



**Review: [Untitled]**

Reviewed Work(s):

*The Logical Structure of Spinoza's Ethics, Part I* by Charles Jarrett  
Jonathan Bennett; Peter van Inwagen

*The Journal of Symbolic Logic*, Vol. 49, No. 3. (Sep., 1984), pp. 996-997.

Stable URL:

<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0022-4812%28198409%2949%3A3%3C996%3ATLSOSE%3E2.0.CO%3B2-0>

*The Journal of Symbolic Logic* is currently published by Association for Symbolic Logic.

---

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/about/terms.html>. JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use provides, in part, that unless you have obtained prior permission, you may not download an entire issue of a journal or multiple copies of articles, and you may use content in the JSTOR archive only for your personal, non-commercial use.

Please contact the publisher regarding any further use of this work. Publisher contact information may be obtained at <http://www.jstor.org/journals/asl.html>.

Each copy of any part of a JSTOR transmission must contain the same copyright notice that appears on the screen or printed page of such transmission.

---

The JSTOR Archive is a trusted digital repository providing for long-term preservation and access to leading academic journals and scholarly literature from around the world. The Archive is supported by libraries, scholarly societies, publishers, and foundations. It is an initiative of JSTOR, a not-for-profit organization with a mission to help the scholarly community take advantage of advances in technology. For more information regarding JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

this predicate as indexical. Contexts are stages in the assessment of sentences as to whether or not they are true.

The early part of the paper is devoted to arguing against truth-value-gap approaches for dealing with the semantic paradoxes. The main argument Burge presents concentrates on the strengthened liar paradox. Suppose  $\beta$  is the sentence " $\beta$  is not true." The strengthened liar is due to the consideration that if  $\beta$  is neither true nor not true, then it is not true. Against responses by gap defenders to this argument, Burge emphasizes the intuitive force of this consideration. For Burge, to allow this re-emergence of paradox shows "failure to account for the basic phenomenon" (p. 173) of semantic paradox.

Burge presents the motivation for his theory for "true" in a detailed discussion of the strengthened liar. He analyzes the argument as having three main components: (a) the occurrence of the paradoxical sentence  $\beta$ , (b) its assessment as "pathological," and hence as not true, and (c) the conclusion from this that  $\beta$  is true. In the move from (a) to (b) there is a shift from the implicature that  $\beta$  is to be assessed with the truth<sub>*i*</sub> schema, where the truth predicate in  $\beta$  is understood as being "true<sub>*i*</sub>," to the denial of this implicature. Consequently,  $\beta$  is neither true<sub>*i*</sub>, nor not true<sub>*i*</sub>. In the move from (b) to (c) it is recognized that since  $\beta$  says that it is not true<sub>*i*</sub>, it is true<sub>*k*</sub> for some  $k > i$ —"true" now having a different extension in a new context.

Burge presents three truth theories. In the first, any sentence that contains "true<sub>*k*</sub>" where  $k \geq i$  is pathological<sub>*i*</sub>, with the latter meaning that the sentence does not have truth<sub>*i*</sub> conditions (that is, the truth<sub>*i*</sub> schema does not hold for it). In the second, there is a liberalization to allow logically valid<sub>*i*</sub> consequences of a true<sub>*i*</sub> sentence to be true<sub>*i*</sub>, even if they contain "true<sub>*k*</sub>" for some  $k \geq i$ . The third theory is a further liberalization to allow true<sub>*i*</sub> sentences themselves to be true<sub>*i*</sub>. A somewhat contentious view that Burge presents, in order to be in accord with his theory, is that an expression such as "All sentences are either true or not" is not a sentence, but a schema.

Burge sketches an account of how indices on "true" are determined, which would be interesting to see further developed. Another useful enterprise would be a further investigation of the comparative merits of the alternative truth theories Burge presents.

ARNOLD SILVERBERG

CHARLES JARRETT. *The logical structure of Spinoza's Ethics, Part I. Synthese*, vol. 37 (1978), pp. 15–65.

Jarrett presents Part I of Spinoza's *Ethics* as a formalized axiomatic theory, along with a detailed commentary on the definitions, the axioms, and the first eleven of the thirty-six propositions of Part I. His logical apparatus consists of first-order quantification theory supplemented by two necessity operators. One of these operators represents the kind of necessary truth that belongs to propositions about God, whose existence and properties follow from his own essence, and the other the kind of necessary truth that belongs to propositions about things such as the infinite modes, whose existence and properties follow from the essence of the thing (God) that causes them. The "divine" necessity operator conforms to S5 and the other to T.

Jarrett's formal reconstruction of Part I employs twenty-six predicates, ten of which are eliminable if Spinoza's definitions are, as Jarrett takes them to be, recipes for introducing abbreviations.

Jarrett's demonstrations rest on twenty-two axioms, the first seven of which correspond to Spinoza's seven axioms. The rest are treated as suppressed premisses. This set of axioms is justified mainly by the claim that its members are what is required to make Spinoza's reasoning formally valid. Most of the "suppressed premisses" are trivial. The most important of them—certainly *not* trivial—is (roughly) "Possibly there is a God." That this premiss is needed to make Spinoza's reasoning valid is to be expected, since the demonstrations of Propositions 7 and 9 jointly constitute a version of the ontological argument. Jarrett's twenty-two axioms suffice for the deduction of all the propositions of Part I except 33 ("Things could have been produced by God in no other manner and in no other order than that in which they have been produced") and 36 ("Nothing exists from whose nature an effect does not follow"). This is as it should be, since Spinoza's demonstration of Proposition 33 is no doubt invalid: it almost certainly rests on a conflation of "necessary" in the sense "caused from all eternity" with the sense "true in all possible worlds." As for 36, we can make no sense of Spinoza's demonstration.

Studies like Jarrett's can help us to understand Spinoza, and Jarrett's does. But there is a drawback to this procedure of tackling specifically logical issues, in relative isolation from other considerations. What one makes of a given demonstration of Spinoza's should depend not only on considerations of validity but also on wider aspects of his thought, and Jarrett's attention to these has to be perfunctory.

Also, he uses them only to determine *how*—not *whether*—the various demonstrations should be made out to be valid. This may be to misrepresent Spinoza's intentions. He offered his demonstrations as giving reasons for his doctrines, and as making them hang together; but it is not clear how far he saw them as possessing what we would recognize as strict validity. If that is how he saw them, then he failed more than he succeeded, and many of those failures are not profitably viewed as misexpressed successes.

Consider the proposition that two substances cannot share an attribute. Jarrett rescues Spinoza's argument for this by giving it the premiss—which is awkward for Spinoza's metaphysics—that if substance  $x$  has attribute  $A$  then  $x = A$ . From this it follows *trivially* that if  $x$  has  $A$  and  $y$  has  $A$  then  $x = y$ , which means that no two substances can share an attribute. Jarrett, however, gives Spinoza a *circuitous* argument from that premiss to that conclusion, and one wonders why a philosopher who is so bad at economy and non-redundancy should be thought to be good at sheer validity.

It is not that we agree that Spinoza thought that an attribute is the substance which has it. Jarrett constructs the following argument for this out of materials in the *Ethics*: By the definition of "attribute," if substance  $x$  has attribute  $A$  then  $x = A$ . From this it follows *trivially* that if  $x$  has  $A$  and  $y$  has  $A$  then  $x$  is conceived through  $A$ ; and by the definition of "substance," a substance is conceived only through itself. These entail that if substance  $x$  has attribute  $A$ , then  $x = A$ .

But not everyone agrees that Spinoza's Part I definition of "attribute" does imply that attributes are essential to substances that have them. Even if it does, is that the same sense of "essence" that is given in the official definition? If so, why is the definition postponed until Part II? And the definition itself should raise suspicions. We agree with Jarrett that although Spinoza states the definiendum as " $A$  is part of the essence of  $x$ " he probably meant to be defining " $A$  is the essence of  $x$ ." The fact that Spinoza went out of his way to state the definiendum wrongly bodes ill for a purely logical investigation of his thought. It is not that Jarrett overrates Spinoza; but we question his apparent view about where Spinoza's greatest strengths lie.

JONATHAN BENNETT and PETER VAN INWAGEN

JOEL I. FRIEDMAN. *Was Spinoza fooled by the ontological argument?* *Philosophia* (Ramat Gan), vol. 11 no. 3-4 (1982), pp. 307-344.

Friedman says that Spinoza's ontological argument for God's existence conflates causal with logical or metaphysical necessity, and that this conflation is what is wrong with the argument. Friedman seems unsure whether the conflation should be regarded as a "modal fallacy" or merely as a false and undefended premiss. Either way, the conflation he speaks of is not the one that is familiar to students of Spinoza. Rather it is between, in Friedman's words, " $x$  is a causally necessary being" and " $x$  is a logically (metaphysically) necessary being." Despite the wording, these two do not differ as 'It is causally necessary that  $P$ ' does from 'It is logically necessary that  $P$ ' for the same  $P$ . This latter distinction—the bare difference between the two sorts of necessity—is what Spinoza is customarily (and rightly) said to have rejected; that rejection does not figure in Friedman's account.

Yet this distinction has a vital role in Spinoza's ontological argument, a role that is not captured in Friedman's reconstruction. Start with the defensible premiss that a substance cannot be caused to exist by anything else, add Spinoza's assumption that whatever exists is caused by something, and it follows that a substance must be its own cause. It is hard to make sense of the idea of something's being its own *cause*, but the causal/logical conflation at least gives a *prima facie* understanding: Something is its own "cause" if it contains within itself all the resources for a complete *logical* explanation of the fact that it exists, and that is the case if the thing has a nature which must be instantiated—for then we can explain its existence by appealing only to (the nature of) the thing itself. When Spinoza defines 'cause of itself' by equating it with something he takes to mean "having a nature that must be instantiated," this is not a stipulation made merely to cover a muddle. Rather, the definition embodies Spinoza's assumption that 'is the cause of itself' means "contains the materials for a complete explanation of its own existence," and his thesis that such an explanation will have to be logical rather than what we today would call causal.

Friedman's Spinoza, however, is not even trying to make sense of the notion of being *self-explanatory*. In Friedman's reconstruction, ' $x$  is cause of itself' is said to have two meanings, one causal and one logical. The causal one equates ' $x$  is cause of itself' with ' $x$  is sempiternal and not caused by anything else'; and this, since it ignores the reflexive pronoun and does not have the form  $C(x, x)$ , does not raise the question of how something could possibly be self-causing or self-explanatory.

One result is that Friedman must find a fresh route for Spinoza to take from (1) ' $x$  is a substance' to (2) ' $x$  is cause of itself.' The natural route is from (1) to ' $x$  is not caused by anything else' and from that, via the