Gunner Peterson

Metapragmatism: The Purpose Driven Philosophy

                    Socrates
And so, my Porcine pal, windows
must certainly **not** cause
movement.

                      Pig
Jolly good, Socrates, but could
you perhaps repeat your theory?

                    Socrates
Why certainly. Cars have
windows, and cars can move. Can
they not?

                      Pig
Of course Socrates, cars can
move.

                    Socrates
But houses also have windows,
and these cannot move.

                      Pig
Right. Houses do not move.

                    Socrates
So the windows must not be the
reason a car moves, but
something else entirely!

                      Pig

Brilliant! Astounding! Your
theories illuminate the deepest
recesses of our lowly brains…

*A pause. Socrates looks quite
content with his answer.*

                      Pig
But Socrates, what about mobile
homes?

                    Socrates
…Allow me a moment of thought.

                      Pig
Why, it shouldn't matter much
anyhow. You are but a Greek
Philosopher and mobile homes
have not been invent-

                    Socrates
Fine swine, are thine familiar
with the forms, a theory of
mine?

                      Pig
Yes I am, I find them devine.
But inlighten me sir, if you
have the time.

                    Socrates
A form is a principle in the
abstract, a concept which the

"real" principle in this world mimics, much like how a shadow mimics the object on which the light is shined.

Pig

I see… so the light is a form?

Socrates

Not exactly. The light allows the form to exist. The objects themselves are the forms.

Pig

I believe I understand now. And the forms describe themselves do they not?

Socrates

Yes, this is quite an important distinction. The form of goodness is infinitely good. The form of justice is infinitely just-

Pig

The form of delicious is infinitely tasty?

Socrates

Correct.

Pig

And do all forms exist?

Socrates

You clearly have an apt mind for questioning, for my friend Parmenides asked me the same question.

All of a sudden, Parmenadies pop into existence. As he believes there is no coming into existence, he quite promptly ceases to exist.

Socrates

Did I hear something? Nevermind - Yes, I believe all forms must exist for the sake of the argument I am about to postulate.

Pig

Then postulate away!

Socrates

I shall. A mobile home partakes in two forms: the form of a home and the form of a car. From a car it gets its movement, from a house it gets its livability. It imitates windows from both forms. Thus, windows must certainly not cause movement, as they imitate both a moving form and an unmoving form. The form of

windows is thus neither moving
nor unmoving.

                Pig
How can an object be neither
moving nor unmoving? Mustn't it
be one or the other?

                Socrates
An object yes, but a form, no.
Unless the form is the form of
movement or the form of being
stationary, it exists in a
state of neither movement nor
non-movement.

                Pig
You sound frighteningly similar
to a friend of yours.

*As the pig says this, Zeno pops
into existence far out of
earshot in the tall grass.*

                Zeno
Hello, hulloo, what's good?
What's new? My dear old
friends, we have so much to do.
So stay right there, I shall
walk to you!

*Zeno begins walking to his
friends. He realizes he must
first walk half this distance.
But before that, he must walk*

*half the distance of this half.
And he must walk half of that
half. Exhausted and having gone
nowhere, he collapses.*

                Pig
What about the form of
nonexistence?

                Socrates
I'm sorry?

                Pig
Don't be. I merely ask because
you said all these forms
"exist" and describe
themselves. So what do you say
about the form of nonexistence?
If it exists, it does not
exist. If it does not exist, it
cannot be a form.

                Socrates
Oh dear, oh dear. I suppose
you're right I fear.

*Socrates looks as if a pile of
rocks has caved in on his head*

                Pig
Well, speaking as a Pig, I may
be able to enlighten you on a
theory of existence I believe
to be superior to that of
humans.

Pig

What if what we wish to exist exists, and what we do not wish to exist does not. I am but a product of utility, of evolution. The only reason I think is because it is beneficial for me to do so; Why have a thought if it doesn't benefit me?

Socrates

Your belief is a hedonistic one at best, although it may have some merit. Sometimes our beliefs do not benefit us at surface value, but they still have use. I'll give up my pursuit of difficult beliefs when pigs fly, thank you very much. Such a life without the pursuit of beliefs I do not have would not be worth living.

Pig

While I would love to fly, I must admit, my Philosophy does sound rather empty at first. But perhaps even you follow my Philosophy, although you do not know it just yet.

Socrates

The unexamined life is not worth living, so let's examine

Pig

You desire truth about virtue, and so you have tailored your existence, your beliefs about truth, to be what allows you to best accomplish this goal. Right now for instance, you exist in a purgatory of dialogue, endlessly pursuing your purpose. Through embracing your desires and setting your truth values relative to them, you can best achieve your goals.

Socrates

Your Sophistic relativism, albeit alluring, will cause moral chaos. Consider an evil man, let us say a mass murderer. Under your Philosophy he should consider "moral truth" to be killing people most effectively. Or, say, one who desires riches beyond all measure. Should he lie and cheat to achieve his desires, and consider true virtue to contain those values?

Pig

I believe you confuse my metaphysics with ethics. I agree, ethics cannot be as relative as my metaphysics, but some relativity should be built in. Perhaps ethics is like a colander in reverse. At its core, fundamental laws must govern the desires we choose. But at the outskirts, at its implementation, we can define truth as the most effective way to implement these desires.

                Socrates
A phenomenal system in principle, but I am afraid these moral laws Kant be found.

                  Pig
Very well. You and I are merely figments anyway.

                Socrates
What could you mean?

                  Pig
We exist in a vacuum designed to prove a point. Have you ever heard of the thought experiment by J.S. Mill?

A loud pop is audible to all
                  Mill

Hello, hulloo, what's good? What's new?

                Socrates
Zounds! Could that be the great Philosopher and founder of Utilitarianism John Stuart Mill? I was just having a fantastic conversation with your pig if you care to join.

                  Mill
Why, this is not how it is supposed to go at all! The pig cannot talk, and he cannot think. He is a slave to the desires of Spinoza fame. Who would slander such a pristine thought experiment! Such a perfect counterargument to Benthem's foolish propositions! The intellectual pleasures must be upheld.

                  Pig
Oink Oink

                Socrates
Oh look what you've done now. You've made him believe it is more beneficial for him not to talk.

                  Mill

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Good. This is the thought                  *Oink*
experiment as it should be.

                                  Socrates sits back on his stump
              Pig                 to ponder meaning for eternity.
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Origins

In Allen and Hand's "Logic Primer," the formal introduction to an argument is defined as "a set of premises and conclusions. All arguments have conclusions, but not all arguments have premises. The premises of an argument can be the empty set." The objective of logical Ethics, Metaphysics, and indeed all of Philosophy to the rationalist and relativist alike is this fundamental question of logic: What arguments in this life have premises consisting of the empty set? In other words, what are the theorems of the human mind?

So introspect on our necessary premises with me. What information must be present? Naturally, we have sensory inputs, sight, taste, touch, Kant's phenomenological world of what we see and feel. Beyond the senses, we have consciousness, Descartes' "thinking mind," the one truth beyond Cartesian doubt. Descartes proposes thinking and being as one, as the implicit fact. So our assumptions: we have sensory experiences and a consciousness that can "think." Past this, we have nothing but conjecture. So why not make these conjectures good ones?

We will begin with the origin - or conclusion if you chose to believe - that all truth is wrapped in our perception, and is relative. This truth usually proceeds a sort of nihilism (if truth is relative then nothing matters), but I believe this step is made hastily. Perhaps if truth is relative, we may change it to suit our needs. If we can design truths to be whatever we wish, we are faced with freedom. The dedication to our consciousness is where we derive pragmatic wisdom: Truth should be defined by what is useful to us. But gaping holes in both its ethics and self-reference are apparent upon inspection. Firstly, as Socrates addresses in the dialogue above, truth defined by use creates an ethical vacuum. Kantian and Platonic lawmaking must be done to repair the ethical hull of our pragmatic vessel. Secondly, within self-reference, Pragmatism is contradictory. Many individuals would think it useless to consider truth relative. Why should a Physicist embrace relativism when she makes better discoveries believing that she is discovering the "real truth." I shall hereby create a new Philosophy, one which embraces all other Philosophies and the nearly limitless powers of thought and belief: Metapragmatism.

Desires

At the core of truth, there is purpose. A purpose can be hedonistic, lofty, morally just, and, at least at this stage, morally unjust and evil. Every system of thought has, at some point, served a purpose. Core systems of expression, such as mathematics, language, and artistic representation, which many Philosophers view as *a priori*, serve more as general-purpose tools to achieve goals than genuine truth-seeking devices. Confusion often arises in the more general methods of thought, those which attempt to represent "truths" that are at their core unverifiable in the sense in which they attempt to verify themselves. For example, consider the dilemma of the true argument. Whatever one attempts to argue, they make many claims. Some claims are minute down to the very specifics of systems, while others are broad in terms of the meaning of words or other symbolic systems. With each of these assumptions, we must justify further and further. Whether we believe in some foundationalist truths which needn't be justified, a coherentist web of truths that eventually create an endless cycle of assumptions or an infinitist concept of infinite truths justifying another one, we must accept that any argument contains millions of sub-arguments if we consider our basis "universal truths." In the Wittgensteinian sense, "Philosophy is a battle against the bewitchment of our intelligence by means of language." But what is intelligence if not the use of tools such as language?[1]

There is a gaping hole where truth should be in metaphysics, a hole that will not be filled anytime soon. An opportunity thus arises to model our lives the way we wish, through understanding truth as plastic, as a utility used to create satisfying beliefs. Because philosophy must first and foremost help us live. Many Philosophers have confused this purpose not out of dislike for my Philosophy, but rather out of an adherence to it: truth-seeking helps Philosophers live. Of course, Philosophers will design truth-seeking mindsets; Philosophers must have a tendency for seeking truth to become good Philosophers. But we must recognize that the Philosophies designed by these philosophers can only be followed if one's goal is to be a truth-seeking philosopher. They can be derived from, embraced, and modified, but never followed dogmatically. I propose a new age of the "Philosopher-and_____," much in the

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[1] This claim will no doubt have Socrates at my throat calling me a Sophist, but as we will soon see, my definitions of truth in pursuit of desires will not exist in an ethical vacuum.

traditional sense in the days of polymaths. In this highly specialized world, where every system I interact with is designed to be used and understood by highly specialized experts, an absurdity arises in any individual attempting to create a broad system in which to live and understand everything "correctly" by an expert. An existentialist dread approaches on the horizon. The Philosopher-and-Artist creates a Philosophy that allows him to design the best art. Perhaps "all art exists, even if it hasn't been created," or "My medium allows me to capture glimpses of the Platonic forms." Are these statements true? If the artist's goals are being fulfilled by the mindset, then yes.

I suspect those with an inclination to the natural sciences will have the most trouble with my Philosophy. Funnily enough, the natural sciences are where my ideas transcend possibility into practice. Consider the fundamental differences between the Physicist, Biologist, and Psychologist's conception of the fundamental building blocks of scientific reality. To the Physicist at the quantum level, there is much uncertainty as to the building blocks of subatomic particles. Quantum entities can be described as either waves or particles, and thus the definitions of "particle" and "wave" themselves are unable to express fundamental principles in this field. In Biology, fundamental principles are mostly defined through molecules and the occasional atomic structure (although these structures are mostly left to chemistry). Biology also contains top-down views of environments that concern entire organisms as building blocks. Finally, the Psychologist observes biological phenomena as immutable building blocks and takes the entire mind as a given, not so much concerning what matter the mind is made of. The Psychologist might believe that instincts are inherent, while the Biologist, who views the development of instincts from the origins of various species, does not. In these instances, truth is not defined in the deterministic sense of "what is the truest," but rather in the sense of "what sense of truth will provide the best X."

So truth, then, cannot be sought without first establishing a basis, a basis which can be found in all that we wish to "get out of" life. The emotions we wish to feel, the actions we wish to take, these products of being are all rooted in the way we observe our environment in relation to who we think we are. But environments are fickle, and the self does not exist without cultivation and awareness of it. To understand "who we really are" is to reject the possibility that our desires can change. The first purpose should be to find your purpose. This purpose could

even be to reject the purpose entirely in the Buddhist sense; this too is a purpose. But we have the freedom to view truth, to view our environment any way we wish. It's terrifying what we can do with these powers, to rewrite history, to manipulate our inner sense of truth, but to squander our ability to do so would be the greatest disservice to our mind imaginable. Evil and moral beauty arise from the same root: absurd creativity.

Communal Desire

In the individual sense, one could imagine finding desires and living by them. But we lose simplicity in introducing other societal agents, belonging to communities such as religions and companies which contain their desires, and the interaction with others who possess opposing desires. These desires will inevitably intersect in the communities to which we belong. How do we reckon with the individual who disagrees with us, who refuses to receive a life-saving vaccine, or whose religious views invalidate our way of life? Transparency in our desires at both the societal and personal levels will be necessary in disentangling the complexities of intersecting purposes.

Firstly, we must treat collective bodies as individuals under this Philosophy. Not in the emotional sense (corporate individualization has been a vile byproduct of the 21st century) or even in the ethical sense, but merely in the sense that the organizations also have purposes. These purposes must be clear and transparent, so that any individual making the choice whether they should belong to this community can reasonably predict whether their personal purposes would be aided by becoming a part of the community. If one chooses to opt into a community, it is expected that the desires of this community shall be integrated into the desires of the individual. But a community must not force any individual to be a part of it, and one must have the option to opt out of any given community, sacrificing any fulfillment received from the community. For this matter, the individual must also not force another individual into any code of desires or purposes. This is the "cardinal sin" of Metapragmatism: forcing one into purpose through illegitimate means. A Philosopher can propose a purpose, and intellectual conversation and debate about such purposes should result, but these must be explicit in their influences and bias.

On God

Is God real? And does my choice of capitalization imply my answer? William James and John Dewey, my primary pragmatic forefathers, believed so. As Christian thinkers, they made Pragmatic thought quite clear on the matter of religion: it would always be most beneficial for an individual to believe in the Christian God. I am far more agnostic, but believe God and religion play a special role in Pragmatic thought, in that they are powerful examples of the power of belief. Commonly I hear "my belief in God 'saved' me." Imagine, then, how powerful it would be to train our minds to save ourselves. But is God real? I'll let you know when I figure out if I want him to be.

The Universal Desire

The next segment will contain a desire which I believe to necessitate all other desires, a backbone which is necessary for human existence. I will make quite plain the experiences which have led me to this conclusion, and allow the reader to draw whether this desire can be forgone under any circumstance. I like to believe that my backbone was removed from my body and placed into my Philosophy. Rather biblical in a sense.

Little matches the existential dread of lying in an MRI machine. Alone, I understood very little of the mechanisms piercing gazes under my skin, into my blood and bone. I began to reconsider my tumor once again, how much I hated the feeling of something growing and festering inside my bone. I wished for an absence, for a space where the rotten vertebrae laid. This tumor was made of my own flesh and blood. It was a piece of me that I wished to be gone. I realized, in the MRI machine, where do we draw the line? Could I wish to be rid of a bone, a limb, a tongue, or a cheek? A fetus? A mind? What parts of us do we have the right to hate? I have, at times, wished for an absence in place of myself. Not desiring death, for this would require a process or an action resulting in the discontinuity of my body. Rather, I wished not to wish. I wished for an absence where I currently lay. The feelings passed, but the existential dread brought me to tears. I found the universal desire: we must first desire to exist, and existence must be enough.

Satisfaction through existence and only existence is a goal which we must attempt to achieve. However, the human mind is ill suited to this end. Consider the possibility, one which I hope is not true, that consciousness persists after death in the absence of phenomenal input.

Since we have found no place in the physical brain for consciousness, we could imagine that after our link to the physical world is disconnected through the death of our physical body, and that our consciousness could continue in an abyss with only our thoughts and memories. How long would it take until we would wish to shut ourselves off? How long until our consciousness would cease to think? I mean to say consciousness in the absence of environment or ways to manifest itself is not self satisfying. But this life, in one with environment, self-satisfaction and a desire to exist must be a core tenant. As existing necessarily results in desiring and forming purpose, one could also call this purpose "the desire to desire."

The Ethics

I introduced my Philosophy in the absence of ethics for two reasons. One: Much like Sartrian existentialism, I began this process without an ethical system. I hoped to mirror my thought processes in the introduction of this Philosophy, and then later become my own de Beauvoir. Two: The pursuit of an ethical system with absurdly relative metaphysics is an ongoing task. I figured it best to leave the ethical Philosophers with something to do. This being said, I can still provide a structure to ethics that mirrors the human mind and society alike, in both its desire for order and moral structure, as well as its inevitable chaos and need for freedom of pursuits.

Entering the conversation of ethics, we find one central debate at the helm: should a system of ethics be made of relative values or universal moral laws[2]? In the left corner, relative value shifts on swift feet. A relative ethical system usually surrounds itself with a central dogma, such as "do the most net good," and sets ethical truths relative to this dogma. Thus, the "most ethical" decision is an informed choice based on what will "do the most good" or any other dogma. This system is relative in twofold. First, the "correct decision" is relative to the person performing the action, and the logical systems they internalize in their thought. Second, the central dogma could hypothetically serve any function. "Do the most good," "Do the least harm," "Make the most muffins," are all dogmas which could serve a use in relative ethics. But in ethics, a simple relativism will not hold, especially when we create our own dogmas. In the dialogue,

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[2] Part of me wishes to make the claim that these are one in the same. Utilitarianism could be "imported" into Kantian ethics. But this train of thought will not build an ethics; it will thus be ignored.

Socrates clarifies this obvious failing of relativism. One who believes in *any* given thing could simply declare it an ethical dogma and then follow it. Needless to say, if one could declare anything as ethical, ethics no longer has a purpose. And even with a seemingly benevolent dogma such as "do no harm," we still must entrust the methods of others to follow through.

With relative value on the left, Universal moral law stands noble and venerated (even if a little dry) on the right. While still beginning dogmatically with values such as: "Act only according to that maxim by which you can at the same time will that it should become universal law," (Kant) moral law systems differentiate themselves through their pre-ordered categorization of immoral actions before they occur and in a vacuum. One cannot steal, lie, or kill, because these actions violate the categorical imperative, whereas a relative system such as Utilitarianism would require more situational insight to make claims against or for these actions. Universal laws are rigid, ordered, simple to understand, and often impossible to implement on the individual level. Thus Kant has often been praised for his brilliantly designed ethical system, but falls short during the real life implementation portion. But the order and simplicity of universal law has its uses, and perhaps we can cleverly fuse our moral standpoints into two sides of one moral coin.

Whenever I think of a coin, my mind gravitates towards the donation collectors found in malls. One drops a coin on the outside of the basin, then watches hypnotized as the coin swirls from the wide mouth to the perfectly coin shaped center. Consider the core of our moral system to be ordered moral law. We will use the Categorical Imperative, as I don't pretend to be a better decider of dogma than Kant. We hope for the basis of our actions as well as the basis of our metaphysical views to be our purposes. These purposes must first pass the Categorical Imperative. Since these values are chosen with reason and prior to action, the Categorical Imperative as universal law can be applied in good conscience; its universality gives all purposes an equal playing field with which it ensures morality. Once our starting points are moral, our special brand of pragmatic relativism can naturally follow. Essentially, relativism becomes the wide basin upon which our actions fall in the real world, and the moral law is that "coin shaped hole" to which these actions return to at heart.

Posterior Ethics

In speaking of dualisms, I often fall victim to the "fallacy of the golden mean." But a compromise between a dualism in this ethical system is derived through an attempt to mimic the world of our desires themselves, game theoretical assumptions of human nature, and our desire for order in a disordered world. In short: laws fall short on realism, and relativism falls short on order. This debate rages through a variety of dilemmas at the center of our humanity. Polytheism and Monotheism, Democracy and Tyranny, Invasive treatment and hospice, we strive for order in a disordered world. And so, at the level of desires, we naturally place the order here. At the level of "the world," or where actions take place, we include our relativism. I like to imagine my ethical religion as an all benevolent and infallible god making orders to fallible subjects. Ethical law in the "real world," with rational agents all making their own decisions, is unreasonable.

But how about desires which necessitate other desires to become moral? Consider the desire for technological advancement, one which I hold myself. I only hold this desire in combination with the desire for progression in a moral fashion. Additionally, consider the desire to create great art. If this were the *only* desire of a society, I would not place my bets on its functionality. But I still wish to incorporate these desires into my moral law. And so -- and I do admit this may open a can of worms -- linked desires should also be included in moral evaluation. This is to say one can evaluate whether a society could function if every individual held all the desires you hold *in combination with one another*. Thus, one can include desires such as "creating great art," in combination with "improve the world" and "support my family."

The separation between ethical desire and ethical action also provides some insight into the difference between "moral" and "good" actions. A "moral action" is one which was done out of some purpose which has passed through the ethical inspection of moral law. A "good action" is a relative term meaning you believe the relative situational insight of the individual performing the action was effective in achieving its ends. Thus, the term "moral" has rigid implications while "good" has relative implications.

The entire structure of this ethical system implies a previously little touched upon inverse relationship between Metaphysics and Ethics. The more freedom applied to one's metaphysics, the more robust one's ethical system must be and vice versa. With set truth values that all must adopt, individuals have little need for ethical codes. A stricter Metaphysics accounts for less freedom of thought, and so less individuals will "bend the lines" into immoral action. Frequently

in "utopian" cults, we see brainwashing maneuvers to shape an individual's reality to the will of the organization. Thus, little needs to be done to enforce ethical rules on the individual. Organized religion does the same: metaphysical concepts such as God, afterlife, and theories of creation enforce actions without the need for an ethical code. In Christianity, an ethical code is provided but always backed up by some metaphysical quasi-truth. Thus, in my pursuit to free metaphysics from the shackles of our current closed-minded systems, I needed to build a robust Ethical system that appears against the tides of my previous relativism.

On the Personal (take one)

On a final note, I wish to return to my Philosophy in combination with the personal. Because during particular moments of my life, I have found the application of my Philosophy difficult to the point nearing impossibility. I will outline mindsets that have been helpful, unhelpful, and places in between. I will note my angers, the futility of those angers, and what I believe I, and others, deserve. I will wrestle with my fears and joys, my hopes for what a "Petersonian Philosophy" will one day come to mean, and attempt to place a cohesive wrapper around my life as my adolescence comes to an end. If Philosophizing and writing about experience is a form of killing, consider these paragraphs a magnificent bloody massacre, an explosive martyrdom as a reward for dredging through my Philosophy.

About halfway through this year, I was approached by a colleague with a request. He had been on a team I led to create a website, had dropped out early on the project, and he wanted to be credited on the masthead. My first instinct was to say "Of course not." This kid didn't put in an ounce of effort, and I did not pick up the slack from the rest of my team members just to give this kid recognition. But I stopped myself, for it was my pride and stubbornness which led me to this truth. I said "Sure, of course." Who was I hurting by training myself to believe in this truth? If I could hone my power of belief, there would be only net gain.

In another example, and this one is rather stoic, I trained my body to believe drinking water would relieve me of my back pain. Chronic pain leaves one desperate for relief, and I sought refuge in my mind. I told myself: you're dehydrated. Drink water and you won't be in pain. And it worked, if only for a few minutes. But after I learned of my tumor, I reconsidered

my actions, whether they were actually helpful. I was working merely with the information I had at the time, and built a mindset that would have been potentially fatal long term.

Which brings to two truth values which I have designed to be helpful, but have hurt me long term: the priority of contradiction and the intellectualization of suffering. The means to which I believe in the priority of contradiction are quite plain: If I hold truth values that contradict my own arguments as of higher weight than those which support my arguments, my arguments will naturally become stronger as I build them around their refutations. But in doing so I lost the sense of myself. Invalidating my Philosophy invalidated myself. Intellectual defeats felt like personal ones, with a Philosophy I could not disentangle from my way of living.

The intellectualization of suffering arises from my own fears about useless sacrifice: If I make my sufferings important intellectually, they will never be useless. Inspired by the line of tortured academics before me, this mindset worked quite well at first. But suffering is a part of life, and to academically turn suffering to utility murdered my spirit, and muddled my life. I began to compare my sufferings to that of others, invalidate certain experiences in favor of others, and overall stopped living, became a shell of a life. I write these examples to explain how difficult this Philosophy can be to achieve without recognising you *will* develop harmful mindsets. But we must be open when they arise, and take a dose of the relative mentality of: "I can change this if it is not helping me."

Meta-meta pragmatism?

So what use does Metapragmatism have? In other words, how pragmatic is pragmatic pragmatism? Asking this question is like asking what use the cup has when drinking a glass of water. Will the cup sustain you? Give you the hydration which you require? No. But the hydration could never occur without it. A good container often goes ignored. I pay special attention to the keys of this laptop, but ignore the table on which it sits, and for that matter the ground on this earth on which it sits. Metapragmatism on its own *should* feel empty and insubstantial. This is exactly what it attempts to achieve, as all good containers do. Absence is at the root of its meaning. In the second part of this paper, I will fill the container with the personal inquiry that has filled my life.