judgment without assuming a superhuman position. His description of how to attain this distance constitutes a genuinely new reading of the possibility of a phenomenological ethics, one that involves reassessing what it means to be a self. Selfhood, according to Mensch, involves both embodiment and the self-separation brought about by our encounter with others—the very others who provide us with the experiential context needed for moral judgment.

He includes a reading of the major moral philosophers—Plato, Aristotle, Kant, Mill, Arendt, Levinas—even as he develops a phenomenological account of the necessity of reading literature to understand the full extent of ethical responsibility. Mensch’s work offers an original and provocative approach to a topic of fundamental importance.

"Mensch breaks through some of the main oppositions in historical and contemporary ethical theory in an original, provocative, and unique way." — John J. Drummond, coeditor of Phenomenological Approaches to Moral Philosophy: A Handbook

James R. Mensch is Professor of Philosophy at Saint Francis Xavier University. He is the author of several books, including After Modernity: Husserlian Reflections on a Philosophical Tradition and Intersubjectivity and Transcendental Idealism, both published by SUNY Press.

THE MICRO-POLITICS OF CAPITAL
Marx and the Prehistory of the Present
JASON READ

Re-reads Marx in light of the contemporary critical interrogation of subjectivity.

What is the relation between the economy, or the mode of production, and culture, beliefs, and desires? How is it possible to think of these relations without reducing one to the other, or effacing one for the sake of the other? To answer these questions, The Micro-Politics of Capital re-reads Marx in light of the contemporary critical interrogations of subjectivity in the works of Althusser, Deleuze, Guattari, Foucault, and Negri.

Jason Read suggests that what characterizes contemporary capitalism is the intimate intersection of the production of commodities with the production of desire, beliefs, and knowledge.

"Jason Read’s book contains the most original and incisive readings of Marx’s texts that I have read in years, along with equally penetrating analyses of Althusser, Foucault, Deleuze, and Guattari. He demonstrates beautifully along the way that French poststructuralism is not opposed to Marxism, but that the two are in fact intimately related in their theories of the production of subjectivity. The book helps reorient our understandings of both Marxism and poststructuralism." — Michael Hardt, coauthor of Empire

"This book represents a thoughtful reconsideration of Marx’s notion of the mode of production and does so in a way that is likely to appeal to a new and younger readership by showing that mode of production is not simply an economic concept but one that can explain the forms of subjectivity peculiar to different kinds of social organization. The theoretical framework of the book is refreshingly broad; the author draws from a number of theoretical and philosophical schools and cannot easily be categorized as ‘Deleuzian’ or ‘Althusserian.’ This represents the perspective of a generation no longer constrained by the notion of opposing theoretical camps so prevalent in the 1980s and 90s." — Warren Montag, author of Louis Althusser

Jason Read is Assistant Professor of Philosophy at the University of Southern Maine.
EPISTEMOLOGY
An Introduction to the Theory of Knowledge
Nicholas Rescher

A comprehensive introduction to the theory of knowledge.

Guided by the founding ideas of American pragmatism, Epistemology provides a clear example of the basic concepts involved in knowledge acquisition and explains the principles at work in the development of rational inquiry. It examines how these principles analyze the course of scientific progress and how the development of scientific inquiry inevitably encounters certain natural disasters. At the center of the book’s deliberations there lies not only the potential for scientific progress but also the limit of science as well. This comprehensive introduction to the theory of knowledge addresses a myriad of topics, including the critique of skepticism, the nature of rationality, the possibility of science for extraterrestrial intelligences, and the prospect of insoluble issues in science.

“This book covers a wide span of issues in epistemology and encapsulates complex debates with lucidity. It lives up to its goal of organizing research in contemporary theory of knowledge into a ‘single systematic whole.’” — Vrinda Dalmiya, University of Hawaii at Manoa

Nicholas Rescher is University Professor of Philosophy at the University of Pittsburgh and the author of many books, including Realistic Pragmatism: An Introduction to Pragmatic Philosophy; Predicting the Future: An Introduction to the Theory of Forecasting; Process Metaphysics: An Introduction to Process Philosophy; and Dialectics: A Controversy-Oriented Approach to the Theory of Knowledge, all published by SUNY Press. Among his many achievements, he is former president of the American Philosophical Association and recipient of the Alexander von Humboldt Prize for Humanistic Scholarship.

A volume in the SUNY series in Philosophy
George R. Lucas Jr., editor

HUMAN EXPERIENCE
Philosophy, Neurosis, and the Elements of Everyday Life
John Russon

Proposes that philosophy is the proper cure for neurosis.

John Russon’s Human Experience draws on central concepts of contemporary European philosophy to develop a novel analysis of the human psyche. Beginning with a study of the nature of perception, embodiment, and memory, Russon investigates the formation of personality through family and social experience. He focuses on the importance of the feedback we receive from others regarding our fundamental worth as persons, and on the way this interpersonal process embeds meaning into our most basic bodily practices: eating, sleeping, sex, and so on. Russon concludes with an original interpretation of neurosis as the habits of bodily practice developed in family interactions that have become the foundation for developed interpersonal life, and proposes a theory of psychological therapy as the development of philosophical insight that responds to these neurotic compulsions.

“The book is persuasively insightful and an excellent translation of phenomenological-hermeneutical ideas, resonating with the works of Hegel, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, and others, into a practical application concerning the nature of therapy.” — Shaun Gallagher, editor of Hegel, History, and Interpretation

“This is a daring book. Russon has clearly challenged many prejudices. …” — Leonard Lawlor, coeditor of Chiasms: Merleau-Ponty’s Notion of Flesh

John Russon is Associate Professor of Philosophy at Penn State at University Park. He is the author of The Self and Its Body in Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit. He is also the coeditor (with John Sallis) of Retracing the Platonic Text and (with Michael Baur) Hegel and the Tradition: Essays in Honour of H. S. Harris.

A volume in the SUNY series in Contemporary Continental Philosophy
Dennis J. Schmidt, editor
CONFUCIAN DEMOCRACY
A Deweyan Reconstruction
SOR-HOON TAN

Using both Confucian texts and the work of American pragmatist John Dewey, this book offers a distinctly Confucian model of democracy.

Through a detailed study of relevant concepts and theories in Confucianism and John Dewey’s pragmatist philosophy, this book illustrates the possibility of Confucian democracy and offers an alternative to Western liberal models. Sor-hoon Tan synthesizes the two philosophies through a comparative examination of individuals and community, democratic ideals of equality and freedom, and the nature of ethical and political order. By constructing a model of Confucian democracy that combines the strengths of both Confucianism and Deweyan pragmatism, this book explores how a premodern tradition could be put in dialogue with contemporary political and philosophical theories.

“Extremely well-written and clear, this is an exemplary illustration of modern comparative philosophy. The whole question of whether or not there can be something we call a ‘Confucian Democracy’ is an extremely lively academic and political issue these days. Tan does an excellent job defining democracy and Confucianism with a balanced discussion between Dewey and various classical Chinese thinkers.” — John Berthrong, author of All Under Heaven: Transforming Paradigms in Confucian-Christian Dialogue

“The Conspiracy of Life offers a series of meditations on the philosophy of F. W. J. Schelling (1775–1854), a great—and greatly neglected—philosopher of life. Rather than construing him as a loopy mystic, or as an antiquated theologian, Jason M. Wirth attempts to locate Schelling as the belated contemporary of thinkers like Heidegger, Derrida, Bataille, Irigaray, Foucault, Deleuze, Levinas, and many others. As such, Schelling is already at the central nerve of current discussions concerning the crisis of truth; the primacy of the Good; the ecstatic nature of time; the nature of art; deep ecology; the world as an aesthetic phenomenon; comparative philosophy; the possibility of non-dialectical philosophy; radical evil; the haunting of philosophy; and the possibility of a philosophical religion.

“This is one of the very few significant studies of Schelling published in English during the last fifteen years. It is especially timely and theoretically imaginative, an important contribution to philosophical and religious thought generally, as well as specifically to knowledge of Schelling and nineteenth-century German thought.” — Charles E. Scott, author of The Lives of Things

Jason M. Wirth is Associate Professor and Chair of Philosophy, Communications, and Fine Arts at Oglethorpe University. He previously translated and wrote the introduction to Schelling’s The Ages of the World for SUNY Press.

A volume in the SUNY series in Contemporary Continental Philosophy

Sor-hoon Tan is Assistant Professor of Philosophy at the National University of Singapore. She is the coeditor (with K. C. Chong and C. L. Ten) of The Moral Circle and the Self: Chinese and Western Perspectives.

A volume in the SUNY series in Chinese Philosophy and Culture

Roger T. Ames, editor