ABSTRACTS

Paul Rooney, Divine Commands and Arbitrariness.

According to the divine command theory of morality, what is right or wrong, good or bad, is entirely dependent on the will and command of God: what He commands is right and what He forbids is wrong just because He commands or forbids it. It is argued here that the principal religious objection to this theory – that if it were true, moral precepts would be arbitrary – is rendered ineffective when due consideration is given to the consequences of God's omnipotence, and in particular, to His rationality and to His responsibility for deciding, in creation, what the characteristics of human nature are to be.

Brian Leftow, Anselm on the Necessity of the Incarnation.

Anselm's *Cur Deus Homo* argues that only by the Incarnation can God save humanity. This seems to sit ill with the claim that God is omnipotent and absolutely free, for this entails that God could save humanity in other ways. I show that features of Anselm's concept of God and treatment of necessity make the claim that the Incarnation is a necessary means of salvation problematic. I then show that for Anselm, all conditions which make the Incarnation necessary for human salvation stem from God's nature and prior choices. If so, the Incarnation's necessity restricts neither God's freedom nor His power. For that the Incarnation is necessary given God's actual choices does not entail that it would have been necessary had God made other choices, or that God could not have made choices which would have made the Incarnation non-necessary.

Don Lodzinski, Empty Time and the Eternality of God.

The present paper defends Augustine's claim that time is ontologically dependent on the world. My proof is accomplished by establishing two sub-proofs. First, I argue that time requires change by criticizing Shoemaker's argument for the counterclaim that time does not require change. Second, I go on to show that there is no source of change apart from the created universe. I conclude that if we grant the traditional theistic assumption that the created universe has a beginning and an end, then since time is ontologically dependent on the world, time cannot extend from the infinite past into the infinite future. And if time does not extend from the infinite past into the infinite future, then a temporal God has a beginning and endures for only a finite period of time. This implausible consequence gives us reason to believe that God is eternal.

Edward J. Hughes, How Subjectivity is Truth in the *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*.

The present article returns to Søren Kierkegaard's *Concluding Unscientific Postscript* in order to delineate the complex relations that obtain between his concepts of subjectivity, inwardness and passion. Supporting concepts, such as appropriation,

existence, and interest, are also referred to as aids in tracing these relationships. I argue that the entire gestalt of terms in the *Concluding Unscientific Postscript* is coherent, consistently used, and that Kierkegaard, despite the poetic format of his style, has constructed a rigorous philosophical anthropology that is neither objectivist, nor subjectivist in its ultimate statement. This is the basis for the name of the article, 'How Subjectivity is Truth in the *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*'. *Subjectivity* can be *truth* in Kierkegaard's work because his use of the term transcends the normal denotation of both *subjectivity* and *objectivity* in religious philosophical discourse and refers to a state of existence with a unique ontological status.

John O'Neill, Intrinsic Evil, Truth and Authority.

This paper responds to Pope John Paul's *Veritatis Splendor*. It defends one of its claims, that some human acts are intrinsically evil, and relates it to another, that one should live in truth. It outlines two versions of the idea of living in truth and argues that the Thomist position defended in the encyclical is to be preferred. However, the paper rejects the encyclical's authoritarianism. It criticizes not the concept of 'authoritative teaching' as such – all teaching presupposes epistemological authority – but the way in which the encyclical's characterization of such authority is incompatible with one of its preconditions – reasoned dialogue.

B. S. Rennie, The Religious Creativity of Modern Humanity: Some Observations on Eliade's Unfinished Thought.

Eliade proposed to 'undertake to analyze the religious creativity of modern societies' in his *History of Religious Ideas* but never did so. In this paper I have attempted to suggest the general direction that his analysis would have taken – the identification of the real with the actual is a religious valorization of contemporary humanity. This is not a generic shift from religion to non-religion but a belief of a religious nature which constitutes a novel departure from the traditional operations of the religious mind. It is accompanied by a refusal to countenance our creative involvement in the construction of reality. This Eliade labels 'modern' and 'historical'.

Quentin Smith, Explanatory Rationalism and Contingent Truths.

This paper extends the orthodox bounds of explanatory rationalism by showing there can be an explanation of why there are positive contingent truths. A positive contingent truth is a true proposition that entails that at least one contingent concrete object exists. It is widely thought that it is impossible to explain why there are positive contingent truths. For example, it is thought by Rowe that 'God created the universe' is a positive contingent truth and therefore cannot explain why there are positive contingent truths. I show, however, that the reasoning behind this orthodox view is unsound and that it is possible to explain why there are positive contingent truths.

Frank J. Murphy, The Problem of Evil and a Plausible Defence.

This paper argues that God may create and exist in any possible world, no matter how much suffering of any sort that world includes. It combines the traditional free will defence with the notion of an 'occasion' for good or evil action and limits God's responsibility to the creation of these occasions. Since no possible world contains

occasions for more evil than good action, God is morally permitted to create any possible world. With regard to suffering that is not due to free will, namely the suffering of beings who are not moral agents, the paper questions the idea that the relief of such suffering is a moral perfection.

Yong Huang, Foundation of Religious Belief after Foundationalism: Wittgenstein between Nielsen and Phillips.

Religious beliefs have often been taken either as absolutely foundational to all others or as ultimately founded on something else. This essay starts with an endorsement of the contemporary critique of foundationalism but sets its task as to search for the foundation(s) of religious belief after foundationalism. In its third and main part, it argues for a Wittgensteinian reflective equilibrium (within a belief system, between believing and acting and among people with different ways of believing and acting) as such a foundation. In this reflective equilibrium, religious beliefs are no more and no less foundational to, or founded by, other beliefs and practices. To appreciate this perspective better, I argue, in the first part, that Kai Neilsen's charge of Wittgenstein as a fideist is not accurate, and, in the second part, that D. Z. Phillips's fideistic contentions are unWittgensteinian.