

Chapter 1 : the basketball metaphysic | Download eBook PDF/EPUB

*Authentic Metaphysics in an Age of Unreality, Second Edition: [Leo Sweeney] on blog.quintoapp.com *FREE* shipping on qualifying offers. In an age where appearances are often substituted for what really is, deception and falsity for honesty and truth.*

This remained true of all classical philosophical aesthetics in the late 18th and 19th centuries. In this brand of aesthetics, the aesthetic moment is but one aspect of the general theory of how humans perceive, know, and act in the world; the theories of beauty and of artistic practice depend on the theories of perception, knowledge and judgement, and those in turn are premised upon more fundamental considerations regarding the nature of reality and our relationship to it. By contrast with the specialised aesthetic theories developed in the last few decades, existentialist aesthetics is a continuation of this grand tradition. Existentialist aesthetics is intimately connected to certain metaphysical views, and it owes its richness and consistency to the fact that it is part of a complex and coherent philosophical system. Therefore we should begin by delineating the most salient features of this metaphysical outlook. The key insight that defines and unites existentialism as a philosophical position, despite all the divergences between the authors included under that denomination, is the emphasis on the radical nature of human freedom, and the metaphysical and ontological imports of that freedom. For existentialism, human freedom grounds the very possibility of knowledge in its deepest form, i. Atheistic existentialists Camus, Sartre, de Beauvoir, Merleau-Ponty , on the contrary, do not ground freedom in faith and the hope of accessing the transcendent; instead they emphasise the difficulty of assuming that freedom, since nothing can ensure that our attempts at finding meaning in the world will actually yield something objectively present in it. The phenomenological core of existentialist aesthetics For the 20th century existentialists, a decisive philosophical inspiration was phenomenology, the philosophical method devised by the German philosopher, Edmund Husserl, during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and which his famous student, Martin Heidegger, developed into a combination of existential analysis and deep ontology. It follows that existentialist aesthetics and the phenomenological approach to aesthetic perception and judgement Ingarden , are two closely related areas. Mikel Dufrenne situates his work precisely at this intersection see especially Dufrenne What does intentionality mean, and why is it such a central notion in existentialist thinking about art? Husserl shows that when any type of meaning is articulated in cognitive, moral, affective, aesthetic attitudes, etc. In other words, different types of meaning depend on the specific structure of the acts of consciousness that carry them; in particular, they depend on the specific temporality of these mental acts. To give an example that made its way into some of the most famous existentialist literary works e. The object is not given in an instant, and every perception points to a potential new perception which will confirm or revise the previous ones. This temporality of perception implies recourse to memory and a unification of past moments of perception. It is not just an epistemological but a metaphysical position. This approach to the basic problem of metaphysics is highly significant because it circumvents the dualisms of classical philosophy: The emphasis on intentionality avoids these dualisms because it entails, on the one hand, that all meanings are constituted through acts of human consciousness, thus insisting on the active role of the subject in the formulation of any meaningful aspect of the world. The existentialists explicitly embraced the philosophical solution that phenomenology provided. It is our presence in the world which multiplies relations. It is we who set up this relationship between this tree and a bit of sky. Thanks to us, that star which has been dead for millennia, that quarter moon, and that dark river are associated in the unity of a landscape. It is the speed of our car and our aeroplane which organises the great mass of the earth. With each of our acts, the world reveals to us a new face. But, if we know that we are directors of being, we also know that we are not its producers. If we turn away from this landscape, it will sink back into its dark permanence. At least, it will sink back; there is no one mad enough to think that it is going to be annihilated Sartre a, Art as revelation of the world Sartre draws a basic aesthetic implication from the thesis that meaning in the world depends on acts of consciousness: Thus, our sense of freedom is tremendously increased: One of the chief motives of artistic creation is certainly the need of feeling that we are essential in relationship to the world. This is

because as Husserl had already insisted the most partial or minute act of perception entails a reference to a broader horizon of future potential perceptions. Many existentialist writers have stressed this primordial, metaphysical function of the work of art as a partial revealing that aims to uncover the totality of Being. Such an intimate link between metaphysics and art explains why existentialists often place certain artists on a level equal or superior to the philosophers: It also partly explains why most existentialist philosophers were equally, or in fact more, active as creative writers. According to them, there are no real differences between metaphysical inquiry and artistic practice: Art as expression of human freedom The metaphysical and ethical dimensions of human freedom are intimately related. This is the most significant difference between the existentialists and Husserlian phenomenology: The existentialists argue that, of all the beings existing in the world, the human being is the only one that can decide what it should be; indeed, it is forced to do so since it has no fixed nature. Many human beings refuse this burden and flee from their ontological responsibility by accepting pre-given roles. What is the link between the metaphysical and the ethical dimensions of human freedom, and how does this latter concern aesthetics? Let us begin with the first part of the question. We will first approach it by using a mode of argument typical of phenomenology. A mountain climber views a mountain in a way radically different from an intellectual who has devoted his or her life to books. The difference in their perspectives relates to the deep projects of selves that distinguish these two persons. In other words, behind every perception there is a value influencing the perception in advance and thus ultimately determining its precise content. The very capacity of human beings to conceive something in the world at all is premised on their capacity to posit values Sartre a; Marcel a, for the religious perspective. This answers, then, the second part of the question regarding the relation between the work of art and the ethical aspect of freedom. For the existentialists, as we saw, the work of art brings to a higher level of reflexivity and consistency the innate capacity of human beings to disclose the world. However, since this capacity is itself rooted in the ethical or religious nature of human beings, the work of art plays a central role in conveying a more acute sense of ethical responsibility. It follows that there is an intimate link between art and engagement: This definition of the artwork remains ambiguous inasmuch as it does not specify whose freedom is required. A number of features can be delineated as a result, depending on whose freedom is emphasised in each case. The freedom required by the world is first of all that of the artist. Every artwork reveals a fundamental, existential attitude towards the world, and is the expression of an existential choice. We will return to the fundamental notion of expression below, but we can already note that putting existential weight on every act of disclosure leads directly to the conclusion that artistic practice is intimately linked to ethical and political choices. This is because existence, freedom and self-determination are, for the existentialists, essentially active and practical notions. The existential choice is not simply a choice of who one should be, in the sense of a choice of personality or character; the theory of existence does not translate into a theory of genius. Rather, the emphasis is on the active relationship within the world, and especially with others. When the artist presents the world whether he or she likes it or not, this presentation also proposes to others ways to live in the world and possibly at least for the most politically minded authors, such as Sartre, de Beauvoir and Merleau-Ponty to change it. Therefore the artwork involves a freedom that is not just that of the artist, but also that of the audience. Hence, Sartre offers another definition of the artwork that identifies the different poles of the metaphysical power of art: In this respect, again, they differ from some modernist views. Indeed, this insistence on the representative dimension of art might appear old-fashioned, inasmuch as the more modern insistence on the autonomy of the artwork has marked most late 19th century aesthetic projects and their 20th century descendants. Art and the absurd So far we have only considered the subjective side of the link between human revelation of the world and the world itself. Existentialism, however, also emphasizes the objective side of the link; that is, the world itself as object of perception and knowledge, and as the context in which human action takes place. Marcel, despite his critical analyses of what he sees as the ills of modern society, is the most optimistic of all, mainly due to the theological grounding of his ontology. Ultimately there is no gap for him between the yearning for full participation in the world including in God and the world itself, since we owe our very existence and capacity for participation to the ultimate origin of this world. As he writes in his diary: Although Merleau-Ponty does not share this theological conviction, he agrees with Marcel on a crucial

point: As a result of our being both in and of the world through our bodies, Merleau-Ponty believes that on the whole our presentations of the world reveal objective features of it. Whilst we crave for sense and harmony, the world has nothing to offer but chaos and a random play of blind forces. All our efforts to impose order and sense upon a world that can ultimately accommodate neither are therefore doomed to fail. The absurd, then, denominates both the most fundamental state of the world and the absurdity of human attempts at overcoming this basic fact. For Camus, one of the ways of liberating oneself from the illusion of meaning and unity is to open up to the beauty of Nature and partake in it, abandoning oneself in privileged moments of hedonistic communion with wild environments, such as the rugged Algerian landscape or the Mediterranean, or in eroticism; see the moments of happiness in *The Outsider*, for example, a, 23â€”24, â€” His first novel, *Nausea*, painstakingly chronicles this ontological disgust towards the strangeness of the world. Admittedly, this applies to some existentialist authors more than others. But these obstacles arise mainly from social institutions notably around marriage and historical events the tragic circumstances of the 20th century and what Marcel sees as the dangerous objectivism of modern society. As we have noted, some of the best-known passages in their literary writings also describe moments in which the obtrusiveness of the world is overcome, yielding fleeting yet sublime experiences of sensuous communion with nature and others. Ontology of the artwork Sartre drew some particularly interesting conclusions from the definition of the functions of art on the basis of an existentialist metaphysics. Mikel Dufrenne has most thoroughly pursued this ontological approach. The freedom that characterises human subjectivity is manifested most vividly in a specific type of intentionality: This distinguishes it from the type of intentionality involved in perception, one of the key aspects of which is precisely the positing of its object as existent. The real, material elements of the artwork are, properly speaking, not the actual elements on which the aesthetic judgement is fixed. These are fixed instead on a virtual object, i. Sartre insists that one should reject any suspicion of dualism here: These two are, however, indistinguishable. The real, says Sartre, is the analogue of the ideal. Merleau-Ponty puts it in similar terms, at first in terms of sense and non-sense, and later on in terms of the visible and the invisible: As we have seen, existentialist aesthetics generally insists on the unity that artistic expression brings to the world. This implies that the consistency of the existential project, from which the world is revealed in a special way, also commands the consistency of the artwork. But the quote above also indicates the relation between the different elements that make up the overall composition: In the same manner, the existentialist philosophers who dedicated the most attention to the articulation of meaning Sartre and Merleau-Ponty insist on the essentially diacritical essence of the aesthetic element in a given composition: This also implies that often the meaning and aesthetic power of a composition a text, a painting and so on rests just as much on what is not said or not shown; what lies in-between the elements of the composition, rather than on the elements explicitly shown. The existentialists all insist that meaning is largely to be found in a certain form of silence. In the case of a novel: On the contrary, it is by nature a silence and a contestation of speech. The hundred thousand words aligned in a book can be read one by one without the meaning of the work emerging; meaning is not the sum of the words, but its organic totality Sartre a,

Chapter 2 : METAPHYSICS SYLLABUS

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Metaphysics is the department-designated class for information competency assessment of Philosophy majors. Thus there will be assignments designed to assess your ability to use information resources like the library resources, databases, reference works, etc. Class Meetings I expect attendance at every class meeting. If this is impossible let me know by 5: I will lower you a grade increment for every unexcused absence. Class meetings will begin at I will treat a pattern of late arrival as an unexcused absence. I expect silent attention during class periods. If you wish to ask a question, answer a question, or make a contribution to the class, please ask to be recognized. There is no excuse for conducting a private discussion during class time. I will treat a pattern of talking in class as an unexcused absence. Reading Assignments You will be responsible for the entirety of all readings assigned. However, at times I will indicate that I will pay particular attention to some part of a reading. As a result, it may happen that other parts of the reading will not be treated in class. You will be responsible for them anyway. Exams Exams will be administered on the date and time scheduled in the syllabus unless I change it for pedagogical reasons. I will allow you a one-page "cheat sheet" for each exam. We will review the material for each exam briefly during the class preceding, explaining what concepts and abilities the exam will test for. I welcome questions, even at times outside that review period. There will be no makeup exams. Organize your life so that you can take the exams at the times and dates indicated. Go to the Main Page <https://>

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He began preparatory school at Weybridge, but because of his frequent advocacy of atheism he was removed, and transplanted to Caterham. There he became notorious for refusing to play football, preferring rather to lie in the middle of the field. He moved from Caterham to Clifton College as a boarding student in 1878. He cherished his memories of Clifton College, despite the perhaps not infrequent bullying he encountered there. In 1881 he joined the influential secret discussion group, the Cambridge Apostles. At this time, A. Whitehead was already a member of the group, and G. Moore and Bertrand Russell would soon join in the early 1890s. McTaggart graduated in 1883. In 1884 he was made a lecturer in Moral Sciences Philosophy at Trinity College, and he held this post until he retired in 1914 at the age of 56. He died unexpectedly two years later, in 1916. This pamphlet is reprinted in his *Philosophical Studies*. First, prove that the world is not exclusively matter, next prove that it is exclusively spiritual, and finally determine the nature of spirituality. The true reality that gives rise to these appearances consists in finite spirits perceiving and loving one another. Throughout his life, he defended the claim that ultimate reality consists of loving spirits. He did not live to see his final defense in print. He died in 1916, at the age of 58, two years before the second volume of the *Nature of Existence* was published in 1918 under the editorial care of C. Bradley was an important influence on McTaggart. In turn, McTaggart was influential in the intellectual development of G. In his autobiography, Russell writes: I heard a knock on my door one day—a very gentle knock. The door opened, and I saw McTaggart on the mat. He was already a president of the union, and about to become a fellow, and I was inspired and in awe on account of his metaphysical reputation, but he was too shy to come in, and I was too shy to ask him in. I cannot remember how many minutes this situation lasted, but somehow or other he was at last in the room. Broad described McTaggart, who was his director of studies at Cambridge Redpath, thusly: Take an eighteenth-century English Whig. Let him be a mystic. Endow him with the logical subtlety of the great schoolmen and their belief in the powers of human reason, with the business capacities of a successful lawyer, and with the lucidity of the best type of French mathematician. Inspire him Heaven knows how in early youth with a passion for Hegel. Then subject him to the teaching of Sidgwick and the continual influence of Moore and Russell. Set him to expound Hegel. What will be the result? Hegel himself could not have answered this question a priori, but the course of the world history has solved it *ambulando* by producing McTaggart. He was on most accounts an unusual fellow, with a big head and a crab-like walk. Bradley, whose feline-directed nocturnal activities were not so benign, McTaggart saluted cats whenever he met them. Bradley preferred to shoot cats; see the entry on F. His preferred method of transportation was a tricycle, a fact which led a Cambridge paper to publish the following poem about him: Philosopher, your head is all askew; your gait is not majestic in the least; you ride three wheels, where other men ride two; Philosopher, you are a funny beast. McTaggart was delighted by this poem. McTaggart conducts metaphysics almost entirely from the armchair. In the first chapter of *Some Dogmas of Religion*, McTaggart characterizes metaphysics as the systematic study of the ultimate nature of reality. He then argues that the empirical sciences, such as physics, cannot replace metaphysical inquiry. The argument is roughly as follows. First, the claim that some empirical science such as physics provides knowledge of ultimate reality is not itself a claim of physics, but rather a metaphysical claim made about physics. And as such the evaluation of this claim goes beyond the province of physics. Second, McTaggart claims that metaphysical materialists, dualists, Berkeleyian idealists, and Hegelians all accept the same system of scientific propositions, whilst differing amongst themselves on the issue of how these propositions are to be interpreted. McTaggart concludes from this claim that there are metaphysical issues remaining even after we have settled on our best scientific theory. A similar conclusion is defended in chapter 3 of the first volume of *The Nature of Existence*. First, McTaggart claims that the rationality of using induction in general is questionable. According to McTaggart, we need an argument for the rationality of induction, and such an

argument will not be an inductive argument. Second, McTaggart raises two specific worries about using inductive arguments to derive metaphysical claims about reality as a whole. The first specific worry is that, since there is only one entity that is reality as a whole, we cannot use an inductive argument to determine the features of this entity. McTaggart appears to conceive of inductive arguments as exemplifying the pattern there are many As and each observed A is F, so every A is F. The second worry is that, since there are infinitely many existing entities a claim for which McTaggart will argue for later in the *Nature of Existence*, and we observe only finitely many of them, any inductive argument moving from claims about the features of what we observe to the features of existent entities in general will be dubious. Einstein is mentioned exactly once in both volumes of *The Nature of Existence*, briefly and in passing in section of the second volume. Unlike some of his near-contemporaries, such as A. Whitehead and Bertrand Russell, McTaggart proceeds as if he were blithely unaware of the potential for interplay between physics and philosophy. McTaggart does allow that experience has a role to play in metaphysical inquiry, albeit a limited one. McTaggart holds that only the former claim is knowable only by experience; the latter claim is derivable, he claims, from the synthetic a priori position that everything has proper parts. This latter claim will be further discussed in sections 6 and 8 of this article. Moreover, McTaggart grants that the data provided by sense-perception are prima facie true. We apparently perceive that objects are ordered in time: McTaggart holds that there is a powerful a priori argument that nothing is actually in time. But there is no powerful argument that the objects that are apparently ordered by temporal relations are not ordered by some other non-temporal relation. Perception teaches us both that objects are in time and that they are ordered by some relation. In this way, McTaggart arrives at the question: Were McTaggart alive today, his perhaps excessive apriorism would probably put off many of his analytic colleagues. But all of them would appreciate his strong desire to make his arguments as clear and as rigorous as he could make them. Moore, who imbibed this philosophical value during his time at Cambridge, had this to say: How clear he was, compared to the majority of philosophers. And what immense pains he took to get clear, even if he did not always succeed. Nor was it only that McTaggart was naturally clear-headed in a very unusual degree: Perhaps the most valuable lesson which his pupils learnt from him was the importance and difficulty of trying to get quite clear as to what you hold, and of distinguishing between the good and bad reasons for holding it. Moore, 3. *The Unreality of Time*

McTaggart is most famous for arguing that time is unreal. He was attracted to this conclusion early in his career, perhaps as a result of his mystical experiences. In June of 1908, McTaggart wrote in a letter to Roger Fry that he had some ideas about the elimination of time. His book *Studies in the Hegelian Dialectic* contains an argument for the unreality of time in sections 16-18, but this argument is very unlike the ones that succeed it. This argument was later reincarnated in the second volume of the *Nature of Existence*. McTaggart distinguished two ways of ordering events or positions in time. First, they might be ordered by the relation of earlier than. This ordering gives us a series, which McTaggart calls the B-series. A second ordering is imposed by designating some moment within the B-series as the present moment. This second ordering gives us a series that McTaggart calls the A-series. According to McTaggart, in order for time to be real both series must exist, although McTaggart holds that, in some sense, the A-series is more fundamental than the B-series. Time is real only if real change occurs. Real change occurs only if the A-series exists. The A-series does not exist. Therefore, time is not real. McTaggart has comparatively little to say in support of premise 1. We find McTaggart accepting premise 1 in as early a work as his *Studies in the Hegelian Dialectic*, section 16. There is real change only if events change, and the only way an event can change is by first being future, then present, and then past, i. According to McTaggart, an event enjoying qualitative variation across its temporal axis, such as a poker that begins hot and later cools, does not constitute an example of real change, since it is always the case that the earlier part of this event is hotter than the later part of this event. For this reason, McTaggart rejects the account of change offered by Bertrand Russell in his *Principles of Mathematics* section 16, according to which something changes just in case a proposition true of it at one time is not true of it when evaluated at a later time. With respect to any proposition P, if P has some truth-value when evaluated at a time, it is always the case that P has that truth-value when evaluated at that time. The only thing left to change then is which events are actually present. So if there is no A-series, if nothing is truly ever present, past or future, then there

is no change.

Chapter 4 : Authentic Metaphysics in an Age of Unreality : S.J Leo Sweeney :

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Chapter 7 : Blogger: Nutzerprofil: T. John Jamieson

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