

Consequences of *Consequences*: Against Professional Philosophy, Anarcho- or Borderless Philosophy, and Rorty's Role

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My story has been one of struggles between kinds of professors, professors with different aptitudes and consequently with different paradigms and interests. It is a story of academic politics—not much more, in the long run, than a matter of what sort of professors come under which departmental budget. Problems created by academic politics can be solved by more academic politics. One may expect that by the end of the century, philosophy in America will have gotten over the ambiguities which have marked the last thirty years, and will begin to develop, once again, a clear self-image. One possibility is that this image will be of a *new* discipline, one not much more than fifty years old, and which (unless analytic philosophy has, in the meantime, triumphed in the Continental universities) does not try to link up with, or even argue with, what is practiced under the heading of “philosophy” in other parts of the world.

--Richard Rorty¹

The twofold purpose of *Against Professional Philosophy* ... is, first, to provide a serious critique of contemporary professional philosophy, for the sake of real philosophy—namely, *anarcho-philosophy* aka *borderless philosophy*—and second, to prepare the way for the real philosophy of the future by featuring past or present philosophical work that is aggressively cosmopolitan and non-chauvinist, critically challenging and edgy, daringly generalist and original, fully humanly meaningful, slightly weird, and generally deemed “unpublishable” in mainstream venues.... In other words, we think that it's up to all of us, as lovers of real philosophy, to dare to think for ourselves against the conventional wisdom of contemporary professional academic philosophy. But that's only the beginning. We hope to help contemporary philosophers, whether inside or outside the professional academy, to (re)discover their true vocation as *rational rebels for humanity*.

--W, X, Y, and Z²

I. Introduction

Richard Rorty's iconoclastic *Consequences of Pragmatism*, aka CoP, was first published in 1982; and the even more iconoclastic anarcho-philosophy blog, *Against Professional Philosophy*, aka APP, went live online in July 2013 and has been living there ever since. CoP and APP, alike, provide an incisive, and indeed (to my mind) devastating metaphilosophical critique of recent and contemporary Anglo-American professional academic philosophy in general, and of post-Quinean Analytic philosophy in particular, and also present positive first-order defenses of two radically different and (at least aspirationally) radically better ways of doing philosophy: namely neopragmatism (inspired by William James, Dewey, and Heidegger) in Rorty's case, and anarcho-philosophy, aka borderless philosophy (inspired by Diogenes, Kant, Kierkegaard, and Kropotkin) in APP's case.

Now CoP is of course fairly famous, or at least fairly notorious. But by sharp contrast, APP is little-known, and indeed virtually invisible to both the power elite and also the rank-and-file of professional academic philosophers. —At the same time, however, in a seeming paradox, currently in 2019 it's being read by close to 20,000 people a year. This in turn suggests that nowadays APP is somewhat of a philosophical *gorilla-in-the-room*, that is, a fairly huge and threatening yet still virtually invisible intellectual and sociopolitical fact, hidden by ideologically deflected or misdirected collective attention. Or to use a more classical metaphor, APP is a philosophical *Banquo's ghost*, shaking its gory locks at the assembled hordes of anxious job-seekers, calculating careerists, philosophy-superstars, aka The Beautiful Minds, and *lumpen* tenure-track philosophers, all banquetting and blithering away at the yearly Divisional Meetings of the American Philosophical Association, aka the APA, while they anxiously pretend not to notice the terrifying visitor from hell.

In any case, against that stage-setting backdrop, I want to do four things in this essay.

First, in a somewhat autobiographical way, I'll situate the emergence of APP within the larger twofold context of

(i) the philosophical reception-history (*Rezeptionsgeschichte*) of CoP and some of Rorty's other post-CoP writings, especially "Post-Modernist Bourgeois Liberalism"³ from 1983 and "The Unpatriotic Academy"⁴ from 1994 and

(ii) the trajectory of Rorty's post-CoP professional academic career after he won a MacArthur "genius grant" in 1981, and exited Princeton and professional philosophy by traveling sideways into high-status professorships, one in the humanities at University of Virginia in 1982 and the other in comparative literature at Stanford in 1997, the latter of which he held until his death in 2007.

Second, I'll present a brief history of APP, again in a somewhat autobiographical way.

Third, I'll provide an equally brief description and defense of anarcho- or borderless philosophy.

And **fourth** and finally, I'll super-briefly critically compare-and-contrast Rorty's critique of professional academic philosophy with APP's.

II. Rorty & Me Up To 1983

When I was in high school in the mid-1970s, I'd read and thought lots about some philosophically-oriented novels by Camus, Dostoevsky, Kafka, Thomas Mann, and Sartre. So by the time I started university, I already knew I was going to study philosophy, no matter what else I did; but nothing prepared me for what happened next. My encounter with pure, unadulterated philosophy was precisely like falling in love with another person: hot and cold flashes, shivers, complete absorption in it to the neglect of everything else, alternating manic intellectual excitement (about, e.g., Plato and socratic/platonic philosophy) and abysmal depression (about, e.g., Descartes and cartesian philosophy), etc., etc. My first passionate loves in philosophy were

Plato, life-changing metaphysics, early Wittgenstein, life-changing metaphysics, Whitehead, life-changing metaphysics, Kant, and life-changing metaphysics.

In the late 70s, in my Plato phase, working ecstatically on my senior thesis on Plato, Kant, and the life-changing metaphysics of value (yes, 70s *naif* that I was, I had read and totally loved Robert Pirsig's *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*, even to the point of driving all the way to Montana to look at the place where he'd taught), I was studying ancient Greek, and also taking courses in classics alongside my other philosophy and literature courses, at University of Toronto, which had (and has) a huge philosophy department. Before the first semester of my senior year, I specially petitioned to be admitted to a graduate seminar on the Socratic Dialogues taught by the then-famous Plato-scholar Gregory Vlastos, who was visiting from Princeton (or Berkeley, I forget which—whatever) for the Fall. I was admitted!, and immediately started re-reading all the Dialogues, making reams of notes, fully prepared for what I thought would be an amazing philosophical experience and opportunity. It wasn't amazing: it was complete bullshit. Vlastos spent the whole semester making us read and critically discuss (in the light of other secondary literature) recent articles by Terence Irwin, and never let us talk about the Platonic texts themselves. Every time I tried to bring the discussion back to the original texts or the underlying philosophical issues, Vlastos wrinkled his nose, made some curt reply, the graduate students rolled their eyes in professional-professorial solidarity, and I was effectively shushed. I was deeply disappointed, disgusted, and also intensely pissed off. So I dropped out of the seminar to focus on my senior thesis. I also stopped studying Greek, and focused on studying German, Wittgenstein, life-changing metaphysics, Whitehead, life-changing metaphysics, Kant, and life-changing metaphysics instead. If this is what doing the history of ancient Greek philosophy for a living was like, I didn't want it. To hell with that: I'd take my with-all-my-heart-love of philosophy elsewhere.

Of course, I was too young and stupid to know then what I know now, that the two-part problem was and still is

- (i) professional academic philosophy, not the history of ancient Greek philosophy per se, and
- (ii) me.

In any case, by the time I'd finished my Honours BA in philosophy, I'd learned and internalized that the thing I loved with all my heart, philosophy, and professional academic philosophy, can often, and perhaps even normally, come apart. Learning and internalizing that fact almost kept me out of professional academic philosophy altogether. Indeed, I seriously tried being an independent philosopher for a year, pursuing my own reading and writing projects, while my wife worked and supported me. But then I gradually realized that all my friends and other people I could talk to about philosophy were in fact graduate students in professional academic philosophy; and it also *seemed* to me that I'd eventually (and probably sooner rather later) need a regular income of *some* sort, so as not to be a parasite on my wife's loving generosity and income in a long-term way, not to mention a deep disappointment to my parents for being a career-less, unemployed, layabout; and that if I just went on-and-on being an independent philosopher, then I'd probably end up as a homeless, lonely, starving barrel-pusher

like Diogenes. So the only other option that was at least *prima facie* consistent with my pursuing the thing I loved with all my heart, *seemed* to be to pursue a professional academic career in philosophy.

But in retrospect, I've often thought that the only reason I actually persevered in entering and slogging through the professional academic philosophy system was a semi-drunk ABD-PhD student in philosophy I met at a cocktail party in Toronto, who told me that because the job market was so bad and the ultimate rewards were so pathetically small, I should just give up thinking about professional philosophy right now, go back to Winnipeg, and do something else for a living. Of course I was intensely pissed off, and vowed to pursue a professional academic career just to spite him.

So I resolved to apply to do graduate work in philosophy. But at the same time I was also still essentially driven by what I loved with all my heart; and so instead of applying to high status Cali-League (i.e., Berkeley, Stanford, or UCLA) Ivy-League, or Oxbridge graduate programs in philosophy, I did my first MA in philosophy at The Catholic University of America, so that I could write my thesis on Whitehead's metaphysics under Paul Weiss, who, not altogether coincidentally, had also been Rorty's PhD supervisor at Yale thirty or so years earlier, and who wrote me a strong letter of recommendation for the Yale PhD program. While I was still an MA student at Catholic U, I managing-edited *The Review of Metaphysics*, wrote book reviews for every issue, and published two or three articles and my MA thesis in pretty good professional academic philosophy journals. Hence it seemed pretty easy to write for scholarly publication, and thereby "get ahead in the business": so I became a little professionally ambitious, and started my second MA and PhD in philosophy at Yale in 1983.

By then, Rorty was not only a highly controversial figure amongst professional academic philosophers, but also much abused for having dared to think philosophically for himself, and then write and publish *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, aka PMN, in 1979. Indeed, in my first year at Yale I remember vividly hearing hallway scuttlebutt to the effect that not only was Rorty a *traitor* to the Analytic tradition in which he'd been professionally nurtured and richly rewarded with his high-status job at Princeton, but also that PMN and his even *crazier* recent essays in CoP could all be easily explained away by his having what we'd now call, with politically correct condescension, "mental health issues," but at the time was just straight-out-trash-talkingly called *Rorty's mid-life crisis*. Frankly I was gobsmacked by this, since I thought both PMN and CoP were philosophically brilliant, exceptionally exciting to read, think, and talk about with the other members of the extra-curricular philosophy reading group I'd started up, and deeply critically provocative, even though I strongly disagreed with them; and I was also (yet again) intensely pissed-off by the patently *ad hominem* character of the scuttlebutt, in view of the fact that it was being spread by supposedly critically-minded, intellectually disinterested, highly reflective professional academic philosophers.

In 1983, I published a generally friendly and mildly critical review of CoP in the *Review of Metaphysics*,⁵ and audaciously sent it to Rorty, who actually wrote back and, with genteel generosity, briefly rebutted my critical remarks. So as early as 1983, I was closely familiar with Rorty's critique of recent and contemporary Anglo-American professional academic philosophy in general and post-Quinean Analytic philosophy in particular. And I was also seriously

beginning to suspect that contemporary professional academic philosophy was going to try to kill the thing I loved with all my heart.

III. A Brief History of APP

As it turned out, I was absolutely right about that. By 2013, I had successively been a tenure-track assistant professor, a tenured associate professor, and then a full professor for eight years, yet I was also intensely pissed off at professional academic philosophy for all sorts of reasons, but especially four.

First, I intensely disliked *The Great Divide* between Analytic and “Continental” philosophy.

Second, I intensely disliked all *the ideological Wittgensteinian fly-bottles* that made it virtually impossible to make any headway whatsoever on the standard “hard problems” of philosophy: the mind-body problem, the free will problem, the problem of universals, the problem of skepticism, the problem of the nature of knowledge and/or justification, the problem of moral skepticism, the problem of the nature of meaning or content, the problem of political authority, etc. etc.

Third, I intensely disliked all *the ideological sub-disciplinary straitjackets* that made it virtually impossible to be a philosophical generalist, moving freely back and forth across sub-disciplinary borders without a passport or visa, between history of philosophy and systematic philosophy, Analytic and so-called Continental Philosophy, and across the various pigeon-holes that made up the dreaded list of atomically distinct professionally-endorsed Areas of Specialization and Competence that could be claimed on CVs and in job applications.

Fourth, I intensely disliked *the APA-validated coercive moralism* of the identitarian or “multi-culturalist” professional academic philosophers that Rorty had criticized so controversially but also with great critical accuracy in “The Unpatriotic Academy.”

Nevertheless, even Rorty had failed to foresee how the identitarians, aka “multi-cultists,” were also destined to become, starting in earnest around the time of Rorty’s death, a *new Inquisition*⁶ and a *new McCarthyism*, supercharged by social media, professional blogs, complicit neoliberal university administrations, and that judicial Frankenstein’s monster, Title IX.⁷ Indeed, in 2014, I and two other departmental colleagues exited our department, professional academic philosophy, and the professional academy altogether, with the new Inquisitors and neo-McCarthyites at our university and department slamming the door behind us. We’d been accused of offensive expression and speech under Title IX (yes, it was about love and sex). But, by the peculiarly Orwellian logic that governs such processes,

- (i) we weren’t legally permitted to rebut our Inquisitors by name or defend ourselves in public on what seemed to us very solid First Amendment grounds supporting free expression and speech, especially *academic* free expression and speech, as per, for example, the famous 1974 Vann Woodward “Report on Freedom of Expression”,⁸ which

is supposed to comprehend daring, radical expression and speech *of all kinds* inside the professional academy,

(ii) *even though* it was deemed legally permissible free expression and speech for our Inquisitors to name-and-shame us over the internet and also anonymously name-names to journalists for publication in newspapers and other local or national media.

Despite the Title IX/love-&-sex pretext, however, the deeper issues at play in the accusations, exit, and door-slamming were *actually*

(i) longstanding personal animosity towards the three of us, and vendettas against each of us, for various reasons that had nothing whatsoever to do with Title IX or love-&-sex, on the part of two senior (so-called) colleagues, who coordinated and orchestrated all the accusations and name-shamings-&-namings, and also

(ii) our overt libertarian (my two colleagues) or anarcho-socialist (me) politics.

In short, it was actually all about “academic politics” in Rorty’s sense, yes; but academic politics *with real-world consequences*, as per the McCarthy era.

Indeed, as a real-world consequence of our collective exit and door-slamming, my other two colleagues stopped doing philosophy altogether, their professional academic careers destroyed. By contrast, I regarded my own exit as a liberating escape from intellectual and ideological prison—in 1940s Hollywood gangster film terminology, a *crash-out*—and so, thirty-six years later, I finally became the independent philosopher I’d wanted to be when I was twenty-one. But the door-slamming hurt. Quite apart from my now having no job and no income of my own (yes, my wife was now supporting me again, although I did manage to arrange a one-year research fellowship in Brazil for 2015-2016), setting myself up as an independent philosopher was made even more difficult by the fact that I was blacklisted for a few years as a result of the public naming-and-shaming. After cudgelling my brains for a while about that, I adopted the tried-and-true McCarthy era tactic of using various pseudonyms—in particular “Z,” my original APP pseudonym from 2013, now with the brilliant 1969 Costa-Gavras film firmly in mind. And in that way, I’ve continued to pursue the full-time, lifetime calling of doing the thing I’ve always loved with all my heart.

As I mentioned above, by 1983 Rorty was being fairly nastily and widely trash-talked by other professional academic philosophers. But something worth noting here is the sharp contrast between

(i) Rorty’s *sideways* MacArthur-grant-powered exit from a high-status professorship in professional academic philosophy into two other high-status professorships in different disciplines, the humanities and comp lit, on the one hand, and

(ii) a *crash-out* exit from the Professional Academic State, McCarthy-era style, into unemployment and blacklisting, on the other.

Bluntly put, *MacArthur-ism ain't the new McCarthyism*, and it seems to me that Rorty didn't suffer *too* much for his iconoclasm; but sharply on the contrary, I can assert with first-hand authority, that crashing out of The Professional Academic State, as they sometimes say about receiving a death-sentence, does wonders for concentrating the attention.

In any case, during the first half of 2013, a year or so before all *that* hit the fan, I was regularly corresponding over e-mail with a former undergraduate student of mine who was then finishing her BA in philosophy at an Ivy League university. And in the course of our expressing and sharing various critical thoughts about professional academic philosophy, together with our expressing and sharing various positive thoughts about what we were calling *real philosophy* by contrary opposition, out of the blue she proposed that we start a pseudonymous, radical blog in order to express and share all those thoughts more fully and widely, and to act as a radical counterforce against the conformist, normalized, orthodox professional blogs, in particular Brian Leiter's *Philosophy Gourmet* and Justin Weinberg's *Daily Nous*. So together with her, I gathered around us a small circle of similarly-minded young philosophers and/or former students, including one who had a good knowledge of website design, and then we went ahead and collectively created APP.

Ironically and/or tragically, later that very Spring my correspondent was accepted with a full and generous fellowship into a top-ranked PhD program at another top-ranked Ivy League university, and within two weeks of arriving there in late August 2013, having completed that graduate program's mandatory ideological bootcamp, she drank the kool-aid and turned. In zombie-movie terminology, "X turned" means "X died, became undead, and thereby turned into a zombie, as per George Romero's seminal 1968 horror flick, *Night of the Living Dead*." What I mean, then, is that after only *two weeks* in professional academic philosophy, my APP muse and co-founder *suddenly* started her own identitarian graduate philosophy student committee and *immediately* quit APP. There are many such stories in the apocalyptic saga of *The 1001 Nights of the Philosophical Living Dead* that's contemporary professional academic philosophy. But her story is a particularly striking case of what the APP circle later dubbed "the double life problem," which I'll discuss in some detail a little later.

Now back to the creation of APP. As we moved towards our target roll-out date of 2 July (not altogether coincidentally, my birthday), it became self-evident to us that in order to be "against professional philosophy" in a rationally well-supported way, we needed

- (i) to formulate a substantive definition of *real philosophy*, and also
- (ii) to write a rhetorically effective Manifesto that stated our basic aims, basic philosophical and political commitments, and our basic objections to professional academic philosophy.

So we did both of those. Here's the substantive definition of *real philosophy*:

By *real philosophy*, we mean authentic, serious, synoptic, systematic reflection on the individual and collective human condition, and on the natural and social world in which human and other conscious animals live, move, and have their being. Real philosophy fully includes the knowledge yielded by the natural and formal sciences; but, as we see it, real philosophy also goes

significantly beneath and beyond the exact sciences, and non-reductively incorporates aesthetic, artistic, affective/emotional, ethical/moral, and, more generally, personal and practical insights that cannot be adequately captured or explained by the sciences. In a word, real philosophy is all about the nature, meaning, and value of individual and collective human existence in the natural cosmos, and how it is possible to know the philosophical limits of science, without also being anti-science. Finally, real philosophy is pursued by people working on individual or collective writing projects, or teaching projects, in the context of small, friendly circles of like-minded philosophers. Like-minded but not uncritical! Real philosophers read both intensively and also widely inside philosophy, and also widely outside of philosophy, critically discuss what they've read, write, mutually present and talk about their work, re-read, re-discuss, and then re-write, with the primary aim of producing work of originality and of the highest possible quality, given their own individual and collective abilities. They also seek to disseminate their work, through publication, teaching, or public conversation.⁹

And here are the five section-headings of the Manifesto, under an image and a famously anarcho-rebellious phrase—*Je vous dis, merde!*, i.e., loosely translated: “You’re so full of shit!”¹⁰—both allusions to Jean Vigo’s breakthrough 1933 film, *Zéro de Conduit*:

1. Think philosophically for yourself.
2. Criticize professional philosophical authority.
3. Recognize and reject professional philosophical bullshit.
4. Treat everyone else with at least minimal moral respect, but never allow yourself to be tyrannized by the professional majority.
5. Take philosophical responsibility for creating the real philosophy of the future.¹¹

In accordance with our basic aims, over the six years since APP’s roll-out, the APP circle has comprehensively explored a serious critique of professional academic philosophy, mainly by means of what we call “edgy essays.” Just to give you a sense of what we’ve written about, and the flavor of our treatments, I’m now going to list (for the most part chronologically, from 2013 to 2019) the titles of what I regard as our most important edgy essays, with occasional follow-up comments by way of elaboration.

“Under Submission”: 4 Radical Fixes for the Philosophy Publication Racket¹²

“Mind the Gap”: How to Close Professional Philosophy’s Gender-Gap and Minority-Gap¹³

“Fear, What’s Fashionable, and Fear”: An Untenured Woman Philosopher’s Thoughts on the State of Contemporary Professional Philosophy¹⁴

What Is the Real Point of Graduate Programs in Philosophy?¹⁵

“Analytic” Philosophy vs. “Continental” Philosophy: WtF? Why Does It Still Matter So Much?¹⁶

Weapons of the Weak Revisited: The Problem of Contingent Faculty and Everyday Forms of Philosophical Resistance¹⁷

Why Does Conscience Make Cowards of Us All? The Tenure-&-Promotion System as an Extremely Effective Device for Thought-Control¹⁸

Can Real Philosophers Survive Outside Professional Philosophy?¹⁹

In this one, which was of special interest and urgency to the members of the APP circle, we discussed the title question under three distinct sub-headings:

- (i) Can real philosophers keep body and soul together outside the contemporary Professional Academic State? (**The Money Question**)
- (ii) Can individual real philosophers working outside the contemporary Professional Academic State find a genuine community of other real philosophers with whom they can actively collaborate, and critically interact? (**The Philosophical Community Question**)
- (iii) Can real philosophers working outside the contemporary Professional Academic State find adequate venues for disseminating their work through publication, teaching, and public conversation? (**The Dissemination Question**).

But the underlying *deep* problem was something which, as I mentioned above, we called *the double life problem*, which, simply stated, is:

How is it humanly possible, whether psychologically, prudentially, or existentially, to be at once an anarcho- or borderless philosopher AND ALSO a professional academic philosopher, and still survive?

We later explored this problem in some detail in this edgy essay:

Are You Secretly APP? –Here’s What You Can Do About It.²⁰

As I also mentioned above, my APP muse and co-founder’s Jonestown-cult-like experience in philosophy graduate school provided an especially striking instance of the problem, which she effectively resolved by drinking the kool-aid and turning, in the space of only two weeks. But more generally and less strikingly, as it’s turned out, most philosophers, especially including most *younger* philosophers, no matter how committed and sympathetic they are to APP’s basic aims, simply cannot manage the long-term psychological, prudential, and existential tensions of the double life, and therefore ultimately opt to resolve the tensions by, in effect, drinking the kool-aid and turning—to be sure, to various degrees, some more so and some less so, and with natural variations for personality-types and different life-situations.

In any case, as a consequence, one of the biggest and most enduring problems for APP has been sustaining the membership and/or active participation of the APP circle over the long haul. The plain fact is, that almost all members of the original APP circle have stopped

contributing to APP, or even reading and thinking about APP's posts, in order to resolve the tensions of the double life by focusing with blinkers on their professional academic philosophy careers, even when they've remained in friendly philosophical contact with me or the others. So the double life problem has taken its toll on APP's circle of philosophers, especially the younger ones, and therefore we've had to rely more and more on a few regular, reliable contributors, with irregular but also immensely appreciated contributions by guest essayists.

Philosophy Professionalized: How We Killed the Thing We Loved²¹

Philosophy Leiterized: How We Reduce Vermeers to Cow Plops, and How A Measure Colonizes Our Behavior²²

Philosophical Rigor as Rigor Mortis, Or, How to Write a Publishable Paper Without Even Having to Think²³

The Strange Case of Don-the-Monster, Or, Coercive Moralism in Professional Philosophy²⁴

From Enlightenment Lite to Nihilism: How Professional Philosophy Has Totally Let Everyone Down about the Real Purpose of an Undergraduate Liberal Arts Education²⁵

In Praise of Semi-Professional Philosophy²⁶

Beyond Enlightenment Lite²⁷

The AOS is a ASS: How Specialization in Professional Philosophy Creates Disastrously Bad Philosophical Pictures²⁸

Rebel Arts Education: A Simple Model for Real Research, Teaching, and Learning Outside the Professional Academic State²⁹

"Failed Academics": Schopenhauer, Peirce, and the (D)evolution of University Philosophy³⁰

"I Sure Don't Need to Read This": One Way of Dismissing APP³¹

This edgy essay, although quite short, is also quite important in the unfolding of APP's brief history, because it explicitly rebuts a fairly typical *dismissive* response to APP by card-carrying professional academic philosophers. In another edgy essay from around that time, a more amusing *abusive* response to APP by someone we called "professional philosophy's Fanny Squeers," was described, and then sharply compared-&-contrasted with the edgy expressive brilliance of Crispin Sartwell, whom we dubbed "professional philosophy's Lenny Bruce":

Abusive Speech vs. Edgy Speech: Professional Philosophy's Fanny Squeers and Professional Philosophy's Lenny Bruce³²

Shortly thereafter, Sartwell was set upon by the new Inquisition and the neo-McCarthyites (not *altogether* coincidentally, Sartwell is also a philosophical and political anarchist), in what we called “*l’affaire Sartwell*” or “the Sartwell case.”

But on the whole, contemporary professional academic philosophers are so fearful of its even becoming known *that they’re reading APP*, that they mostly remain completely silent. It might also be that our original decision *not* to include a bog-standard, publicly-visible readers’ comments-&-feedback, on the grounds that these typically provide mostly

either (i) an opportunity for philosophical know-it-alls and poseurs to perform in public,

or (ii) a trigger mechanism for philosopher-trolls,

has perhaps dampened our readers’ enthusiasm for providing instant feedback and perhaps also reduced readership, somewhat. Perhaps: but all things considered, I do continue to think

(i) that this is only one of the many ways that APP is as it were the *Anti-Philosophy Gourmet* and the *Anti-Daily Nous*, and more generally, emphatically *not* a site where philosophers go to consume or produce professional gossip, naming-and-shaming, name-naming, and scandal, or reinforce APA-style ideological thought-control,

(ii) that the overall philosophical benefits of indirectly discouraging know-it-alls, poseurs, and trolls, are very great, and also

(iii) that anyone who has had serious philosophical comments or suggestions to make, has been able to reach us easily just by writing to us at the APP e-mail address posted on the site.

Hyper-Disciplined Minds: The Professionalization of Philosophy and the Death of Dissent³³

What It’s Like to Exit Professional Philosophy: Crispin Sartwell³⁴

On Playing the “Mental Health Issues” Card in the Crispin Sartwell Debate³⁵

How to Become an Official Enemy of the Professional Academic State: The Timeline of the Sartwell Case, and What It All Means³⁶

What (the Hell) is Enlightenment? Anarcho-Philosophical Dialogues 1³⁷

Philosophical Works, Philosophical Theories, Real Philosophy, and REAL Philosophy: Anarcho-Philosophical Dialogues 2³⁸

Thinking Inside the Box: The Institutional Structure of “Hard” Problems in Professional Philosophy³⁹

Passionless Professionalism in Academic Philosophy⁴⁰

Dialogue, Debate, and Conversational Pathology in Professional Philosophy⁴¹

Why Hasn't Professional Philosophy Produced Any Important Ideas in the Last 40 Years?⁴²

Ten Brilliant But Professionally Neglected Philosophical Ideas Since 1977⁴³

Salovey's Dilemma, Lilla's Thesis, and Professional Philosophy⁴⁴

Professional Philosophy Inside the Ivory Bunker⁴⁵

Murder-By-Neglect: From Danto's Optimism to Z's Pessimism⁴⁶

An Object of Contempt: Rorty Against the Unpatriotic Academy, and the Coming Double Oppression of Loyalty Oaths⁴⁷

This edgy essay, a critical analysis of Rorty's "The Unpatriotic Academy," is particularly important in the present context. Indeed, the first section of *that* essay is worth reproducing here in full, with an anticipatory eye to the final section of *this* essay:

1. Rorty, Professional Academic Philosophy, and the Ash-Heap of History

Richard Rorty was a brilliant, critically devastating, historically wide-ranging and open-minded, highly prescient, exciting, and yet at the same time, oddly narrow-minded and misguided, philosopher.

What I mean is that Rorty's positive views—anti-metaphysical, naturalistic, pragmatic, conceptualist, relativist, post-modernist, bourgeois, liberal, and in a word, *Enlightenment Lite*....,⁴⁸ were pretty thin gruel, in comparison to his all encompassing, all-leveling, dialectical critique of modern philosophy in *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (PMN).

With 20-20 retrospective vision, moreover, it's shiningly clear that what PMN should have been called was *Professional Academic Philosophy Circa 1980 and the Mirror of Nature*.

In other words, what Rorty was really attacking in PMN was philosophy as conceived by the mainstream Anglo-American professional academic philosophical tradition of his day, and when PMN is understood as such, it's absolutely bang-on.

Indeed, all the naïve unargued presuppositions, bad philosophical pictures, tragic intellectual flaws, and questionable ideological commitments, and correspondingly, the inevitable dialectical self-implosion, of that tradition, as so perfectly grasped and so correctly foreseen by Rorty, have indeed come to pass in the almost 40 years since PMN.

In that sense, APP, with its Kant-inspired *Heavy Duty Enlightenment* project in real, serious philosophy, can effectively build on and transcend the critical and dialectical work of the *Enlightenment Lite Wizard Rorty*, and appear in the 2010s like an *Avenging Kantian Anarchist Angel*, brandishing *its Rorty-forged sword*,



as professional academic philosophy circa 1980 to circa 2020, *finally goes down in flames and into the ash-heap of history, in The Age of Trump.*

Notice also APP's characteristic use of images in order to provide emphatic *essentially non-conceptual* supplements for otherwise *purely conceptual* points. This, in turn, is of a piece with APP's substantive first-order philosophical commitment to Non-Conceptualism.⁴⁹

**The Elective Affinity Between Analytic Philosophy and the Political Status Quo:
Some Apocalyptic Follow-Up Thoughts on "On the Emergence of American
Analytic Philosophy"**⁵⁰

Professional Philosophy and the Normalized Intellectual⁵¹

Can There Be a Real Philosophy Department?⁵²

Taking Down Descartes: The Canon Wars⁵³

On Philosophical Failures⁵⁴

Canon Wars, Round 2: The Multi-Culti Critique of Western Philosophy⁵⁵

Multi-Culti Is Anti-Kanti⁵⁶

The Rortyan epigraph of this edgy essay is particularly worth noting and briefly commenting on:

For ... non-Kantian philosophers, there are no persistent problems—save perhaps the existence of Kantians.⁵⁷

Rorty's anti-Kantianism sharply contrasts with APP's contemporary Kantian commitments and also lines up perfectly with the contemporary philosophical identitarian or multi-culturalist critique of Kant and Kantian philosophy. Indeed, we end the essay like this:

[A]s per Rorty's bang-on witticism, gaslighting Kant's or Kantian philosophy out of professional academic existence would also *very* conveniently solve non-Kantian philosophers' one "persistent problem," wouldn't it?

So in that edgy essay we situate Rorty in a long line of anti-Kantians who explicitly or implicitly use what we call "the moral-taint-by-association strategy" to try to write Kant and Kantianism out of the professional academy's canonical history of modern philosophy. Correspondingly, in one of the essay's Notes, we observe that

[i]nsofar as the moral taint-by-association strategy was applied to Kant after World War II, it built on an already-existing philosophical tradition that blamed Kant, post-Kantian German idealism, and Nietzsche for the rise of German militarism culminating in World War I. See, e.g., G. Santayana, *Egotism in German Philosophy* (London: J.M. Dent & Sons/New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915), available online at URL = https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Egotism_in_German_Philosophy. It would be interesting to do a three-way critical comparative and contrastive study of the (i) "Kant-to-Kaiser-Wilhelm" argument, the (ii) "Kant-to-Hitler" argument, and the (iii) Multi-Culti-anti-Kanti argument.

On the Use of the Term "Continental Philosophy"⁵⁸

This edgy essay, too, is particularly important in the present context, because we provide evidence for the extremely interesting and thought-provoking sociologico-philosophical claim that, ironically enough, *Rorty himself* is responsible for the entrenchment of the term "Continental Philosophy" in professional academic philosophy:

An Ngram of the term "Continental Philosophy" shows that it took off around 1980 (see https://books.google.com/ngrams/graph?content=continental+philosophy&year_start=1800&year_end=2000&corpus=15&smoothing=3&share=&direct_url=t1%3B%2Ccontinental%20philosophy%3B%2Cc0), shortly after the smash-hit appearances of Richard Rorty's two highly controversial books, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* in 1979, and *Consequences of Pragmatism* in 1982. It seems that before that time, many instances of the term were meant just in a geographic sense, not implying a contrast with "Analytic philosophy." This hints at an invention, or at least popularization, of the term in its current meaning around 1980. Perhaps there was not merely a temporal succession, but also some sort of causal connection, between the publication of Rorty's books and the later Anglo-American entrenchment of the term.

Given APP's serious commitment to "heavy duty" or *radical* enlightenment, and our philosophical and political *anarcho*-socialist orientation, we've long been serious analysts and defenders of free expression and free speech, and correspondingly, serious analysts and critics of the identitarian/multi-culti coercive moralist attack on free expression and speech inside the contemporary professional academy. Here are our most recent efforts in those directions:

“Free Speech Is Wonderful—Unless You Offend Us and Then You Must Face the Consequences”⁵⁹

The Tyranny of the Minority: Why the Authoritarian Left Doesn’t Have a Right to Tell Us Who We Can Listen To⁶⁰

Free Places, Not Safe Spaces⁶¹

The Blue Pill Without Amnesia—On the Philosophical Foundations of Political Correctness, Part 1⁶²

The Blue Pill Without Amnesia—On the Philosophical Foundations of Political Correctness, Part 2⁶³

The Blue Pill Without Amnesia—On the Philosophical Foundations of Political Correctness, Part 3⁶⁴

Philosophy and Profanity⁶⁵

The New Inquisitors⁶⁶

At the same time, because we’re equally anarcho-*socialists*, we also fully reject Trump-style, neoliberal neofascism, and correspondingly, fully reject their *lip-service* commitment to free expression and speech when (and only when) it serves their political purposes. This also puts us in direct opposition to so-called “right libertarians.” Since most people, including most professional academic philosophers, think in simplistic, ideologically binary “left vs. right,” “liberal vs. fascist,” “communist vs. capitalist,” “centrist vs. both extremes,” etc., etc., terms, it’s extremely difficult for them to wrap their heads around the very idea of a serious *third alternative* that’s at once committed to Kant-style respect for human dignity, Kant-style autonomy, Kierkegaard-style existential authenticity, Kropotkin-style anarcho-socialism, and Diogenes-style cosmopolitanism. But we keep pushing that philosophico-political Sisyphean rock up that ideological mountain.

Another theme we’ve been critically exploring, especially recently, is professional philosophy’s *irrelevance problem*, which I’ll describe in section IV, and its relation to the “public philosophy” movement, for example:

McPublic Philosophy⁶⁷

The Incoherence of Public Philosophy, and What Can Be Done About It⁶⁸

On Solving Professional Philosophy’s Irrelevance Problem⁶⁹

One other thing worth noting, is APP’s gradual evolution from writing and publishing almost exclusively *critical* material, towards writing and publishing more and more *creative*,

original, systematic real philosophy, both first-order philosophy and metaphilosophy. See, especially,

What is a Work of Philosophy?⁷⁰

The Organicist Conception of the World⁷¹

Serious Philosophy⁷²

On The Deeper Source of The Fragility of Human Dignity⁷³

and the twenty-five installments of the *Thinking For A Living: A Philosopher's Notebook* series, e.g., the latest installment,

You Are Identical To Your Life, For Better or Worse⁷⁴

This evolution from publishing mostly-critical content on the site to publishing mostly-creative-original-and-systematic content on the site was a development fully intended right from the very beginning of APP, announced in the “Welcome To...” essay posted on our home page in July 2013.

In addition to the edgy essays and creative, original real philosophy, we’ve also re-published many *APP-relevant little-known works by well-known philosophers, whether academic or non-academic*, e.g., Edgar Allen Poe, William James, Bertrand Russell, Simone Weil, Hazel Barnes, and Susan Haack; produced a series of cinema-inspired *experiments* in presenting real philosophy, neologistically dubbed *Philosoflicks*; curated a series of re-printed contemporary journal articles together with added-value philosophical analysis, called *Philosophy Ripped From The Headlines!*; produced a series on the historical and philosophico-political foundations of anarchism and socialism; and also, recently, posted/published quite a lot of very creative *philosophical satire* in various presentational formats, including a parody of the *Tractatus*,

NeoTractatus Illogical and Sillier Than the Both of Us⁷⁵

comic strips, music, poetry, and videos.

So, in short, for the past six years APP has been pretty much everything real-philosophical that contemporary professional academic philosophy has *not* been.

IV. *Il Faut Cultiver Notre Jardin*: Anarcho- or Borderless Philosophy⁷⁶

The term “anarcho-“ in the label “anarcho-philosophy” emphasizes the *critical and politically radical* aspect or dimension of APP, whereas the term “borderless,” in the label “borderless philosophy” emphasizes APP’s *cosmopolitan and emancipatory* aspect or dimension. Relatedly, and indeed by way of an elective affinity, the novelist Julian Barnes wrote these philosophically very interesting sentences in 2011:

The history of [*Candide*'s] world-famous phrase, which serves as the book's conclusion – *il faut cultiver notre jardin* – is ... peculiar. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, it didn't come into written use in English until the early 1930s – in America through Oliver Wendell Holmes and in Britain thanks to Lytton Strachey. But a long, unrecorded history of its oral use and misuse can be deduced from Strachey's announced desire to cure the "degenerate descendants of *Candide*" who have taken the phrase in the sense of "Have an eye to the main chance." That a philosophical recommendation to horticultural quietism should be twisted into a justification for selfish greed would not necessarily have surprised Voltaire.⁷⁷

In Voltaire's *Candide*, the scathing critique of abstract, world-alienated, self-alienating, sanctimonious theoretical philosophy in general, and of professional academic philosophy in particular—specifically exemplified by 18th century Leibnizian/Wolffian rationalism and theodicy, satirically represented by that iconic moralistic idiot of professional academic philosophy, Dr Pangloss—equally evocatively and provocatively concludes with the phrase "*il faut cultiver notre jardin*," that is, "we must cultivate our garden." What does Voltaire's world-famous phrase mean? Barnes aptly notes that a popular, vulgar misuse and twisting of it means "have an eye to the main chance," that is, a "justification for selfish greed," and then proposed that, contrariwise, its real meaning is "a philosophical recommendation to horticultural quietism." *That* reading of its real meaning seems wrong to me, however, an anachronistic interpretation over-influenced by the later Wittgenstein's idea that real philosophy should only get clear on the confusions of classical philosophy as represented by mainstream professional academic philosophy, discharge all its bad pictures, engage in liberating self-therapy, and then just "leave the world alone." Contrariwise to Barnes's Wittgensteinian contrariwise, I think that "*il faut cultiver notre jardin*" is in fact Voltaire's radically enlightened 18th century philosophical recommendation to *revolutionize* philosophy, and transform it from abstract, world-alienated, self-alienating, sanctimonious theorizing into a concrete, world-encountering, self-realizing, emancipatory, rational humanistic enterprise: in a nutshell, the real philosopher as *a rational rebel for humanity*.

Hence what Voltaire is really saying, in the context of 18th century radical enlightenment, is essentially closer to what the early, humanistic Marx is saying in his 1844 *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* and his 1845 *Theses on Feuerbach*—

The resolution of *theoretical* considerations is possible only through *practical* means, only through the practical energy of humanity. Their resolution is by no means, therefore, the task only of understanding, but is a *real* task of life, a task which philosophy was unable to accomplish precisely because it saw there a *purely* theoretical problem.⁷⁸

The philosophers have only *interpreted* the world in different ways; the point is to *change* it.⁷⁹

and to what Thoreau is saying in his 1854 *Walden*—

There are nowadays professors of philosophy, but not philosophers.... To be a philosopher is not merely to have subtle thoughts, nor even to found a school, but so to love wisdom as to live according to its dictates, life of simplicity, independence, magnanimity, and trust. It is to solve some of the problems of life, not only theoretically, but practically.⁸⁰

—than it is to what Wittgenstein is saying in the *Philosophical Investigations*.

That all being so, then how do

(i) the popular, vulgar, misused, and twisted meaning *versus* the real meaning of “*il faut cultiver notre jardin*,”

(ii) Voltaire’s radically enlightened critique of professional academic philosophy as abstract, world-alienated, self-alienating, sanctimonious theorizing, and

(iii) his corresponding radically enlightened 18th century recommendation about real philosophy,

jointly apply to *contemporary philosophy*?

First, I think it’s clear that the popular, vulgar misuse and twisting of “*il faut cultiver notre jardin*” as “have an eye to the main chance” applies directly to the *professionalization* and *neoliberalization* of academic philosophy in late 20th and early 21st century democratic or not-so-democratic nation-States, whether in Europe, North America, or anywhere else in the world.

Second, I think it’s also clear that Voltaire’s radically enlightened critique of professional academic philosophy as abstract, world-alienated, self-alienating, sanctimonious theorizing applies directly to what, following Carlo Cellucci, I’ve also called *the problem of irrelevance* for contemporary professional academic philosophy.⁸¹

And **third**, I think it’s even *self-evidently* clear that Voltaire’s radically enlightened recommendation about real philosophy directly applies to what I’m calling *anarcho-philosophy*, aka *borderless philosophy*.

In Voltairean terms, by means of anarcho- or borderless philosophy, 21st century philosophers, should “eradicate the infamy” (*écrasez l’infâme*) that is the panglossian professionalization, neoliberalization, and irrelevance of contemporary academic philosophy, and cultivate our garden instead. But what, more precisely, do I mean by “anarcho- or borderless philosophy”? In order to answer that question, I’ll need to define some terminology.

By *collective intelligence*⁸² I mean an emergent property of human or otherwise animal mindedness, that is constituted by the cognitive capacities and cognitive activities of a group of (for example) people *as a group*, especially including group-reasoning, group brain-storming and innovation, the social production of written texts and other kinds of social media, group deliberation, and participatory decision-making. Recent work in cognitive psychology, social psychology, and organizational studies shows that *collective wisdom*, or a relatively high level of group coordination, creativity, problem-solving, and productivity (aka “constructive *Gemeinschaft*”), is determined by high levels of socially-open, non-hierarchical, free-thinking, and non-conformist, but at the same time also mutually comfortable, mutually communicative, mutually respectful/principled, relaxed, mutually sensitive, mutually supportive, and highly dialogical collaborative activities within groups,⁸³ and is not a function of high average IQ levels among the group’s individual members.⁸⁴

Sharply on the other hand, however, by *collective stupidity* I mean a relatively low level of social group coordination, creativity, problem-solving, and productivity, and correspondingly a relatively high level of group dysfunctionality (aka destructive *Gemeinschaft*). The same recent work in cognitive psychology, social psychology, and organizational studies that I cited earlier that demonstrates the existence, character, and etiology of collective wisdom, also, by simple inversion, demonstrates the existence, character, and of etiology collective stupidity. Collective stupidity is determined by high levels of socially-closed, top-down organized, conformist, but at the same time mutually antagonistic and competitive, coercive, arrogant, non-collaborative, zero-sum, winner-takes-all, gaming-the-system-style activities within social groups, independently of high average IQ levels amongst the group's individual members. In other words, groups made up *entirely of people with very high IQs* can manifest very high levels of collective stupidity.

A more aggravated manifestation of collective stupidity is what I call *collective sociopathy*. Collective sociopathy is when collectively stupid social institutions stop asking altogether whether what they are doing is morally right or wrong, and concentrate entirely on efficient ways of implementing group policies and on coercively imposing the policies and directives of the group's administrative and/or governing elite on people belonging to, participating in, or under the jurisdiction of those institutions, who cannot effectively push back or resist. These groups involve especially high degrees of coercion and vanishingly few opportunities for authentic collaboration. Perspective-taking and empathy become very, and sometimes even impossibly, difficult. At the same time, however, *the power elite*, consisting of those individuals who administer, control, and/or directly govern sociopathic institutions, as individuals, may seem to be otherwise quite normal, sane, and socially well-adjusted: they are "good, law-abiding citizens," and they love, look after, and more generally care for their partners, their children, their extended family and friends, their dogs, and so-on, and so forth. But, in an operative sense, they're social-institutional *monsters*.

The real-life, catastrophic paradigm of this, of course, was the Nazi bureaucracy's increasingly effective, increasingly satanic "solutions" to the "Jewish question." Eichmann, at least as portrayed by Hannah Arendt in *Eichmann in Jerusalem*,⁸⁵ was the perfect "company man" or "organization man" in the modern world's most evil, murderous example of institutional sociopathy. But in a far less satanic and more mundane, although equally important and currently urgent sense, along the lines of Czeslaw Milosz's classic critical essay on institutional sociopathy in post-War communist eastern Europe, *The Captive Mind*,⁸⁶ virtually all contemporary college and university administrations and academic departments, especially philosophy departments, operate on the assumption that effectively implementing various higher-administration-mandated, state-mandated, or Federally-mandated policies and directives, without any critical reflection whatsoever on the rational justifiability or moral permissibility of those policies and directives, as applied to the members of their academic communities, is their be-all and end-all. So in that sense, these contemporary professional academic communities, the intellectual arm of what I call *the military-industrial-university-digital complex* that drives contemporary neoliberal nation-States and their State-like institutions,⁸⁷ also manifest institutional sociopathy.

In turn, it is obvious enough that professional academics, taken one-by-one, and in general, are highly intelligent people, "the smartest kids in class," all the way from kindergarten to graduate school. And, judging at least by average GRE scores across all academic

disciplines,⁸⁸ *physicists* and *philosophers* are the most intelligent professional academics: physicists top out the quantitative scores across all disciplines and also have relatively high analytical/verbal scores; whereas philosophers top out the analytical/verbal scores across all disciplines and also have relatively high quantitative scores. But as Jeff Schmidt's *Disciplined Minds*⁸⁹ clearly shows, to the extent that a group is more and more "professionalized," and therefore has increasingly levels of what Schmidt calls *ideological discipline*, the more they are, collectively, stupid, and even institutionally sociopathic, endlessly contributing to a downwards spiral of destructive *Gemeinschaft*, while, at the same time, all-too-busily promoting their own professional careers, slithering up "the greasy pole" of professorial and/or administrative promotion, reward, and status.

In my pseudonymous guise as Z, I've argued in one of the APP edgy essays cited in section III that contemporary professional academic philosophers are, by virtue of their special training, methodological narrowness, and intellectual arrogance, in fact "*hyper-disciplined minds*,"⁹⁰ from which it follows that they are, as regards their collective intelligence, *hyper-stupid*, and *hyper-institutionally-sociopathic*. The most urgent questions before us, therefore, are:

(i) how can this catastrophic trend towards professional academic philosophical collective stupidity and collective sociopathy be reversed?, and

(ii) how can contemporary professional academic philosophers move towards the kinds of collective wisdom variously imagined, for example, in the ancient Greek Cynics' radical free-thinking and what, as Z, I've also called Diogenes of Sinope's "promethean philosophical failure";⁹¹ in Plato's Socratic dialogues; in Kant's conception of enlightenment, fully realized as the "ethical community" of his later religious writings; in Friedrich Schiller's aesthetic and artistic extension of Kant's conception of enlightenment,⁹² yielding a fusion of an ideal of aesthetically and artistically creative, fully embodied, freely self-realizing, productive human activity with the ideal of an ethical community; in Marx's early humanistic writings, with their emphasis on emancipation from the mechanistic, self-interested, alienating system of capitalism and on the ideal of free social production;⁹³ in Kropotkin's social anarchism, grounded on voluntary association and mutual aid;⁹⁴ or in the early Russell's vision of "the world as it could be made" in *Proposed Roads to Freedom*?⁹⁵

Or otherwise put:

(iii) how can contemporary professional academic philosophers move from where they are now, in a downward-spiralling condition of destructive *Gemeinschaft*, to a radically different condition in which they begin to achieve high levels of socially-open, non-hierarchical, free-thinking, and non-conformist, but at the same time also mutually comfortable, mutually communicative, mutually respectful/principled, relaxed, mutually sensitive, mutually supportive, highly dialogical and collaborative, aesthetically and artistically creative, fully embodied, freely self-realizing, productive human philosophical activities within groups?

In answer to this question, here are three proposals. The conjunction of these three proposals is anarcho- or borderless philosophy.

First, we should get rid of graduate schools, MA and PhD degrees, and philosophy departments *altogether*, and replace them with a network of interlinked *anarcho- or borderless philosophy communities*, each one created and sustained by voluntary association, team-spirit, and a shared sense of real, serious philosophy as a full-time, lifetime calling and mission, that combine dialogue, research, writing, publishing, the creation and sharing of original works of philosophy in any presentational format whatsoever, teaching, and grassroots social activism, whose members are widely distributed spatiotemporally, in many different countries, continents, and time-zones, and who are therefore also fully *cosmopolitan* thinkers, doing real philosophy without borders. Here, the term “cosmopolitan” should be understood in the sense of the original, core meaning of the concept of *cosmopolitanism*, as correctly and insightfully formulated by Kwame Anthony Appiah:

Cosmopolitanism dates at least to the Cynics of the fourth century BC [and especially to Diogenes of Synope], who first coined the expression cosmopolitan, “citizen of the cosmos.” The formulation was meant to be paradoxical, and reflected the general Cynic skepticism toward custom and tradition. A citizen—a *politēs*—belonged to a particular polis, a city to which he or she owed loyalty. The cosmos referred to the world, not in the sense of the earth, in the sense of the universe. Talk of cosmopolitanism originally signalled, then, a rejection of the conventional view that every civilized person belonged to a community among communities.⁹⁶

In short, the original, core meaning of *cosmopolitanism* expresses a serious critique of existing political communities and states; a thoroughgoing rejection of fervid, divisive, exclusionary, loyalist commitments to convention, custom, identity, or tradition; and a robustly universalist outlook in morality and politics, encompassing not only the Earth but also other inhabited worlds if any, and also traveling between worlds, and, finally, the entire natural universe.

Second, we should get rid of professional academic philosophy journals, presses, and the rest of the professional academic publishing racket *altogether*, and replace them with a cosmopolitan, border-less, worldwide network of interlinked *anarcho- or borderless philosophy online sites and platforms* for dialogue, research, writing, publishing, the creation and sharing of original works of philosophy in any presentational format whatsoever, teaching, and grassroots social activism, that are severally and collectively organized and run by the worldwide network of anarcho- or borderless philosophy communities.

Third, as a consequence of the first two proposals, contemporary philosophy, whether professional academic or non-academic, should become fully cosmopolitan in the sense of the original, core meaning of the concept of *cosmopolitanism*.

Admittedly, in the face of the institutional juggernaut that is contemporary professional academic philosophy, anarcho- or borderless philosophy is pretty radical, and, to its most successful, high-status inhabitants, pretty scary and threatening even to the point of turning them into collectively sociopathic, coercive moralist, identitarian social- institutional monsters, killer zombies in the now apparently permanent apocalyptic saga of *The 1001 Nights of the*

Philosophical Living Dead, as I've noted in section III above. So is anarcho- or borderless philosophy really possible? In all honesty, I don't know; but I *do* know this:

If and only if anarcho- or borderless philosophy *can be* implemented by contemporary philosophers, whether professional academic or non-academic, and precisely to the extent that borderless philosophy *actually is* implemented by contemporary philosophers, will they (and we) exit their (and our) current condition of philosophical collective stupidity and destructive *Gemeinschaft*, including institutional sociopathy, and finally begin to achieve a condition of philosophical *collective wisdom* and constructive *Gemeinschaft*, in the spirit of Diogenes, Socrates, Kant, Schiller, early Marx, Kropotkin, and early Russell.

Indeed, a prototype mega-project in anarcho- or borderless philosophy, called *Philosophy Without Borders*, aka PWB, which comprehends APP as well as several other sub-projects, was launched in May 2017 and still actually exists;⁹⁷ and the first number of its journal, *Borderless Philosophy*, also actually appeared in June 2018.⁹⁸ Twenty-two months into its existence, PWB is currently being supported by a few generous, visionary patrons to the tune of a fabulous USD \$105.00 per month. —No, that's not a typographical error. So, to be sure, leaving aside for a moment the generosity and vision of these patrons, and looking sideways with anger and disdain at the military-industrial-university-digital complex in all its gory zombie-apocalypse glory, but also with an appropriate measure of Cynic-inspired gallows humor, it's a laughably, pathetically small amount with which to fund a philosophical revolution. But at the same time, *it's a beginning*.

V. Rorty's Half-Way House

Even though Rorty's influence on APP has been both necessary for APP's emergence and also inspirational for the anarcho- or borderless philosophers at APP, nevertheless, as it turns out, he was deeply, doubly wrong when he wrote, in "Philosophy in America Today" (also quoted above in the first epigraph of this essay) that

[p]roblems created by academic politics can be solved by more academic politics. One may expect that by the end of the century, philosophy in America will have gotten over the ambiguities which have marked the last thirty years, and will begin to develop, once again, a clear self-image.

More precisely, the thirty-seven years since CoP's first publication have made it self-evident

(i) that the "problems created by academic politics" *could not* "be solved by more academic politics," and also

(ii) that by the end of the 20th century, and indeed two decades into the new millennium, philosophy in America had and has not only *not* gotten over the ambiguities that marked the thirty years prior to 1982, but also had and has in fact become a seemingly permanent social-institutional apocalyptic saga, *The 1001 Nights of the Philosophical Living Dead*.

Why was Rorty so badly mistaken about those fundamental points? I think that it's directly due to the inherent philosophical and political inadequacy of his postmodernist neopragmatism and bourgeois liberalism. In a three-celled nutshell,

- (i) postmodernism collapses into individual or cultural *relativism* and *nihilist skepticism*,
- (ii) lacking a substantive background metaphysics along the lines of C.S. Peirce's pragmatism, Jamesian-and-Deweyan pragmatism collapses into *reductive epistemic empiricism* and *the reduction of all human value to purely instrumental value*,⁹⁹ and
- (iii) bourgeois liberalism—since all liberalism has a Hobbesian foundation, and Hobbesianism is paradigmatically Statist¹⁰⁰—is not only explicitly *Statist*, which, from the standpoint of philosophical and political *anarchism*, means that it's rationally unjustified and immoral, but it also has a strong tendency to collapse into *neoliberalism*, which, since neoliberalism valorizes big capitalism, and big capitalism presupposes Statism,¹⁰¹ from the standpoint of philosophical and political *social anarchism*, aka *anarcho-socialism*, again means that it's rationally unjustified and immoral.¹⁰²

So *no wonder* Rorty made those two fundamental mistakes about the nature of academic politics and the philosophy of the future.

Therefore Rorty's critique of professional academic philosophy, for all its theoretical and practical virtues, and for all its enabling influence on APP, *still* falls substantially short of the theoretically and practically more adequate aims of APP. And in this way, Rorty's weaker critique constitutes at best only an inherently unstable philosophical and political *half-way house* between

- (i) contemporary professional academic philosophy, in all its gory undead glory, on the conformist, Establishment, normalized, orthodox, *zombie* side of the intellectual, social-institutional, and political map, and
- (ii) APP and anarcho- or borderless philosophy, living in (admittedly) naïve, romantic rational faith and hope, but also with an appropriate measure of Cynic-inspired gallows humor, on the nonconformist, countercultural, radical, counterorthodox, *rational-rebel-for-humanity* side of the map.

NOTES

¹ R. Rorty, "Philosophy in America Today," in R. Rorty, *Consequences of Pragmatism* (Minneapolis MN: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1982), pp. 211-230, at p. 228.

² W, X, Y, and Z, "Welcome to Against Professional Philosophy: A Co-Authoring Anarcho-Philosophical Diary," *Against Professional Philosophy* (2 July 2013), available online at URL = <<https://againstprofphil.org/>>.

³ R. Rorty, "Postmodernist Bourgeois Liberalism," *Journal of Philosophy* 80 (1983): 583-589.

⁴ R. Rorty, "The Unpatriotic Academy," *The New York Times* (13 February 1994), available online at URL = <<https://www.nytimes.com/1994/02/13/opinion/the-unpatriotic-academy.html>>.

⁵ R. Hanna, "Review of R. Rorty, *The Consequences of Pragmatism*," *Review of Metaphysics* 37 (1983): 140-143, also available online at URL = <https://www.academia.edu/19021980/Rorty_and_Me_in_1983>.

⁶ See D. Mann, "The New Inquisitors," *Against Professional Philosophy* (4 March 2019), available online at URL = <<https://againstprofphil.org/2019/03/04/the-new-inquisitors/>>.

⁷ See L. Kipnis, *Unwanted Advances: Sexual Paranoia Comes to Campus* (New York: Harper, 2017).

⁸ C. Vann Woodward et al., "Report of the Committee on Freedom of Expression at Yale [1974]," *Yale College* (2019), available online at URL = <<https://yalecollege.yale.edu/deans-office/reports/report-committee-freedom-expression-yale>>.

⁹ W, X, Y, and Z, "Welcome to Against Professional Philosophy: A Co-Authoring Anarcho-Philosophical Diary."

¹⁰ This phrase was first published by the French anarchist Miguel Almereyda, Vigo's father, later murdered in prison.

¹¹ W, X, Y, and Z, "A Five-Point Manifesto for Anarcho-Philosophers and Other Real Philosophers," *Against Professional Philosophy* (2 July 2013), available online at URL = <<https://againstprofphil.org/manifesto/>>.

¹² Z, "'Under Submission': 4 Radical Fixes for the Philosophy Publication Racket," *Against Professional Philosophy* (11 August 2013), available online at URL = <<https://againstprofphil.org/2013/08/11/under-submission/>>.

¹³ W, X, Y, and Z, "'Mind the Gap': How to Close Professional Philosophy's Gender-Gap and Minority-Gap," *Against Professional Philosophy* (26 August 2013), available online at URL = <<https://againstprofphil.org/2013/08/26/mind-the-gap/>>.

¹⁴ Z, "'Fear, What's Fashionable, and Fear': An Untenured Woman Philosopher's Thoughts on the State of Contemporary Professional Philosophy," *Against Professional Philosophy* (23 April 2015), available online at URL = <<https://againstprofphil.org/2015/04/23/fear-whats-fashionable-and-fear-an-untenured-woman-philosophers-thoughts-on-the-state-of-contemporary-professional-philosophy/>>.

¹⁵ Z (with X and Y), "What Is the Real Point of Graduate Programs in Philosophy?," *Against Professional Philosophy* (1 May 2015), available online at URL = <<https://againstprofphil.org/2015/05/01/what-is-the-real-point-of-graduate-programs-in-philosophy-an-edgy-essay-by-z-with-critical-discussion-by-x-and-y-2/>>.

¹⁶ Z (with W, X, and Y), "'Analytic' Philosophy vs. 'Continental' Philosophy: WtF? Why Does It Still Matter So Much?," *Against Professional Philosophy* (13 May 2015), available online at URL =

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