might expect tapes 1 through 7 to be heard on cassettes 1A through 7A, and tapes 8 through 14 to be heard on cassettes 1B through 7B. But no: Tape 7 is is heard on cassette 1B, and tape 10 is heard on cassette 6B, tape 11 on cassette 7A, tape 12 on cassette 4B, tape 13 (only 6 minutes long) on cassette 7B, and tape 14 on cassette 5B. This may be as confusing to students as it was to me. And finally, the taped voice occasionally makes slips of the tongue, the most serious of which is to misread the phrase "It is true that no treatments are yet in sight for many hereditary diseases" as "There is treatment yet in sight for hereditary diseases" (Tape 7, band 1).

A final difficulty with the tapes is that they are expensive. One set of tapes costs $75.00, plus tax and postage. If you order 30 sets of tapes, the cost is discounted to $35.00 per set. But that's still too much. However, if you adopt the text, the publishers will send you a set of tapes free, and then permit you to reproduce the tapes. Assuming that a blank cassette costs about $1.00, you would then be able to reproduce the tapes for about $7.00 a set. Even at that price, few departments could afford to outfit many students with a set of the tapes. A less expensive way of making the tapes available to students is to make a half-dozen or so copies of the tapes and place them on reserve in the library. But then, students are less likely to use them.

To be sure, *at first* it's going to be fun to listen to the tapes. And there are several passages on the tapes which are very entertaining (e.g., there is an interesting discussion on tape 12 of the facts which support the thesis that Shakespeare's plays were written by Edward de Vere). These passages will help to rejuvenate waning student interest. But there are some very long stretches during which the novelty of listening to the tapes will wear off and it will become a chore to continue. I am afraid that when this point is reached, students will abandon ship. They will want to continue to listen to the tapes about as much as they will want to spend additional hours in the classroom listening to the instructor read the solutions to some of the exercises. In short, I doubt that many students will get their money's worth, or the department's money's worth, out of the tapes.

The Kegleys' book is basically solid and reliable, and its many problems are minor in nature. The instructor who sees educational advantages to the supplementary audio tapes, and likes the Copi-type texts, should not be too discouraged by these problems. If, however, an instructor is not impressed with the possibilities of the tapes, then he would be better off not to adopt this text, for there are other similar texts available which, because they have gone through multiple editions, have been subject to repeated editing and thus are freer of mistakes. I myself shall not adopt it because I am convinced that the traditional printed study guide which accompanies some texts is more convenient to use, and accordingly will be used by students more, than will the tapes which accompany this book. □

Metaphysical Thinking, Elmer Sprague. New York: Oxford University Press, 1978, 162 pages, $4.00 pbk.

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Metaphysical Thinking is an introduction to metaphysics through the examination of three problems: the nature of persons, the structure of the physical world, and the existence of God. The book seems designed for introduction to philosophy as well as undergraduate metaphysics courses. In length, appearance, and degree of difficulty it reminds one of ichard Taylor's *Metaphysics*.

In the preface Sprague warns the reader "this metaphysics book, like all others, is written from a point of view," and so it is. With an uncompromising positivism Sprague aims to show that the claims of traditional metaphysicians (Descartes,

Armstrong, Berkeley, Anselm, Aquinas, and Spinoza) are best viewed as linguistic proposals and are neither true nor false. According to Sprague, persons, the world (as metaphysicians use "person" and "world") and God are entities only in the Pickwickian sense of being "brought into being" by metaphysical discourse. Thus, "Metaphysical discourse must not be seen as informing us of some discovery ...Metaphysics is not like field botany or observational astronomy. Rather the aim of metaphysical discourse is to persuade ...us that we should...talk of a given metaphysical subject as the metaphysician has decided to" (5).

Sprague devotes the first chapter to examples of entities from everyday life "that can be found only by learning what to say about them" in order to show that his conception of metaphysics is continuous with non-philosophical, intellectually non-suspect subjects. According to Sprague, what makes someone a *knight* or *spouse*, or what makes something *mine* or a *home run* is the fact that there is a convention for speaking in a certain way. In the remainder of the book Sprague attempts to extend this conventionalism to metaphysics.

He begins by arguing that both Descartes's dualism and Armstrong's materialism are metaphysical claims in his sense, rather than factual ones. With Descartes the argument is pressed by noting the impasse between Descartes and his objectors over whether a thinking thing might exist apart from a body. According to Sprague, since there are no experimental grounds for deciding the question, "we can do no more than ask which way we are to think of the relation of thought and bodies" (35). Sprague concludes that the difficulties in speaking with Descartes (Strawsonian problems over non-bodily survival, mind-body interaction difficulties, and a conflict with ordinary language) make Descartes's way unattractive (37). Armstrong's theory is argued to be "a metaphysical identification, a postulation, a way of reading the facts, not a fact itself" (52) by noting that the mediators of stimuli and responses which Armstrong claims are mental states turn out to be brain states only if one looks for them within the context of physiological theory. But, according to Sprague, if one digs in one's heels, one *can* insist that the logic of our language prohibits our saying that mental states are neurophysiological ones. Thus, the choice is ours, and Armstrong's theory is rejected in favor of Rylean behaviorism, which is held to be more conformable to ordinary language.

In the chapter on the structure of the world, man-in-the-street "pluralism" is found preferable to materialism, Berkeleian immaterialism, and Parmenides's theory. The criticism of materialism is disfigured by Sprague's imputations to his foe: that the materialist is concerned with showing that sensible objects are material *because* they are the most amenable candidates (89); that the materialist holds that a term is meaningful only if it is explicable in terms of matter and that otherwise existence claims are meaningless (89-90); and that the materialist is committed to the claim "*mind* means *brain*" (90). Materialism is rejected for the (dubious) reason that a micro-structural analysis of a teacup (unlike micro-structural analyses of gold and water) is incomplete: "...the teacup is not simply reducible to matter in motion. A complete account of the teacup requires a statement of its purpose as well" (92). This rejection of materialism is especially surprising since Sprague introduces materialism as a thesis about the structure of the world rather than semantic reducibility.

After contrasting Judeo-Christian and Hindu conceptions of God, Sprague claims that doubts about the existence of a God cannot arise inside a religion, while God can be asserted to exist only within a religion (132). Although on a charitable interpretation this claim amounts to the tautological "If you believe in God, then you believe in God," Sprague takes his claim as evidence that each of several arguments for the existence of God—Anselm's, cosmological, design, and moral—amounts to merely "a lesson

in talking about God" (133). Sprague's criticisms of the traditional arguments are fairly effective, as is his brief atheistic counter-sketch at the end. But again Sprague's metaphilosophy causes trouble; rather than claiming his atheistic picture is more likely to be true than theistic ones, he claims that on his view cosmological questions are ruled out as senseless. Thus, as consistency demands, Sprague relegates his own atheism to the level of a merely linguistic maneuver.

Sprague criticizes a great many philosophers, usually unsuccessfully. He evinces confusion over the word/object distinction when he criticizes materialism by pointing out that "my body" is not substitutable with "I" in every context (45-6) and when he criticizes Armstrong's identification of mind and brain because a "subtle" metaphysics requires "the three concepts *person*, *mind*, and *brain*" (54). Sprague claims that Armstrong's demand for a micro-structural foundation to Rylean dispositions both is needless —since we can handle our mental vocabulary adequately "without a smattering of knowledge of neurophysiology" —and risks giving philosophy a bad name—since to "ask for a neurophysical, inner-process kind of explanation is to introduce into mental life a species of prime-moverism" (60). Sprague does not object to the theoretical implausibility of a Berkeleian immaterialism which does not include God to explain the regularity and interpersonal coincidence of sense experience (97-9). Further, he displays no familiarity with the now-common separation of epistemic, modal, and semantic categories, nor does he distinguish between meaning and reference. Probably the most pressing defect is Sprague's reliance on the positivistic dichotomy between the two triads empirical-factual-contingent and the metaphysical-merely verbal-necessary. Using this scheme uncritically one can conclude that traditional metaphysicians were merely singing different tunes, but is it acceptable? Curiously, Sprague does not defend the dichotomy—perhaps he relies tacitly on an analogy with the conventional properties discussed in chapter one to convince readers that where experimental answers are not forthcoming there can be only verbal disagreement. But the analogy is weak in any event, since there is no *prima facie* temptation to treat the properties of being a spouse or home run as non-conventional, while metaphysical questions do seem to require answers about non-conventional, linguistically independent entities.

As a text, *Metaphysical Thinking* is too loose for an introductory course—the argumentation is often unclear or unconvincing and too much of the book is devoted to considering "what we say" in everyday contexts. There is a real danger that uncritical freshmen will finish the book wondering why anyone ever worried about philosophical problems. At the same time critical freshmen will be disappointed, if they harbor the suspicion that metaphysics is supposed to propose answers where science does not. Despite Sprague's efforts to dissolve them, the metaphysical questions remain. In this respect, *Metaphysical Thinking* is unhappily poles apart from the sober metaphysical realism of Taylor's book and Cornman and Lehrer's difficult but rewarding *Philosophical Problems and Arguments*. On the positive side, *Metaphysical Thinking* is a paradigm of a conscientious application of positivistic ordinary language philosophy. In more advanced courses, Sprague's book may add a useful perspective to the realist trend in recent philosophy, although perhaps not as well as some heyday positivistic treatises, e.g., Ayer's *Language, Truth and Logic.* □

Philosophers in Wonderland: Philosophy and Psychical Research, Peter A French, ed. St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn Publications, 390 pages, $9.95 cl.

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This is a charming and useful introduction to the conceptual issues of psychical phenomena. Apparently, French came to