What Wisdom Must be Like for One Who is Actually Wise: An Aristotelian Perspective

Tom Pham

Tom is an SDIS member and a professional computer programmer by training who has worked for big and small companies, IBM Corp. among them.

For seven years in the early 2000s, Tom participated regularly in a reading group called San Diego Great Books, which strengthened his interest in philosophy and independent study.

The present talk arose from an online discussion group in which he actively participates. One of its ongoing reading projects and topics of discussion is Aristotle’s: Nicomachean Ethics.
The Scholars Notebook is issued monthly during the academic year, except December, by the San Diego Independent Scholars. Editor: Arlene Gilbert

SDIS strives to promote opportunities for active learning and scholarship, for its members and for the San Diego community.

Public service activities of SDIS include free public lectures and cooperative educational projects with other organizations. SDIS members enjoy a variety of regular discussion groups, presently via Zoom.

SDIS, established in 1982, was instrumental in the founding of the National Coalition of Independent Scholars, an organization that unites eight similar organizations and has international membership.

For more information see https://sdscholars.org or contact sdisask@gmail.com

SCHOLAR’S NOTEBOOK
February 2024—Contents

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What Wisdom Must be Like for One Who is Actually Wise: An Aristotelian Perspective

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Calendar

Please check announcements for information related to possible sign-up requirements and specifics about meeting locations.

SDIS Members are invited to attend events in North County Village in Carlsbad. Activities will be listed in our calendar and identified as NCV events.
BIOSCIENCES

February 9, 1-2:30 p.m.

In January, the Biosciences Group met jointly with the Works in Progress Group because the presentation “A Science and Contemplative Perspective on Wellbeing” by Dr. Jaime Pineda was of interest to both groups. See Works in Progress, following….

In February, Biosciences will examine the explosion of new RNA-based technologies in medical therapy and diagnostics, emphasizing advantages, disadvantages and safety considerations. The meeting will be at 1:00 on February 9 in Dorothy Parker’s apartment. Visitors are welcome, but please RSVP to dorothylparker@gmail.com.

WORKS IN PROGRESS GROUP

February 15, 1-2:30 p.m.

The Works in Progress Group now meets monthly in the North University Community Library at 8820 Judicial Drive in San Diego, CA 92122. These sessions, which are open to the public, are at 1:00 on the 3rd Thursday of each month. The library has ample parking and a pleasant community room. Invite your friends!

The January meeting, featuring Dr. Jaime Pineda, attracted 25 attendees, of whom 10 were guests. Jaime’s presentation, “A Science and Contemplative Perspective on Wellbeing,” synthesized viewpoints from neuroscience with those of various contemplative philosophies, including Buddhism and mindfulness meditation. The lecture’s new, convincing ideas led to an enthusiastic question period.

“Mysticism and Art,” the topic of the Works in Progress meeting on February 15, will be led by Caroline Morse, who has developed a unique series of participatory discussions and art experiences related to mysticism. The current event will focus on Dag Hammarskjöld, who is known for his role as Secretary General of the United Nations but whose writings indicate he was a mystic. The discussion will be followed by a short art activity based on Dag Hammarskjöld’s life and writings.

Because of limited table space and art supplies, participation in “Mysticism and Art” must be limited to 15 people. REGISTER NOW by an email to chmorse2@gmail.com. (Registration is required for this month of Works in Progress only.)

(Registration is required for this month of Works in Progress only.)

Dorothy Parker
The SDIS Inside Politics Study Group will next meet on Zoom on Saturday, February 10, at 10:00 a.m. At that meeting we will first discuss the opening of the 2024 election season in January, which began with the Iowa Caucus and ended with the New Hampshire Primary Election. Former President Donald Trump soundly won the Republican Caucus, with Ron DeSantis a distant second and Nikki Haley a close third.

Eight days later, the New Hampshire primary was held. By that time, DeSantis had suspended his campaign for President, and Nikki Haley had her best chance to beat Trump because the election rules in New Hampshire allowed every voter to declare himself or herself an independent or undeclared voter and vote in the GOP primary.

Still, Trump prevailed that night by about double digits. This was the first time in history that a non incumbent had ever won both the Iowa Caucus and the New Hampshire Primary.

The biggest surprise of the evening came during Haley’s concession speech. While most of the cable networks had predicted Haley would suspend her campaign if she did not win or come a close second in New Hampshire, Haley announced the campaign was just beginning, and she was looking forward to a rematch with Trump in South Carolina in late February. So we are guaranteed at least another month of the Republican campaign.

Trump was incensed and appeared “unhinged” in his victory speech, according to Nikki Haley. Meanwhile, criminal and civil court cases against Trump continue, and threaten to disrupt the Trump campaign, which could explain Haley’s decision to go forward despite Trump’s victories in Iowa and New Hampshire.

Al Korobkin

physical sciences group

February 14, 2 p.m.— via Zoom

"The Physical Sciences Group had its most recent zoom meeting on Jan 31, 2024, We continued our review of Peskin and Schroeder's "Introduction to Quantum Field Theory", covering chapter 5 at this and the previous meeting. This chapter explores applications of the lowest approximation Feynman Diagrams to specific Quantum Electrodynamic scatterings, including: electron positron annihilation into a muon anti-muon pair, Scattering of an electron off a muon (a kind of Rutherford Scattering), Compton Scattering - scattering of a photon off an electron, to yield another photon and the electron. (This is a bit like two billiard balls colliding, With some added complication to the nature of the scattering), and annihilation of an electron positron pair into two photons.

In all these cases the predicted resulting scattering cross-sections as a function of the angle of scattering, yield results that are exquisitely verified with great accuracy by experiment. Furthermore, the dependence of the scatterings on the relative spins of the incoming and outgoing particles are precisely verified by measurement. Our next zoom meeting will be on Wed. Feb 14, at 2:00pm. At that time we will continue our review with chapter six, which deals with higher order Feynman Diagram contributions in Quantum Electrodynamics."

Alvin Halpern
This group’s concentration on “Photography” ended with a figurative bang, as each participant named and described a favorite photographer, briefly discussing that individual’s work. Those named were a varied mix of individuals, in time, in subject matter, and in location:

First was **Ansel Adams**, not for his well-known landscape works but for his little-known photographs of Manzanar, one of the holding camps set up by the US government during World War II to house Japanese-American families.

Next was **Edward Curtis**, who between 1906 and 1911 became so expert at photographing Native Americans of the West that he was often trusted to photograph tribal ceremonies and dances which whites were not allowed to witness.

More modern was **Don Bartletti**, a photojournalist for the Los Angeles Times and the San Diego Union, whose specialty was essays, one of which won him the Pulitzer Prize in 2003.

Then there was **George Platt Lynes**, who during the 1930s and 40s was best known for his portraits of Hollywood stars, ballet dancers, writers and male nudes, and is also considered one of the great American surrealists.

**Bill Cunningham** of the New York Times was a street photographer who loved, photographed and predicted fashion; originality and eccentricity attracted him and won him the French government’s Legion of Honor award. Among ordinary working people and among the socialites and wealthy, men as well as women, he was a trend-spotter and considered fashion a mirror of the times, snapping photos from the late 1960s until his death in 2016.

**Jacques-Henri Lartigue**, born into a wealthy French family, photographed the life around him from his childhood at the beginning of the 20th century until his death in 1986. His life and photographs include spontaneous and joyful depictions of his relatives, the resorts he frequented, early airplanes, automobile races, his wife and son, and the many other beautiful women in his life.

And last, briefly mentioned, was the Mexican artistic photographer **Manuel Alvarez Bravo**, who became one of the most important 20th century Latin American photographers.

Now concentrating on “Poetry”, this group will discuss certain of Shakespeare’s sonnets at its February 19 meeting. Always on the third Monday of the month at 10 a.m., the group meets via Zoom. Contact me for further details.

Gerry Horwitz

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**COLLOQUY CAFÉ**

February 21, 1 p.m.

January’s meeting featured thoughts and opinions about wrongs, both suffered and committed, as we discussed “forgiveness”. What acts demand, or deserve, to be forgiven? Does the passage of time without it wear away the need to forgive? Strongest of all was one participant’s opinion that refusing, or neglecting, to forgive harms the one who holds the hurt much more than the one who caused it.

But February’s discussion, as usual an in-person meeting on the third Wednesday—Feb. 21 at 1:00—will feature a happier subject: “music”. This will occur in the home of Sonia Rosenberg; non-regular individuals who wish to participate may contact either her or me for more information.

Gerry Horwitz

Ansel Adams
The Film Group will meet Wednesday, February 7, at 10 a.m.

On February 7 at 10 am, the SDIS Film Group presents the first Rock n’ Roll musical: Rock Around the Clock (1956).

IMDB’s Maths Jesperson summarizes the film as follows:

Orchestra manager Steve Hollis realizes that big-band music is dead. People want something new, but what? On their way to New York, Steve and his companion Corny, stop at a motel in a small place called Strawberry Springs.

It’s Saturday evening, and a huge number of young people are going to the Town Hall to listen to a local band called Bill Haley and His Comets, playing a new kind of music called rock’n’roll.

It is accompanied by a new way of dancing, led by the siblings Lisa and Jimmy Johns. Steve immediately recognizes that this could be what all America is waiting for.

He convinces the band and the dancers to let him organize their nationwide breakthrough, and goes to New York to arrange bookings with the top agent Corinne Talbot. She has for a long time tried to get Steve to marry her, but in vain.

She now realizes that Steve is in love with the young dancer Lisa Johns, which makes her change her strategy. Corinne tries to stop the rock’n’roll group everywhere, but despite all her efforts they soon are a big success all over the country. And Lisa is smarter than Corinne.

Jesprson neglects to mention appearances by The Platters. The Ernie Freeman Combo, Martinez and His Mambo, and Freddie Bell and His Bellboys, who with Haley contribute 17 lively popular songs of this early Rock era.

DJ Alan Freed (notorious later in his career for the “Payola” scandal) plays himself, and in keeping with his anti-discriminatory policies on TV, integrates the cast of musicians.

Ken Krauss and Barbara Heckler
February 2024
Some meetings and events listed are via Zoom

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