

HOISTED BY THEIR OWN PETARDS: PHILOSOPHICAL POSITIONS THAT SELF-DESTRUCT

by

Steven James Bartlett

Visiting Scholar in Philosophy and Psychology, Willamette University
and

Senior Research Professor, Oregon State University

Website: <http://www.willamette.edu/~sbartlett>

KEYWORDS: self-reference, pragmatism self-referential inconsistency, projective self-referential inconsistency, metalogical self-reference, conceptual pathology, therapeutic philosophy, philosophy of quantum theory

This paper was originally published in the journal *Argumentation*, Vol. 2, 1988, pp. 221-232. The publisher of the journal wishes to have the following statement included here: “The final publication is available at <http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/BF00178023>.” The author’s version made available here includes a number of typographical corrections and is supplemented with internet-searchable keywords and an addendum of references to some of the author’s other publications that further develop this topic.

This electronic version is made available as a free open access publication under the terms of the Creative Commons **Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs** license, which allows anyone to distribute this work without changes to its content, provided that the author, the original publishing journal, and the original URL from which this work was obtained are credited, that the contents of this work are not used for commercial purposes or profit, and that this work will not be used without the author’s or his executor’s permission in derivative works (i.e., you may not alter, transform, or build upon this work without such permission). The full legal statement of this license may be found at

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/legalcode>



HOISTED BY THEIR OWN PETARDS

Philosophical Positions that Self-Destruct

Steven James Bartlett

Visiting Scholar in Philosophy and Psychology, Willamette University
Senior Research Professor, Oregon State University

ABSTRACT

Philosophers have not resisted temptation to transgress against the logic of their own conceptual structures. Self-undermining position-taking is an occupational hazard. Philosophy stands in need of conceptual therapy.

The author describes three conceptions of philosophy: the narcissistic, disputatious, and therapeutic. (i) Narcissistic philosophy is hermetic, believing itself to contain all evidence that can possibly be relevant to it. Philosophy undertaken in this spirit has led to defensive, monadically isolated positions. (ii) Disputatious philosophies are fundamentally question-begging, animated by assumptions that philosophical adversaries reject. (iii) The intention of therapeutic philosophy is to study philosophical positions from the standpoint of their internal consistency, or lack of it. In particular, its interest is in positions that either compel assent, because they cannot be rejected without self-referential inconsistency, or self-destruct because self-referential inconsistency cannot be avoided. The article's focus is on the latter. Several examples of self-undermining positions are drawn from the history of philosophy, exemplifying two main varieties of self-referential inconsistency: pragmatical and projective.

KEYWORDS: disputatious philosophy, philosophical judo, meaning, meaningfulness, metalogical, narcissistic philosophy, pathologies of epistemology, conceptual pathologies, performative self-reference, pragmatical self-reference, metalogical self-reference, quantum mechanics, self-referential argumentation, self-referential inconsistency, therapeutic philosophy, zero-sum discipline.



Science is the only way we have of shoving truth down the reluctant throat. Only science can overcome characterological differences in seeing and believing. Only science can progress. – A. H. Maslow¹

I would like to introduce the main theme of this paper to you indirectly, by means of a number of light-hearted illustrations. What they illustrate will very likely be clear to you; some of the principles they point to will be the object of our attention later on.

(1) BARTLETT'S POSITION IS UNASSAILABLE.

(2) BOTH SENTENCES IN THIS BOX ARE FALSE.

{222} The composer Robert Schumann wrote at the beginning of one of his compositions: "To be played as fast as possible." A few measures later he wrote: "Faster."

Groucho Marx refused to join any club willing to have him as a member.

"Don't read this" is printed on a sign.

The following rule is formulated: All rules have exceptions.

The sceptic asserts the truth of the claim: There are no truths.

A computer is instructed to answer to yes-or-no questions by turning on a red light, for an affirmative response, or a green light, for a negative response. The computer is then instructed to respond to the question, "Will the next light to go on be the green light?"

A.

There are three false statements given under item A. on this page.

1. $2 + 2 = 4$.

2. $3 \times 6 = 17$.

3. $8/4 = 2$.

4. $13 - 6 = 5$.

5. $5 + 4 = 9$.

A behaviorist claims to know that all knowledge is a matter of adjusting to the environment.

Among the many sentimental things stored in his attic by the grandfather who has recently died is a box that his family finds containing little pieces of string. The box is labeled: "Pieces of string too small to save."

Or, in another vein:

A teacher attempts to respond accurately to the following question often put to him by students: "May I ask you a question?"

Or, you avow, "I will never make a promise."

Or, again in a different way,

You are asked, "If I had six apples and gave away all but four of them, how many would I have left?"

In 1926, how much did a 13¢ stamp cost?

{223}

THREE CONCEPTIONS OF PHILOSOPHY

Philosophy is perhaps unique among disciplines: After two millennia, it is still unsure what it is or should be. Richard Rorty, one of numerous philosophers in search of a definition of their field, has proposed three propositions, in an attempt to gain a clearer conception of the nature of the philosophical discipline. The three propositions form, he argues, an inconsistent triad:

- (1) A game in which each player is at liberty to change the rules whenever he wishes can neither be won nor lost.
- (2) In philosophical controversy, the terms used to state criteria for the resolution of arguments mean different things to different philosophers; thus each side can take the rules of the game of controversy in a sense which will guarantee its own success (thus, in effect, changing the rules).
- (3) Philosophical arguments are, in fact, won and lost, for some philosophical positions do, in fact, prove weaker than others.²

Rorty intends for us to think about these propositions, and so I have tried to do this. They reinforced my biases, so I naturally believe there must be truth in what he says. I think that the truth about philosophy is that it is not a unified discipline, but rather is a loosely tied together group of approaches, most of which, in different ways, arise from the motivation to reflect upon experience. I would like to distinguish three of these approaches here: They exemplify three conceptions of philosophy, which I shall refer to as the narcissistic, the disputatious, and the therapeutic conceptions.

1. *Philosophy May be Undertaken in a Spirit of Narcissism*

A philosophical position is born, matures, and dies, or it is immortalized as a self-enclosed, self-contained framework, hermetically sealed in relation to alternative positions.

Henry W. Johnstone, Jr., asks, “Why is it not possible for a philosopher to imagine that his opponent’s position is right?” Johnstone’s answer is that a philosophical position includes all the relevant evidence. The position cannot imagine that it itself is wrong, since it has already accounted for all evidence that can be relevant to it. For the narcissistic philosopher, there do not exist alternative accounts: There is only the single, self-inspired truth.

Paul Arthur Schilpp concluded on the basis of sixty years of dedication to the works of great living philosophers that “philosophers do not *want* to understand one another.”³ This, in its brevity, may partly explain the {224} defensive, divisive, adversarial spirit we see expressed at philosophy congresses, which led Husserl to complain that at such assemblies only the personalities of the philosophers meet, never the philosophies.

Philosophy as an expression of narcissism is a “zero-sum” discipline. In the dogmatic atmosphere of narcissistic philosophy, there can be a winner and a loser, but no constructive gain for the field as a whole. In the prophetic words of *Macbeth*, “When the hurly-burly’s done, when the battle’s lost and won,” narcissistic philosophy will look at its own reflection, and see mirrored back an empty succession of mirrors.

2. *Philosophy Conducted in a Disputatious Spirit Is Philosophy that Is Perpetually Forced to Beg the Question*

This is philosophy undertaken in a contentious way: Questions are posed, and then answers proposed, contested, and controverted. In one of its earliest senses (1551), “That is called disputacion or reasoning of matters, when certain persones debate a cause together, and one taketh part contrary vnto an other.”⁴

These “certain persones” are almost assuredly philosophers who, to apply More’s words, are “addicted to a disingenuous humor of Disputacity.”⁵ They have been “rendered ... loquacious, disputatious and quarrelsome.”⁶ As Tucker wrote more than two hundred years ago, “In this divided disputatious world one must not expect to travel long without a check.”⁷

Such an approach to philosophy suggests a *contest* wherein the opposing players each assumes principles not admitted by the others in an effort to show them wrong. A philosopher so animated will assume a position extraneous to a position to be critiqued, using principles rejected by the latter. In this fashion, the Freudian may defend his position by explaining away an opponent’s criticism, in this way: “Of course you cannot agree with the Freudian account: The reason, you see, is that your toilet training is responsible.”

Similarly, some of the logical positivists endorsed a criterion of meaning that made meaning synonymous with verifiability. The cries of dismay elicited from the metaphysician, and from the less outspoken artist, musician and poet, are irrelevant to the positivist. The central question was not asked.

Philosophy is reduced to a disputatious contest whenever a view is analyzed or criticized by imposing on it an alien, external frame of reference. And conversely, opposition to a position cannot be silenced by presuming the very principles that the opposition would question.

If a narcissistic philosophy appeals to the solipsist, disputatious philosophy, infected with the fallacy of irrelevance, is the enterprise of those whose persuasions are extraneous to the views they would investigate. {225} Disputatious philosophy, like narcissistic philosophy, cannot rise above a zero-sum discipline.

3. Therapeutic Philosophy, in Contrast, Situates Itself from Within the Framework of a Position to be Studied

From this point of view, “an ideally effective argument would be based upon an assumption that [the proponent of the position in question] cannot waive, in view of the fact that he cannot regard it as a dogma alien to his own beliefs.”⁸

Philosophy undertaken in this spirit has an obvious psychotherapeutic character: Toulmin coined the word ‘cerebroses’ to refer to conceptual neuroses. John Wisdom employed the language of clinical psychology to describe the objectives of philosophy. Gregory Bateson expressed a concern for “pathologies” that the epistemologist can heal. Wittgenstein conceived of philosophy as its own needed form of therapy, to guide the philosophically perplexed out of the confines of their own entrapment. The allegory of the cave is foremost an expression of therapeutic intentions.

The strongest standard of evaluation that can be applied when philosophy is undertaken in a therapeutic spirit is to take the positions we study *seriously*: For, many positions, if they are taken seriously, will, by their own standards and in their own

terms, either falsify or undermine themselves, or prove to be utterly compelling.

This general conception of philosophy has attracted a surprisingly heterogeneous group: In metaphysics, in epistemology, in philosophy of science, philosophers have insisted that a self-referential approach to the internal dynamics of positions is the strongest method, both for criticism and for demonstration, that is available to philosophy.⁹ In this century, men such as R. G. Collingwood, John Anderson, Ledger Wood, Paul Weiss, Frederic Brenton Fitch, Henry W. Johnstone, Jr., John Passmore, Carl Kordig, Germain Grisez, Joseph M. Boyle, Jr., Olaf Tollefsen, and others have stressed the value of self-referential argumentation in philosophy.

It is an approach that appears to transcend provincialisms. It is a constructive approach to philosophy for, from this perspective which I want now to focus on, some philosophical positions prove to be unassailably strong, while some cannot be maintained at all.

Here, I would like to give special attention to the phenomenon we encounter when a philosophical position itself is such that it precludes its own acceptance.

PHILOSOPHICAL POSITIONS THAT SELF-DESTRUCT

Philosophical arguments have often sought to make use of a judo-like {226} approach that takes an opponent seriously, and then employs his own assertions against him. Philosophical judo has been exercised in a variety of ways; examples abound in the history of philosophy. I will mention several, purely as a taste of arguments to come:

1) In the *Theaetetus*, Plato had Protagoras advance the view that man is the measure of all things. The argument against Protagoras proceeds by taking his view seriously, and by showing how it brings about its own ruin. Socrates speaks:

For if truth is only sensation, and no man can discern another's feelings better than he, or has any superior right to determine whether his opinion is true or false but each is himself the sole judge, and everything that he judges is true and right, why, my friend, should Protagoras be preferred to the plane of wisdom and instruction and deserve to be well-paid, and we poor ignoramuses have to go to him, if each one is the measure of his own wisdom?¹⁰

2) A second objection was raised by Socrates, and it is perhaps yet more forceful. A contemporary interpreter formulates the objection as follows:

If Protagoras is right in thinking that what anyone takes to be true is true, it will follow that his opponents are right in *denying* that that

which anyone takes to be true is true, since this is how matters appear to them. So if Protagoras is correct it will follow both that man is the measure of all things (since this is how it appears to Protagoras) and that man is *not* the measure of all things (since this is how it appears to his opponents).”¹¹

3) Eudoxus argued that pleasure is the chief good since he is said to have claimed, in Aristotle’s words, that “any good thing—e.g., just or temperate conduct—is made more desirable by the addition of pleasure.” Aristotle took Eudoxus’ argument seriously. By accepting Eudoxus’ principle just quoted, Aristotle was able to advance an argument that reached the opposite conclusion, that the chief good is *not* pleasure. This was the argument: Any good thing is made more desirable by the addition of wisdom, hence *wisdom* is the chief good. —By granting Eudoxus’ form of reasoning, a conclusion in conflict with Eudoxus’ is reached; hence his argument fails.¹²

4) Bouwsma reasoned¹³ that Descartes was forced to reject the hypothesis of an evil genius because the idea of such a being is self-undermining: The conditions that would need to be satisfied under the assumption of the truth of the hypothesis at once are conditions that falsify it. In order to maintain that such a being is possible, it is necessary both to accept and to suspend the usual meanings of such terms as ‘truth’, ‘deception’, etc.

5) In his *Inaugural Dissertation*, Kant argued that the concept or schema of space is that according to which the mind actively coordinates its “*sensa*” as prescribed by unchanging laws.¹⁴ He further claimed that {227} space, as a formal principle of human intuition, “concerns the laws of sensibility of the subject [rather] than conditions of the objects themselves.”¹⁵ Taking Kant’s account seriously, there is no way the mind, structured in compliance with the laws of the subject, can ascertain the validity of Kant’s distinction: i.e., the distinction between the mind, spatially structured, and objects themselves, to which the concept of space does not apply.

With these sample arguments before us, I should now like to make explicit the principles they rely on. These form conceptual tools that can be effectively applied to philosophical positions such as the abbreviated ones above. The approach I will use is formal in its motivation to reduce the problem to simplest terms, and then to generalize.

This preference on my part is best expressed in the context of the test devised by the logician Smullyan to tell whether you are a mathematician or a physicist:

You are in a country cabin in which there is an unlighted stove, a box of matches, a faucet with cold running water, and an empty pot. How would you get a pot of hot water? Doubtless you will answer, “I would fill the pot with cold water, light the stove, and put the pot on until the water gets hot.” To this I reply: “Good; so far mathema-

ticians and physicists are in complete agreement. Now the next problem separates the cases.”

In this problem, you are in a country cabin in which there is an unlighted stove, a box of matches, a faucet with cold running water, and a pot filled with cold water. How would you get a pot of hot water? Most people reply, “I would light the stove and put the pot of cold water on it.” I reply: “Then you are a physicist! The mathematician would pour out the water, reducing the case to the preceding problem, which has already been solved.”

We could go a step further and consider the ease of a pot of cold water already on a lighted stove. How do we get hot water? The physicist just waits for the water to get hot; the mathematician turns off the stove, dumps out the water, reducing the case to the first problem (or he might just turn off the stove, reducing the case to the second problem).

A still more dramatic variation goes as follows: A house is on fire. We have available a hydrant and a disconnected hose. How does one put out the fire? Obviously, by first connecting the hose to the hydrant and then squirting the building. Now, suppose you have a hydrant, a disconnected hose and a house not on fire. How do you put out the fire? The mathematician first sets fire to the house, reducing the problem to the preceding case.¹⁶

This is exactly the strategy I propose in connection with narcissistic/disputatious philosophy: first burn it, then save it.

The philosophical literature on self-referential argumentation has distinguished two main varieties of self-referential inconsistency. One has been termed ‘pragmatical’ or ‘performative’; the second I have elsewhere brought into the world and christened ‘metalogical’ or ‘projective’.¹⁷

Pragmatical self-reference occurs when a proposition is used by someone to refer to an aspect of that very usage. If what is referred to falsifies the proposition, then one has a pragmatical self-referential inconsistency. For example, the assertion, “There are no truths,” is pragmatically self-referentially inconsistent. It is self-falsifying. Pragmatically self-referentially inconsistent propositions involve a factual aspect of the use made of a proposition.

Metalogical self-reference, on the other hand, occurs when a proposition is used in a manner that explicitly presupposes that certain preconditions of reference are satisfied, without which the proposition in question *in principle* could be neither true nor false. Should the proposition itself deny one or more of these conditions, then the proposition is said to be *projective*. For example, P. W. Bridgman hypothesized—tongue-in-cheek—that the physical universe is shrinking homogeneously in a manner that proportionately affects all means that can be employed to detect this shrinkage.

The cosmic shrinkage hypothesis is therefore projective: It is self-undermining. The hypothesis explicitly denies a condition that must be satisfied in order for the hypothesis in principle to be meaningful: It denies that there is any standard unaffected by the universal shrinkage, relative to which the hypothesized change in relative size could be detected. In this context, the cosmic shrinkage hypothesis undermines its own meaning: The hypothesis pulls the carpet out from under its own feet.

(—And so we may see that certain of the illustrations at the beginning of this paper are pragmatically self-falsifying; others are projective; some are neither.)

Philosophical positions can bring on their own ruin in either of these ways, destroying themselves pragmatically or projectively. Let us look at some further examples, in detail.

Carl R. Kordig has argued that most contemporary philosophies of science are self-referentially inconsistent in the sense of being self-falsifying. Kordig's analyses concern the pragmatic variety of self-referential inconsistency.

Kordig argues, for example, that the denial of objectivity in science and the doctrine of radical meaning variance are both self-referentially inconsistent. Both are self-falsifying assertions. The falsity of each claim is derivable from the assumption of its truth.

In connection with Kuhn's and Feyerabend's rejections of scientific objectivity, Kordig is in agreement with Scheffler, who claims: "Objectivity is presupposed by any statement which purports to make a cognitive claim. To put forth any such claim in earnest involves a presuppositional commitment to the view that the claim has an objective truth value."¹⁸

In connection with the doctrine of radical meaning variance, Kordig has argued against the view held by Feyerabend, Hanson, Hesse, Kuhn, Smart, and Toulmin, who have asserted that a shift from one scientific theory to another involves an incommensurable change in the meanings of the terms used, and hence that there can be no statements whose meaning is invariant across scientific theories. Kordig supplies an argument resembling Scheffler's: A statement which rejects radical meaning invariance is intended by its advocates to express the sort of meaning invariance it denies. Thus, its falsity follows from its assumed truth.

A possible objection is foreseen by Kordig: that the proposed rejection of objectivity in science and the endorsement of radical meaning variance are made from a restricted standpoint which is excepted from the claims made, e.g., from the standpoint of a metatheory. It is true that in so doing pragmatic self-referential inconsistency is evaded. However, the consequences of the evasion are unfortunate. The denial of scientific objectivity and the doctrine of radical meaning variance then result, Kordig argues, in an unjustified dualism: On the one hand, both scientific objectivity and invariance across scientific theories are denied; on the other hand, objectivity and meaning invariance are presumed in the special perspective of philosophy of science. This preference and privilege are not justified. Therefore

Kordig is able to conclude that objectivity and meaning invariance in science cannot consistently be rejected, or this rejection entails the arbitrariness of dogmatism.

A last illustration of the pragmatic variety of self-referential argument concerns the so-called Quine-Duhem thesis. Quine was responsible for extending Duhem's thesis concerning physical hypotheses, to all hypotheses. Kordig distinguishes two versions of Quine's extended thesis: (i) No hypothesis can be irrevocably falsified. (ii) No hypothesis can be immune to revision. To show the pragmatic self-referential inconsistency of both versions, Kordig argues as follows:¹⁹

(i) The Quine-Duhem thesis is itself an hypothesis. By its own claim, it cannot be irrevocably falsified. Like the thesis itself, the negation of the Quine-Duhem thesis is an hypothesis that, according to the thesis, cannot be irrevocably falsified. Hence the denial of the thesis cannot be rejected with finality: It is possible to sustain the negation of the thesis, that is, that some hypothesis *can* be irrevocably falsified. Consequently, from the Quine-Duhem thesis, its falsification can be deduced. It is a self-falsifying self-referential inconsistency, hence is not tenable. (A variation on Socrates' objection to Protagoras, mentioned earlier.)

Alternatively, (ii) the Quine-Duhem thesis is an hypothesis that claims no hypothesis can be immune to revision. Hence it is open to revision. To revise an hypothesis, in Quine's view, is to change its truth-value. In other words, from the assumption that the Quine-Duhem thesis is true, it follows that it is false.

Most self-referential analyses in philosophy of science have been pragmatical in focus, and have treated theories developed in philosophy of science *about* scientific theories. By way of contrast, let us look at a particular scientific theory, from the standpoint of its metalogical self-referential consistency.

{230} In the development of quantum mechanics, numerous philosophers (though few physicists) have argued that a microparticle has, e.g., a simultaneously well-defined position and momentum. The so-called hidden variable interpretation of quantum mechanics maintained this commitment to realism, in opposition to the Copenhagen view, which has now gained widespread acceptance. David Bohm was the main defender of the hidden variable hypothesis. From the standpoint of modern quantum statistical mechanics, the hidden variable hypothesis is projective: It is metalogically self-undermining. Very briefly, the argument to demonstrate this runs as follows:

It can be shown that the uncertainty relations have the status of presuppositions in modern quantum mechanics. One way to do this is to show that from an operationally-based statement of the uncertainty relations, the rest of quantum mechanics can be derived. This was proved by von Neumann in 1955. However, it can also be shown that a denial of the postulate of uncertainty entails a denial of preconditions that must be satisfied in order for physical reference to specified dynamical variables—position and momentum, energy/time, or number/phase, etc.—to be possible. This is straightforward to establish:

The algebraic analog of a statement simultaneously specifying precisely defined

values for position and momentum itself is without meaning in quantum mechanics. The absence of meaning here is due to conflict with the rules of formation and transformation employed in the formalism. But there is another, perhaps more interesting, reason for its meaninglessness.

As long as an alternative, comparably detailed microphysical theory is unavailable, the physical meaningfulness of a microphysical claim—e.g., relating to mutually interfering observables—will be understood in terms of prevailing quantum statistical theory. The uncertainty relations have the status of presuppositions, conceived of as rule-based constraints, within the conceptual structure of the theory. The uncertainty relations are nothing more than the expression of a limitative postulate required in a calculus of operators.

A hidden variable theorist wishes to refer to subatomic events as currently understood in the context of existing quantum theory. He wishes, furthermore, to claim that mutually interfering observables actually possess well-defined simultaneous values. Such a claim is clearly projective: The hidden variable theorist refers to a pair of observables that are *essentially* defined in a noncommuting sense, and in so doing explicitly denies a condition logically forced on our current understanding of interfering observables. The condition he denies is a precondition that must be satisfied in order for it to be possible for him, or anyone else, to refer meaningfully in the theoretical context in question to such observables. It is not that what the hidden variable theorist says is self-falsifying; rather, his claim is self-undermining in terms of its possible meaningfulness.²⁰

{231}

CONCLUSION

We have considered a variety of examples of self-referential inconsistency, some bizarre and humorous, others philosophical in nature, and one resulting from an analysis of a scientific theory. I have come to be persuaded that self-defeating positions pervade many, perhaps most, areas of human discourse and thought. That this may be so is perhaps not surprising. Man is a creature capable of many transgressions: Transgressions against the logic of his own conceptual structure are no exception.

That we at times need therapy, whether emotional, physical, or occupational, is widely acknowledged. The analogous belief that in our use of concepts we at times also stand in need of therapy, is less widely accepted.

In psychotherapy, it is often appropriate to regard as pathological a person's rigid commitments to patterns of inconsistency that lead to self-defeating behaviors. Similarly, philosophy, undertaken as conceptual therapy, can serve to identify and to treat the following pair of *conceptual pathologies*: on the one hand, claims that are self-falsifying, and, on the other, claims that employ concepts in ways that implicitly place these concepts in conflict with their presuppositional bases.

NOTES

- ¹ A. H. Maslow, quoted by Aldous Huxley in *Literature and Science* (New York: Harper and Row 1963), p. 79.
- ² Richard Rorty, "Recent Metaphilosophy," *Review of Metaphysics* XV (2), 1961, p. 299.
- ³ Cf. the author's "Philosophy as Ideology," *Metaphilosophy* 17 (1), 1986, p. 1; and "Narcissism and Philosophy," *Methodology and Science* 19 (1), 1986, pp. 16-26.
- ⁴ Quoted in the *Oxford English Dictionary* as: T. Wilson, *Logike*, 1567.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*: H. More, *Mede's Works*, *Life* 18, 1672.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*: Scott, *Rob Roy* xii, 1818.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*: Tucker, 1768-74, *Lt. Nat.* (1852), I. 61.
- ⁸ Henry W. Johnstone, Jr., *Philosophy and Argument* (University Park, Penn.: Pennsylvania State University Press 1959), p. 93.
- ⁹ This kind of approach is related to a wide range of concerns, in a variety of disciplines. See Steven J. Bartlett and Peter Suber, Eds., *Self-Reference: Reflections on Reflexivity* (Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Martinus Nijhoff 1987).
- ¹⁰ Plato, *Theaetetus*, translated by Benjamin Jowett (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill 1949).
- ¹¹ John Passmore, *Philosophical Reasoning* (London: Gerald Duckworth 1961), p. 67.
- ¹² This example is treated in Johnstone, *op. cit.*, pp. 64ff.
- ¹³ O. K. Bouwsma, "Descartes' Evil Genius," in Alexander Sesonske and Noel Fleming, Eds., *Meta-meditations: Studies in Descartes* (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth Publishing Co. 1965).
- ¹⁴ Section 15.
- ¹⁵ Section 16.
- ¹⁶ Raymond Smullyan, *What Is the Name of This Book?* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall 1978), pp. 189-190. {232}
- ¹⁷ See the author's "Referential Consistency as a Criterion of Meaning," *Synthese* 52, 1982, pp. 267-282.
- ¹⁸ Israel Scheffler, *Science and Subjectivity* (New York: Bobbs-Merrill 1965), p. 21.
- ¹⁹ See Carl R. Kordig, "Objectivity, Scientific Change and Self-Reference," in *Boston Studies in the Philosophy of Science*, Vol. VIII (Dordrecht, The Netherlands: D. Reidel 1970), pp. 519-523.
- ²⁰ For a more extended treatment of this subject, see §VII of the author's "Self-Reference, Phenomenology, and Philosophy of Science," *Methodology and Science* 13 (3), 1980, pp. 143-167.

OTHER PUBLICATIONS BY THE AUTHOR RELATED TO THE TOPIC OF SELF-REFERENTIAL ARGUMENTATION

Some of these publications are available as free downloads from the author's website:

<http://www.willamette.edu/~sbartlet>

BOOKS

1. *Metalogic of Reference: A Study in the Foundations of Possibility*, Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, 1975. A research monograph that formulates the author's approach to epistemology in terms of self-referential argumentation and self-validating proofs.
2. *Conceptual Therapy: An Introduction to Framework-relative Epistemology*, Studies in Theory and Behavior, Saint Louis, 1983. An introductory text describing the author's approach to epistemology in terms of self-referential argumentation and self-validating proofs.
3. *Self-Reference: Reflections on Reflexivity*, edited with Peter Suber, Martinus Nijhoff, 1987; now published by Springer Science. The first of two collections (see #4 below), consisting of invited papers by leading contemporary authors, to be published in the new area of research, the general theory of reflexivity, pioneered by the author.
4. *Reflexivity: A Source Book in Self-Reference*, Elsevier Science Publishers, 1992. The second collection, consisting of classical papers by leading contributors of the twentieth century, published in the new area of research, the general theory of reflexivity, developed by the author.
5. *The Pathology of Man: A Study of Human Evil*, published in 2005 by behavioral science publisher Charles C. Thomas, is the first comprehensive scholarly study of the psychology and epistemology of human aggression and destructiveness. The study includes original research by the author, such as a detailed description of the phenomenology of hatred and the psychology of human stupidity, and an extension and elaboration of the author's earlier published work dealing with the epistemology of human thought disorders (Part III).
6. *Normality Does Not Equal Mental Health: The Need to Look Elsewhere for Standards of Good Psychological Health*. Praeger, 2011. The first book-length scholarly critique of the widespread and unexamined presumption that psychological normality should be employed as a standard for good mental health. The book extends the perspective offered by Abraham Maslow that acceptable standards that define good mental health are to be found among exceptional people, and not among the average and psychological normal, who so often—as world history has amply proved, and as Milgram's and Zimbardo's studies offer experimental confirmation—will, when circumstances are right, subject others to abuse, cruelty, and death in state- or group-endorsed wars, genocides, and terrorism (see publication #5 above).

ARTICLES

7. "Philosophy as Conceptual Therapy," Educational Resources Information Center, National Institute of Education, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, May, 1983, Document #ED 224 402.
8. "Roots of Human Resistance to Animal Rights: Psychological and Conceptual Blocks," *Animal Law* (law review of the Northwestern School of Law, Lewis and Clark College), Vol. 8, 2002, pp. 143-76. The first comprehensive legal study of the psychological and epistemological foundations of human resistance to the compassionate treatment of animals. Contains an application of the author's self-referential argumentation to human conceptual blocks that stand in the way of the recognition of animal rights.
9. "Roots of Human Resistance to Animal Rights: Psychological and Conceptual Blocks," electronically re-published October, 2002, by the Michigan State University's Detroit College of Law, Animal Law Web Center, and maintained on an ongoing basis.
<http://www.animallaw.info/articles/arussbartlett2002.htm>
10. Also available in German: "Wurzeln menschlichen Widerstands gegen Tierrechte: Psychologische und konzeptuelle Blockaden," German translation of the preceding paper:
http://www.simorgh.de/animallaw/bartlett_33-67.pdf
11. Also available in Portuguese: "Raízes da resistência humana aos direitos dos animais: Bloqueios psicológicos e conceituais," published in *Brazilian Animal Rights Review* (*Revista Brasileira de Direito Animal*), Vol. 2(3), July/December, 2007 [actually appeared in 2008], pp. 17-66. Available online at:
http://www.animallaw.info/journals/jo_pdf/brazilvol3.pdf