

THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY & PSYCHIATRY

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

18th ANNUAL MEETING

May 20 & 21, 2006

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

THEME: Psychiatry and the Moral Emotions

The “moral” emotions, which have attracted increased interest among philosophers, psychiatrists and psychologists in the past two decades, are those that arise in the context of events that are perceived to have a moral component or that serve to motivate a person toward moral action (or inaction). The category is vague, but typical moral emotions include the “reactive” attitudes of guilt, shame, regret, contrition, remorse, resentment and envy, as well as such positive emotions as awe, love, empathy, and gratitude. Because a degree of cognitive self-reflection about one’s own role is part of many of these emotions, they are also referred to as emotions of self-consciousness or self-assessment. This element of self-awareness connects the moral emotions to issues around metaphysics, consciousness, spiritual life, and existential concepts like freedom and authenticity. Further puzzles about the moral emotions involve the long-standing controversies concerning the relationships of emotion to rationality, the influence of emotions in general as motivators for human action (or inaction), and the significance of the moral emotions in the development of character and personality.

The moral emotions relate to psychiatric theory and practice in a variety of ways. Psychiatry has traditionally been interested in the pathological aspects of the moral emotions. Guilt and shame are prominent in the phenomenology of depressive and anxiety disorders, including PTSD. Similarly, guilt, shame, and humility figure prominently (if primarily as deficits) in personality disorders like Antisocial, Narcissistic, and Borderline Personality Disorder. More recently, interest has extended to the neurobiology subserving the moral emotions. Neurobiological explanations of the moral emotions may reframe questions of moral and legal responsibility. Evolutionary psychology and psychiatry have raised the question of the adaptive significance of the moral emotions. Questions that arise at the philosophical/psychiatric interface include: Which are the moral emotions? What are the components of these complex emotions? What is the relationship between moral and mental health norms? What are the differences between shame and guilt, and when are these emotions healthy and when not? How do personality and the moral emotions interact? Has psychiatry reduced the moral worries and conflicts to a series of neurotic symptoms? How shall psychiatric practice examine moral conflict in its understanding and treatment of patients?

Abstracts should be **600** words or less, and must be accompanied by a **separate cover sheet** with the author(s) name, mailing address, and telephone number. This facilitates AAPP's blind review policy. Mail abstracts in triplicate to: **Jerome Kroll, M.D., Community-University Health Care Clinic, 2001 Bloomington Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55404, or (fax) 612-273-9779 or (e-mail) kroll001@umn.edu**

Submissions must be postmarked by November 30, 2005 to be considered. Each abstract will have a blind review by three members of the AAPP Executive Council and their designees. Acceptances will be mailed no later than January 15, 2006. Approximately 18 papers will be accepted. Accepted papers should be of length to present within a **strict 20-minute time limit**.