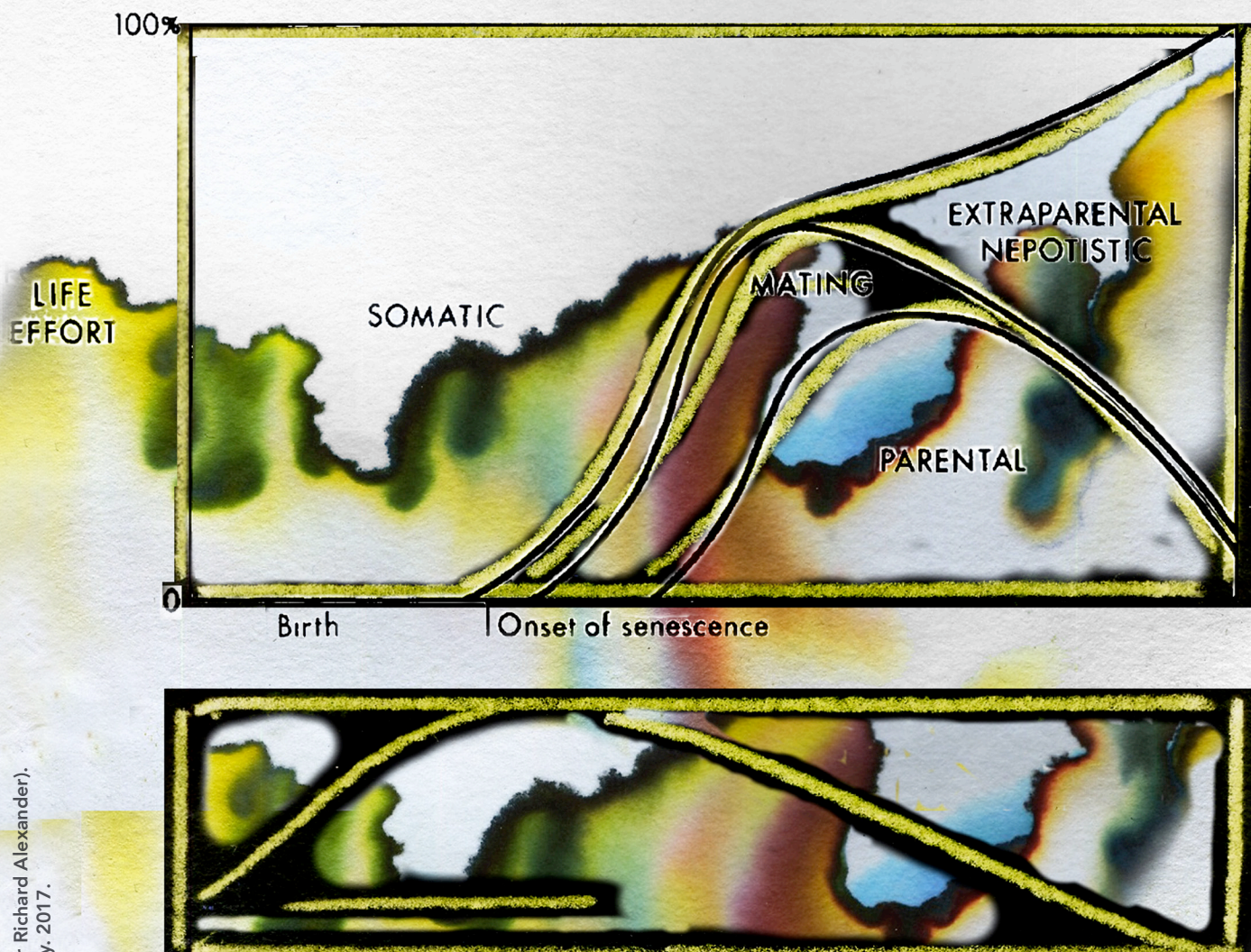


MORAL SENSE COLLOQUIUM III



Dr. Alison Dell. Somatic Effort (for Richard Alexander).
Mixed media and chromatography. 2017.

2 JUNE 2017



ST. FRANCIS COLLEGE
THE SMALL COLLEGE OF BIG DREAMS

MORAL SENSE COLLOQUIUM III

ST. FRANCIS COLLEGE

180 REMSEN STREET
BROOKLYN HEIGHTS, NY 11201

2 JUNE 2017

SFC.EDU



ST. FRANCIS COLLEGE

BROOKLYN HEIGHTS, NEW YORK

St. Francis College has a proud heritage of preparing students to take their places as leaders in their fields and to become contributing members of society. With a mission founded on the ideals and teachings of St. Francis of Assisi, the College plays a vital role in the community and in the lives of its students and alumni.

A group of Franciscan Brothers first came to Brooklyn in 1858, opening St. Francis Academy several months later in 1859. It was the first private school in the diocese of Brooklyn. The school, which was opened to educate the boys of the diocese, started in a building on Baltic Street and grew quickly. In 1884, just 25 years later, the trustees of St. Francis received permission from the state legislature to "establish a literary college" under its current name and giving it the power to confer diplomas, honors, and degrees. In June 1885, St. Francis College conferred its first Bachelor of Arts degree, and seven years later the first Bachelor of Science degree was granted.

The College continued its meteoric growth and built a new facility on Butler Street in 1926. In 1957, the Regents of the University of the State of New York granted an absolute Charter to the Trustees of the College. In 1960, St. Francis embarked on an expansion program. It moved to Remsen Street, where it had purchased two office buildings from Brooklyn Union Gas Company, allowing it to double its enrollment. Shortly thereafter, it became a co-educational institution and additional property was purchased on both Remsen and Joralemon Streets. The College expanded its facilities with the construction of a science building, athletics complex and housing to accommodate the Franciscan Brothers and provide more space for faculty.

The addition of the Anthony J. Genovesi Center in 2003 offers students additional opportunities to participate and watch athletic events while the \$40 million Frank and Mary Macchiarola Academic Center which opened in 2006, houses a library, numerous smart classrooms, HDTV studio, and black box theater.

Today the School has more than 2,600 students and 20,000 alumni. They come primarily from Brooklyn and the other boroughs of New York City, although their diverse backgrounds represent some 80 countries. A record 450 undergraduate and graduate degrees were conferred in the liberal arts and sciences in May of 2012. Many distinguished public servants, scientists, lawyers, business professionals, and teachers call St. Francis College *alma mater*, as do many of the priests and nuns within the Dioceses of Brooklyn-Queens and Rockville Centre.

PROGRAM ORGANIZERS AND DIRECTORS

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND SPECIAL THANKS TO ST. FRANCIS COLLEGE

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STUDENT INTERN

Sumaiya Hoque

COVER ART

Dr. Alison Dell. Somatic Effort (for Richard Alexander). Mixed media and chromatography. 2017.

Moral Sense Colloquium III
2 June 2017
St. Francis College, 180 Remsen Street, Brooklyn Heights, N.Y.
Program Schedule

Keynote Speaker: Robert Trivers, Ph.D.

8:00am-8:45am – Continental Breakfast and Registration, Callahan Center.

9:00am-9:15am – Welcome, Gregory F. Tague, Ph.D., Founders Hall.

9:15am -11:00am – Panel One, Founders Hall. Chair, Alison Dell, Ph.D.:

1. D. PAL. “Of Sympathy.”
2. K. NOLAN. “When and Why Did Our Feelings about Whales Change?”
3. T. DUGAN. “The Masks Among Us: Fear and Masquerade in Transnational Settings.”
4. J. FREEMAN. “Teleological Concepts in Evolutionary Theory Applied to Moral Sense.”
5. S. HOQUE: Student Respondent

11:00am-11:15am – Coffee break, Callahan Center.

11:15am-12:15pm – Plenary Session, Founders Hall, David Lahti, Ph.D. “Celebrating 45 Years of Giving Professional Moralists the Heebie-Jeebies.”

12:15pm-1:15pm – Lunch, Callahan Center.

1:30pm-2:30pm – Keynote Speaker, Founders Hall, Robert Trivers, Ph.D. “Self-Deception and Morality.”

2:30pm-2:45pm – Break, Callahan Center.

2:45pm-4:30pm – Panel Two, Founders Hall. Chair, Gregory F. Tague, Ph.D.:

1. J. SPARKS. “Moral Perception and Illusion.”
2. C. SHOPPA. “Neurobiology, Intention and Decision.”
3. L. DELESCU. “A Defense of Cognitive Morality.”
4. N. GARRERA-TOLBERT. “A Sketch of an Experiential Ethics.”

4:30pm-4:45pm – Break, Callahan Center.

4:45pm-6:30pm – Panel Three, Founders Hall. Chair, David Lahti, Ph.D.:

1. C. JENSEN. “Dual Inheritance, Ecological Peril, & the Morality of Procreation.”
2. S. KIM. “Extreme Moral Values (highest vs. lowest) among Three Countries in WVS”
3. E. GODOY. “Sympathy for Non-human Predatory Animals.”
4. J. GOODMAN. “The Necessity of Practical Understanding of Altruistic Behavior.”

6:30pm – Reception and Book Signing, Dr. Trivers, Callahan Center.

About the Keynote Speaker, Robert Trivers, Ph.D.



[from the website RobertTrivers.com]

“I have been an evolutionary biologist since the fall of 1965 when I first learned that natural selection is the key to understanding life and that it favors traits that give individuals an advantage (in producing surviving offspring). Spring of 1966 I learned Hamilton’s kinship theory, which extended one’s self-interest to include not only one’s own offspring but also those of relatives, each devalued by the appropriate degree of relatedness. I was eager to contribute to building social theory based on natural selection, because a scientific system of social theory must, by logic be based on natural selection, and getting the foundations correct would have important implications for understanding our own psyches and social systems. A general system of logic that applies to all creatures also vastly extends the range of relevant evidence. I then published a series of papers on social topics: reciprocal altruism (1971), parental investment and sexual selection (1972), the sex ratio (1973), parent-offspring conflict (1974), kinship and sex ratio in the social insects (1976), summarized in my book *Social Evolution* (1985). [...] I devoted 1990 to 2005 to mastering genetics, in particular *Selfish Genetic Elements*, which typically are harmful to the organism as a whole but spread through within-individual genetic conflict. They infect all known organisms, including ourselves, come in a zoo of forms but can be understood by a logic of genetic conflict continuous with the kind that operates at the individual level (with no internal conflict). [...] Finally, I have recently attempted to master the scientific literature on self-deception and to sketch out some of the many applications of the resulting view.”

Book Publications Include:

Wild Life. 987-1938972126

The Folly of Fools. 978-0465027552

Natural Selection & Social Theory. 978-0195130621

Deceit & Self-Deception. 978-0141019918

Genes in Conflict. 978-0674017139

Moral Sense Colloquium III

St. Francis College, Brooklyn, N.Y., 2 June 2017

Abstracts of Papers and Talks

LUCIAN DELESCU

A Defense of Cognitive Morality

Lucian Delescu, Adjunct Senior Lecturer of **Philosophy**, Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, St. Francis College

One of the contemporary convictions is that the evolutionary explanation of morality necessary contradicts “rationalistic” accounts of morality. Two main arguments have been provided in support of this conviction. On the one hand, it has been argued that there is empirical evidence only for morality with strictly emotional ontological structure while that is not the case of morality with dual emotional and cognitive ontological structure “rationalists” tend to defend. On the other hand, it has been argued that emotions suffice to account for conscious experiences. In this paper I will address the tension between evolutionary morality and certain “rationalistic” theories of morality from the point of view of the philosophical modality to conceive “ontological possibilities” that are later deemed as undisputable ontological events. The claim is that one cannot settle ontological events without accounting the implications of the modality in which such events are conceived keeping in mind that “existence” and “evidence” in standard scientific sense means “quantity” while “existence” and “evidence” in philosophical sense means “understanding”. Following that I will sketch out the argument for an epistemological assessment able to identify the elements which ensure the correlation between emotion and cognition without reducing one to another, and without applying theories designed to justify certain ontological events to ontological events which require a different kind of theoretical justification.

TIMOTHY DUGAN

The Masks Among Us: Fear and Masquerade in Transnational Settings

Timothy Dugan, Associate Professor, Department of Communication Arts, St. Francis College

The rationale of this guided discussion is the emergent, but substantial phenomena of mask wearing in non-theatrical contexts and circumstances. The charge of our anthropological “dig” is the building of an archive of the innumerable masks utilized by laborers, athletes, public servants and private citizens in their day-to-day ministrations. Many of these “masks”, either professionally crafted or improvised have become commonplace at everyday work sites and allow citizens to fulfill their daily obligations while living or working in dangerous, prohibitive or quarantined

environments; regardless of vocation or avocation, these mask wearers are inclined towards a shared form of masquerade and performance that is unintended, but verifiable. Our responsibility as performance anthropologists, social scientists and theater historians is to unpack and interrogate this cross-cultural and transnational spectacle.

Topics for anthropological inquiry will include a wide avenue of practices including surgical, paramedical and cosmetic masks, firefighter masks, riot gear, welders masks, remote marine engineering apparatus (oil rigs), super-sonic and space travel apparatus, and the haunting specter of terror and anti-terror masks; sacred and quasi sacred practices such as veils, burkas and yarmulkes will be considered. Although all of the above identified masks have a non-theatrical and wholly utilitarian specification, our investigation will prove or disprove a theatrical tendency in vocational, ancillary and even incongruous settings; images (for example) of a pre-adolescent ballet company in Beijing wearing anti-SARS protective masks at a dance recital will be offered for both sociological and theatrical inquiry. Collateral discussion will probe geopolitical regions inflicted with germ transmission as progenitors of an unintended masquerade that is mordant and terrifying; panelists and respondents will justify or disclaim the post 9/11 banning of masks in public settings in New York City such as parades, sporting events and political rallies.

JAMES S. FREEMAN

Teleological Concepts in Evolutionary Theory Applied to Moral Sense

James S. Freeman, Adjunct Lecturer of Religion, Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, St. Francis College

Advances in technology appear to be on the verge of supplanting natural evolutionary processes in human beings with artificial ones: genetic engineering and biotechnology, robotics and other forms of mechanical augmentation, and AI or human/machine interfaces. It seems clear that in many cases, research and experimentation is being pursued more out of a response to the salient question of “what can we achieve?” rather than “why do we want to achieve this?” or “what are the consequences of this achievement?” Vaguely formed and grandiosely stated goals such as “merging humanity with machine,” “abandoning biological bodies for purely digital consciousness,” and “creating a race of super humans” no longer appear to be solely within the realm of speculative fiction. While evolutionary biology still wrestles with questions of whether teleological claims are denied by Darwinian evolution, or whether the Modern Synthesis is still “infected” with design teleology, researchers and corporations appear to be hijacking the entire discourse, with themselves in the lead teleological role of designer. Opposition to such projects often (though not always) takes the form of alternative teleological claims that such technologies overstep the “limits of nature” or are tantamount to “playing God.”

Assuming that moral sense is a combination genetically evolved and conditioned traits and behaviors and a set of culturally evolved and conditioned beliefs, values and practices, how will it deal with the impacts of advanced technology? Are our present philosophical tools and discourses adequate to the task? Perhaps it is time to borrow from the debates over evolution and re-examine some philosophical views on nature and teleology to see what application they might have to a

rapidly changing world. This paper looks specifically to Kant's *Critique of Pure Judgment*, with its curious pairing of aesthetics and teleology, and James's *Will to Believe* and *Pragmatism* as providing non-theistic forms of teleology, fully supportive of evolutionary theory, that nevertheless can be used to provide a framework to discuss and critique current technological projects that present existential challenges to our definitions of what it means to be human and to possess and employ moral sense.

NICOLÁS GARRERA-TALBERT

A Sketch of an Experiential Ethics

Nicolás Garrera-Talbert, Assistant Adjunct Professor of Philosophy, Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, St. Francis College

On the basis of a notion of « person » understood as that kind of entity that (i) is irreducible to the natural realm, (ii) is embedded in a « pulsional » or « affective » body, (iii) is constituted by a « system of sedimented habits and beliefs », and (iv) is capable of consistently thematizing his or her own experiences and potentially acting in accordance to self-given rational aims, my presentation sketches an « experiential conception of ethics ». This is an ethical theory grounded in a certain kind of ontologically and epistemologically irreducible, subjective kind of experience, namely « ethical experience ». This is why an experiential ethics rejects all forms of reductionism—in particular all forms of scientism, including naturalism. Specifically, it rejects the idea of a moral sense as that singular cognitive capacity that would give us direct access to the fundamental ethical distinctions—it finds no need to posit a moral sense as an element of the anthropology of the person (see points (i)-(iv) above) presupposed by the experiential approach to ethics. Thus morality is not inscribed in our nature, but, quite the contrary, presupposes the separation between the realm of freedom and the realm of nature. Such an approach however does not need to reject science altogether. In fact, an experiential ethics is a pluralistic and encompassing approach to ethics that can in principle accommodate relevant scientific findings about our moral lives without eliminating the « non-naturalizable » reality in which the basic moral distinctions are given to us in their irreducibly subjective character.

ERIC S. GODOY

Sympathy for Non-human Predatory Animals

Eric S. Godoy, Assistant Chair of Social Science & Cultural Studies, Adjunct Assistant Professor of Philosophy, Pratt Institute

In the summer of 2015, dentist Walter Palmer illegally shot and killed Cecil the Lion on a hunting trip. His actions sparked an outrage that led to a swift response from a range of people, companies, and organizations. Big game hunting is not a rare occurrence, so what was unique about Cecil? This paper draws from the moral sentimentalist, evolutionary psychological, and ecofeminist traditions to understand when and why we sometimes express sympathy for non-human animals—

sometimes even more so than for other humans—and sometimes we do not. I focus in particular on moral reactions to the killing of large, predatory animals that regularly harm humans. I sort through the terminological confusions surrounding sympathy, empathy, and ‘the moral sense’ that plague cross-disciplinary research on the subject. I then look at how cultural differences, such as exposure to the threat of predatory animals, can greatly affect attitudes of sympathy. What is an object of sympathy cannot be a threat and vice versa. What relevant cultural factors influence our perceptions of predatory non-human animals?

JONATHAN R. GOODMAN

The Necessity of Practical Understanding for Altruistic Behavior

Jonathan R. Goodman, Postgraduate Researcher, Biology Department, Queens College, CUNY

In this paper I argue that neither altruistic intention nor effect is sufficient for explaining altruistic behavior, and, further, that a particular action intended to be altruistic that has a positive effect on the intended recipient is not necessarily altruistic. Practical understanding of the nuances of particular circumstances is a necessary criterion for acting altruistically; this is shown with examples of gift-giving intended to be generous that fail to qualify as altruistic. Two effects of this argument, if valid, are proposed: first, that altruism is best understood as a signal designed to elicit costs from recipients and observers and, second, that “honest” signaling of this variety is more likely to benefit the agent than deceitful signaling. Yet this signaling system can be exploited for evolutionary reasons: practical understanding of altruistic behavior within a particular culture may be used for personal gain. Some possible counterarguments are considered.

CHRIS JENSEN

Dual Inheritance, Ecological Peril, & the Morality of Procreation

Chris Jensen, Associate Professor of Ecology and Evolution, Pratt Institute

The human species has been exceptionally successful at harnessing cultural innovation, and our current population size of over seven billion is perhaps the most obvious evidence of that success. But our remarkable population growth is not without consequence: it is now clear that the impacts of human activities are unsustainable, leading many moral philosophers to suggest that we need to deliberately curtail our procreation. But is the evolved human moral sense capable of compelling reproductive abstinence? And can a morality centered on reproductive restraint save us from self-made ecological peril?

Evidence suggests that human reproductive decisions are highly sensitive to both perceived resource requirements and offspring survival prospects. In industrialized societies, these twin drivers appear to have increased the age of first reproduction and decreased the overall birth rate, leading to shrinking populations. But have perceived resource needs and increased offspring survival really slowed population growth, or are these simply correlates of a deeper cause? An

answer to this question may lie in the fact that humans are not just prolific breeders of babies: we are also prolific propagators of culture. And in industrialized societies, the necessity and imperative to obtain and propagate cultural knowledge has expanded dramatically over the past century, paralleling the steady decrease in the birth rates of these societies. Perhaps we don't need a morality of reproductive restraint, we just need to create cultures whose byproduct is reproductive restraint.

Unfortunately, shifting towards cultural procreation won't solve our sustainability dilemma, because people who allocate more effort to cultural propagation tend to produce greater impacts. The real moral dilemma we face centers on the kind of culture that we propagate: will we continue to use fossil fuels to power the creation of disposable products, or will we shift to cultural propagation that is less dependent on ecologically-impactful practices?

SUNGHUN KIM

Extreme Moral Values (highest vs. lowest) among Three Countries in WVS

SungHun Kim, Assistant Professor of Psychology, St. Francis College

Values have been understood as a motivational factor for a behavior (Paciello et al., 2013; Schwartz, 2010; Schwartz & Howard, 1984). Moreover, values are highly related to people's ideas of what "being moral" means for them (see Prilletensky, 1997), because values often define social standards or principles. The members of a society or community follow the standards and principles, and in turn, values to be socially acceptable and desirable (Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz, 1994). In this study, I analyzed a cross-national level dataset available through the World Values Survey (hereafter WVS; www.worldvaluessurvey.org). I obtained the 6th wave WVS data that were established from 2010 through 2012. The WVS founded in the early 1980s as a global network and have included almost 100 countries with 400,000 people across the world. With the rigorous and high-quality research design, the WVS can be considered as the nationally representative group (in terms of various demographic characteristics of each country such as gender, ethnicity, SES, immigration status, and so on.) The goal of the study was to explore how morality-related values can be explained by different levels of other values such as life satisfaction, social trust, educational attainment, political standpoints, and religiosity in three countries: The United States, Mexico, and South Korea.

DAVID LAHTI

Celebrating 45 Years of Giving Professional Moralists the Heebie-Jeebies

David Lahti, Associate Professor of Biology, Queens College, CUNY

The attempt to understand the origin, content, and function of morality from an evolutionary perspective has been in high gear since publications by Robert Trivers and Richard Alexander in 1971. A walk through the main features of this analysis, as encapsulated, for instance, in

Alexander's 1987 book *The Biology of Moral Systems*, demonstrates the tremendous promise of evolutionary social science and philosophy. However, this enterprise has elicited strong negative responses from many traditional social scientists and moral philosophers. The most common objections seem to derive from three roots: (1) a concern that the evolution of human psychology would undermine the role of individual human history and agency; (2) the conviction that connecting evolution and morality is either wrong, unfounded, or illogical; and (3) a distaste for values that the evolutionists allege to have played causal roles in the evolution of morality, including selfishness, reproductive success, and violence. These worries can generally be handled in a careful way that does justice to the evolutionary account while preserving the possibility of a robust personal devotion to moral values. However, one great threat remains that attacks the moral nature of humanity at its very core, but is not often noticed by the dissenters. In short, hypocrisy and self-deception are inherent in human nature and an essential part of adaptive moralizing. This realization might finally knock us off of our moral high horse... but that might not be a bad thing.

KATHLEEN NOLAN

Cultural Evolution of Thought Processes. From Leviathan to Saint: When and Why Did Our Feelings about Whales Change?

Kathleen A. Nolan, Professor of Biology, Chair of Biology and Health Promotion, St. Francis College

"In the Heart of the Sea: The Tragedy of the Whaleship Essex" by Nathaniel Philbrick is the true story of a sperm whale that sank a whaleship in 1820. In contrast, Farley Mowat writes the story, "A Whale for the Killing" of how, in the 1960's, well after the fall of the whaling industry, people in Newfoundland are taking great pleasure in taking gunshots at, and eventually killing, a whale that is trapped in the ice. Mowat updated his version of the book, after Greenpeace and the U.S. Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1974 came into existence. This presentation will explore attitudes of people about whales before and after this "paradigm shift" of thinking about the whales as being "evil boat-sinkers" (*Moby Dick* was based on the Tragedy of the Essex story) to revered animals. The cultural evolution of this thought process was most likely accelerated by our loss of dependence for whale oil for lighting, and ambergris for perfume, as well as the tumultuous population decline of these animals. This modern day thinking, however, is most prevalent in societies that do not depend on whales for a living. The attitudes in these groups will be compared and contrasted to those communities that still whale.

DIBAKAR PAL

Of Sympathy

Dibakar Pal, Ph.D. student, Department of Business Management, University of Calcutta, India

Creative writing is based more on manifestation rather than on expression. It does not inform rather reveals, so it bears no reference. The present article is the outcome of creative writing meant for lay

readers. As such free style is the methodology adopted so that pleasure of reading can be enjoyed by the common mass. As you know well that Francis Bacon (1561-1626), the immortal essayist, wrote many essays and notably, Of Love, Of Friendship, Of Ambition, Of Studies, etc. The myriad-minded genius rightly pointed out that all the words of the dictionary can be the themes of essays one can write. But little has been done, in this regard since his death, in order to finish his unfinished monumental works. In fact Bacon's way of presentation i.e., his unique style kindled the imagination already in me and encouraged me as well to write essays, in the light of creative writing, thus to get relief through catharsis.

Sympathy is the ability to share in the feelings of others. This ability stands for mental not physical. A strong man may not have that tender feeling; rather a weak and timid heart can help others being urged by that feeling. But a person who is strong both physically and psychologically is an ideal one. This feeling is instant and spontaneous in nature. It is a mutual liking or understanding arising from sameness of feeling. It is a feeling of pity and sorrow for someone else's misfortune. It is a divine feeling. This feeling is free from culture and caste. It is a universal urge arises from the core of the holy heart. It is the manifestation of goodness already in man and paves the way to achieve greatness. A holy soul shows its divinity through its spontaneous act. A person gains immense psychic force thus helping others in distress. All cannot show sympathy. A stupid or a shrewd or a hardened soul seldom responds to help the ailing humanity. Only a tender soul enriched with the feelings of kindness shows sympathy.

CLAYTON SHOPPA

Neurobiology, Intention and Decision

Clayton Shoppa, Assistant Professor of Philosophy, Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, St. Francis College

In *The Descent of Man* Darwin regards the emergence of moral sense in terms of probability. Bernard Lonergan commends Darwin for being among the first to employ “probability as a principle of explanation.” Given a species with social instincts, the development of conscience is likely. Subsequent generations of expositors and critics take Darwin to mean that personal rational deliberation about moral ends is secondary, that shifting material or ecological conditions are more primary. Evolutionary history explains concrete moral decision-making better than, for example, the history of philosophy or the history of rhetoric. In *Neurobiology and the Development of Human Morality* and other recent work, Darcia Narvaez uses evolutionary theory to work against this impersonal and passive view of morality.

She develops the idea of a “biosocial grammar” that, I argue, reinterprets and corrects defects in previous generations’ understanding of moral sense. Drawing on epigenetic and environmental factors dismissed by others, Narvaez contends narratives and not genes are the building blocks of moral sense. Our brains, according to psychologist Allan Schore, are only 25% developed at birth. Moreover, to the contrary of the strident cognitivism of many of Darwin’s contemporaries, moral development is more affective than rational. Emotions help us and other animals distinguish

worthwhile courses of intentional action. Aristotle makes a point left implicit in Darwin and Narvaez. Natural selection is open-ended because the universe within which both it and moral decision-making occur is open-ended too. Narratives are principles of stability in a universe liable to change. Darwin uses probability to explain a series of species, where Narvaez affirms moral-explanatory narrative schema realized in probabilistic ways. The latter view is important since minds and morals are not fated things we have by reception as much as they are things we make by meaning and value.

JACOB SPARKS

Moral Perception and Illusion

Jacob Sparks, currently ABD at Bowling Green State University and adjunct lecturer at John Jay College

You might bear witness to some injustice, but can you witness the injustice itself? At first glance, it's tempting to say "yes." Sometimes we see things that provoke an immediate moral judgement just as we sometimes see things that provoke the immediate judgement that e.g. the book is red or that our friend is angry. It seems like we *perceive* the injustice just as we *perceive* the redness or the anger. Natural as that position is, some reflection might give us pause. Do we really *see* injustice? Isn't it more accurate to say that we *see* e.g. the innocent man being punished, and then we *infer* that what is happening is unjust? And what, anyway, is the difference between *seeing* and *inferring* that some act is unjust?

The dispute, between those who think that there is a genuine kind of moral perception, where moral properties are part of the contents of our perceptual experiences, and those who think that no such kind of perception is possible, is the topic of this paper. It is surprising to how quickly many authors dismiss moral perception as an independent source of moral knowledge, given that many others seem to think that genuine moral perception is an essential and indispensable part of the explanation of how are able to know about what's good or right.

Two arguments for the existence of genuine moral perception will be my focus. The first argument makes the case for moral perception by reflection on the qualities one needs to be a sensitive moral thinker. The moral life involves more than reasoning from a priori principles. Even someone possessed of all the true moral principles would need certain perceptual capacities to apply those principles and to see how all the morally relevant features of the situation balance off against each other. Furthermore, it is sometimes claimed, a well developed moral sense is a more reliable guide to what is right than our feeble and fallible reasoning capacities.

Those who employ this method of showing that there is genuine moral perception, I aim to show in §2, commit a characteristic mistake: they fail to distinguish carefully between moral perception proper and what I will call morally relevant perception. Though certain perceptual capacities are no doubt relevant to good moral reasoning, they do not amount to a kind of distinctively moral

perception. Moreover, if there were proper moral perception, the capacity to perceive morally relevant properties would be much less important than it actually is.

The other argument is an argument by analogy. There are many complex non-moral properties that are thought to be perceptible. We can see, for instance, that our friend is angry, that it's time to walk the dog or that Harold made a joke. Why should we think that moral properties are any different?

A full assessment of such arguments is difficult, since it is difficult to draw a sharp distinction between those properties that we can perceive and those that we cannot. In §3, however, I want to suggest one way of drawing that distinction, and to raise a question for proponents of moral perception. If we could perceive the instantiation of moral properties, then we would expect that there would be something like an appearance of injustice, goodness, permissibility, etc. And we do often claim that some actions *appear* to have these moral properties. But we also use appearance language to describe phenomena that are not perceptual, as when we say that an argument appears to be valid or that a number appears to be prime. We might call such appearances *intellectual*. One way of distinguishing perceptual from intellectual appearances is to think about nature of illusions. Illusory appearances can be more or less *persistent*. Perceptual appearances tend to be highly persistent. An illusory perceptual appearance remains even when we know full well that we are experiencing an illusion: the stick still looks bent in the water even though you know that it isn't. Intellectual illusions tend to be less persistent. When you come to know that an argument contains an equivocation, it no longer *appears* to be valid. So if moral appearances are perceptual, we would expect them to exhibit some degree of persistence. The question for proponents of moral perception is: are moral appearances persistent when known to be illusory? If so, that would provide some evidence that such appearances are perceptual.

The final section combines the results of the previous two to produce an argument against the possibility of moral perception. When we keep in mind the difference between moral perception and morally relevant perception, we will find that moral appearances do not exhibit the kind of persistence we would expect if there were really moral perception. Any persistence they do have comes from the persistence of morally relevant appearances. In order to maintain that there is moral perception, the authors mentioned need to provide us with a better way of distinguishing perceptual from intellectual appearances, and to show that moral appearances fall on the perceptual side of this divide.

ROBERT TRIVERS

Self-Deception and Morality

Morality is favored by natural selection and so are displays of false morality. Our system of self-deception in turn is tuned to turn fake into real. Evidence and logic will be reviewed.

[The Colloquium Call for Papers and Presentations]



Moral Sense Colloquium III at St. Francis College, Brooklyn,
N.Y., 2 June 2017

This day-long conference is an opportunity to explore and exchange interdisciplinary ideas concerning the notion of *moral sense*. Keynote: Robert Trivers, Ph.D.

Our purpose in organizing this third Moral Sense Colloquium is multifaceted: to mark the 30th anniversary of the publication of Richard Alexander's *The Biology of Moral Systems*; to bring together a community of scholars and learners interested in topics

related to the moral sense; and to demonstrate how science and other disciplines can work together in a meaningful and productive way.

At the heart of the conference is the notion of moral sense, which has been variously defined by philosophers and scientists (from the seventeenth century, through Darwin, up to the present) as an approval faculty, or conscience, or sympathy, or compassion, or as an instinctual social emotion. While not equivalent, for convenience we will use the terms moral sense and morality interchangeably here.

However one addresses topics suggested below, we are nonetheless looking for papers that accommodate a true Darwinian reading of moral sense; that is, we are not looking for abstract, metaphysical explanations with no grounding in the sciences or social sciences. While philosophy is crucial to this conference, presenters should consider pairing philosophical ideas with parallel readings in the natural or social sciences. It goes without saying that if you are a scientist working in this field you might want to read moral philosophy; if you are a moral philosopher you'd want to read in the sciences and social sciences that cover this area.

Here are some questions that might stimulate ideas and approaches for the conference.

- Do we have an inherited (evolutionary, biologically adapted) moral sense?
- In what degree is our moral sense different from an animal's feelings?
- How are emotions related to morality?
- Is there a cognitive explanation for morality?
- How is consciousness involved in the moral senses?
- Are emotional moral sensations or cognitive moral sensations different from morality?
- In what way do disciplines outside of biology and philosophy (e.g., anthropology, psychology, sociology, economics) help explain the various loci of moral decision making?
- How do we reconcile humanist values with a mechanistic explanation of the brain?
- What do the arts have to do with any moral sense?
- What is the practical value of talking about moral sensations?
- Does cultural evolution play a role in moral sentiments?
- Are there gender or sex differences in terms of a moral sense?
- What happens to us – biologically – when confronted by a moral dilemma?
- What role does the brain play – in its various parts – in helping us make a moral decision?

- Can other disciplines, notably primatology or neuroscience, help us understand morality?
- How do individual differences – biologically and environmentally – account for moral decisions?

The colloquium will take place at St. Francis College, 180 Remsen Street, Brooklyn Heights, N.Y. This is a one-day conference (9am – 7pm) on 2 June 2017. The program won't be finalized until we evaluate abstracts, but we envision a number of panels (with papers/presentations of no more than 20 minutes each), a keynote speaker, as well as a plenary address. Presentations can come in the form of papers, posters, or power points. Let us know in advance how you intend on making a presentation. The registration fee of \$95 will include a program of abstracts, breakfast, lunch, and an opportunity to meet and mingle with colleagues.

The Colloquium is sponsored by The Office of the Provost, The English Department, and the Evolutionary Studies Collaborative – all at St. Francis College.

Abstracts (300 words) are invited for papers relating any aspect of the moral sense (as defined in a range of disciplines involved with biology, anthropology, philosophy, and consciousness studies) to any feature of the questions outlined above (or others by implication). Panels will be created and organized around incoming abstracts. Abstracts should be sent as Word attachments to Professor Gregory F. Tague, Ph.D. gtague@sfc.edu Deadline for submission is 15 February 2017, but early submissions are highly encouraged. You may also query Prof. Tague if you have any questions.

Conference Website: moralsense2017.org [Drawing credit, Wolfgang Köhler]

In Darwin's century, while Herbert Spencer and T.H. Huxley famously defended Darwin's ideas, they also confounded his notion of morality by pitting it against nature (i.e., the flawed ideas of social Darwinism). After Darwin, prominent biologists of the twentieth century have tackled the question of why cooperation extends beyond kin: R. Haldane (in 1932) uses the term *altruism*; in the 1960s W.D Hamilton addresses the evolution of social behavior, and George C. Williams writes of *social donors*; by 1971 R.L. Trivers pens his famous article on the evolution of reciprocal altruism. Since then there has been a steady flow of articles and books (popular and academic) on what it means to be moral (and from whence such behavior arose). In his 1990 book *Created from Animals*, philosopher James Rachels argues that the notion of dignity is a human creation devised only to elevate us above animals. Even more recently, we see the extended evolutionary synthesis that posits constructive development, niche construction, developmental plasticity, and reciprocal causation.

Philosophers (mostly British) of primarily the eighteenth century, in reaction to a number of complex events – religious, social, and scientific – of the seventeenth century, developed a notion of the moral sense. These philosophers, working in an increasingly secular age, argue very strongly that any human goodness was not bestowed from a divinity but was driven by innate human feelings of benevolence or sympathy. Some have written extensively about this very issue: from an evolutionary and biological perspective, we do in fact have a so-called moral sense. Taking the lead from the British Moralists, Darwin, in *The Descent of Man*, has a chapter on moral faculties and employs the term moral sense. There is a rich history of philosophy that focuses on morality and ethics; now, science is helping us understand much better those concerns and the connection of

ancestral human caring to morality. Some psychologists help us understand social-moral decision making in terms of our individual biological construction. Some neuroscientists and biologists have written on these controversial topics – i.e., the connection between the biology of the brain and moral decisions or moral behavior.

What is happening in other disciplines in terms of moral sense research and analysis? There is: evolutionary psychology; the biology of emotions; neuro-philosophy. In literary studies, some scholars have used science to focus on emotions and empathy; some have started a movement known as literary Darwinism. We are in a new age of discovery – not quite Carl Sagan’s *Cosmos*, but in mapping evolutionary adaptations like the moral senses of feeling and intelligence in *Homo sapiens*. What have we learned, what do we need to know, and where is this research and information likely to take us?

Publication of Conference Proceedings:

Revised conference papers will be considered for publication in the *ASEBL Journal*. Please visit the ASEBL site and strictly adhere to submission requirements outlined on the About page for details: www.asebl.blogspot.com. ASEBL is a peer-reviewed online journal, indexed in the EBSCO Host Humanities Source database and in the Modern Language Association’s International Bibliography. The journal is a member of the Council of Editors of Learned Journals. Deadline: 30 September 2017 for 2018 publication. Pending receipt of a good sample of papers there might be one or two issues.

Status of establishments might have changed – call in advance

PUBS

Cody's Ale House Grill – 154 Court Str. (b/w Pacific & Amity) 718-852-6115
O'Keefe's Bar & Grill – 62 Court Str. (b/w Joralemon & Livingston) 718-855-8751
Brooklyn Marriot Hotel Lounge and Bar – 333 Adams Street – 718-246-7000

RESTAURANTS

Armando's – 143 Montague Str. – 718-624-7167
Grand Canyon – 141 Montague Str. – 718-797-1402
Heights Café – 84 Montague (Hicks Str.) – 718-625-5555
Marco Polo Ristorante – 345 Court Street (Union Str.) – 718-852-5015
Queen Italian Restaurant – 84 Court Street (b/w Livingston & Schermerhorn) 718-596-5954
The Archives Restaurant – 333 Adams Street (Brooklyn Marriott Hotel) – 718-222-6543
Juniors Restaurant – 386 Flatbush Avenue – 718-852-5257
Peter Luger Steakhouse – 178 Broadway – 718-387-7400
River Café – 1 Water Street – 718-522-5200
Tripoli Restaurant – 156 Atlantic Avenue – 718-596-5800
Morton's The Steakhouse – 340 Jay Street – 718-596-2700
Jacques Torres Chocolate – 66 Water Street – 718-875-1269
Caffè Buon Gusto – 151 Montague Street – 718-624-3838
Bubby's Restaurant – 120 Hudson Street – 212-219-0666

PIZZERIAS

Monty Q's Brick Oven Pizza – 158 Montague Str. – 718-246-2000
My Little Pizzeria – 114 Court Str. – 718-643-6120
Grimaldi's Pizzeria – 19 Old Fulton Street – 718-596-6700
Savoia Pizzeria – 277 Smith Street – 718-797-2727

CAR SERVICES

Clinton Limo Service – 718-852-9000
Montague Car Service – 718-625-6666
Promenade Car & Limo Service – 718-858-6666

Here are some accommodation possibilities for conferees. This information also appears on the website www.moralsense2017.org We list the Brooklyn Marriott first since it is closest to the college (and a full-service hotel).

Prices as of 2015 and therefore subject to change – we cannot be responsible changes in price or broken links – please check on your own.

Brooklyn Marriott. Very close to the college – full service hotel. Approximately \$335US per night. From this hotel, easy train commutation into Manhattan.

<http://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/nycbk-new-york-marriott-at-the-brooklyn-bridge/>

Nu Hotel. In downtown Brooklyn, a bit farther away from the college than the Marriott. About \$235 a night.

<http://nuhotelbrooklyn.com/hotels-in-brooklyn-ny/>

3B Downtown B&B. Short walk (about four blocks) to the college. From approximately \$75 to \$195US.

<http://3bbrooklyn.com/>

Best Western Gregory Hotel, Bay Ridge. Subway ride (about 30 minutes) to the college.

Approximately \$195US a night. There are other local hotels (such as in Queens), but we mention this one since the neighborhood is nice and the subway ride short.

<http://bestwesternnewyork.com/hotels/best-western-gregory-hotel/>

Places to stay in Park Slope via Air B&B. Variable rates, some reasonable. One of the more desirable neighborhoods in Brooklyn. Depending on where you are in the Slope, could range from a very long walk to a cab ride (with some public transportation). Park Slope is an idyllic Brooklyn neighborhood complete with immaculately maintained brownstones and well-behaved children. The families and professionals that share Park Slope are savvy and eco-friendly big-city dwellers with a refined neighborly sensibility. Easily accessible and self-sufficient, Park Slope's main avenues are filled with boutiques, restaurants, and bars serving a crowd that expects nothing less than the crème de la crème.

<https://www.airbnb.com/locations/new-york/park-slope>

Places to stay in Cobble Hill (within walking distance to college) via Air B&B. Variable rates, some reasonable. A lovely neighborhood – wonderful just to walk around. Corner cafes, cinemas, fire escapes and stoops—such is the streetscape in Cobble Hill. Known for its mom-and-pop shops, Italian meat markets, and boutique shopping, Cobble Hill fits in with its Brooklyn neighbors along Smith Street, Carroll Gardens and Boerum Hill. A little bit trendy and a little bit hip, this neighborhood preserves an approachable atmosphere in a picturesque NYC setting.

<https://www.airbnb.com/s/New-York?neighborhoods%5B%5D=Cobble+Hill>

Places to stay in Carroll Gardens via Air B&B (next neighborhood over from Cobble Hill)

and so a little farther from the college – either a robust walk or a bus ride. Variable rates, some reasonable. Carroll Gardens has established itself as a Brooklyn favorite. Although flush with hip

bars, boutiques, and restaurants, this neighborhood has never lost its old-NYC mystique. Quintessential brownstones line tree-trimmed sidewalks and local retailers and Italian eateries populate its cheerful main street. For a stroll or a stay, Carroll Gardens promises a healthy dose of Brooklyn's cool candor.

<https://www.airbnb.com/locations/new-york/carroll-gardens>

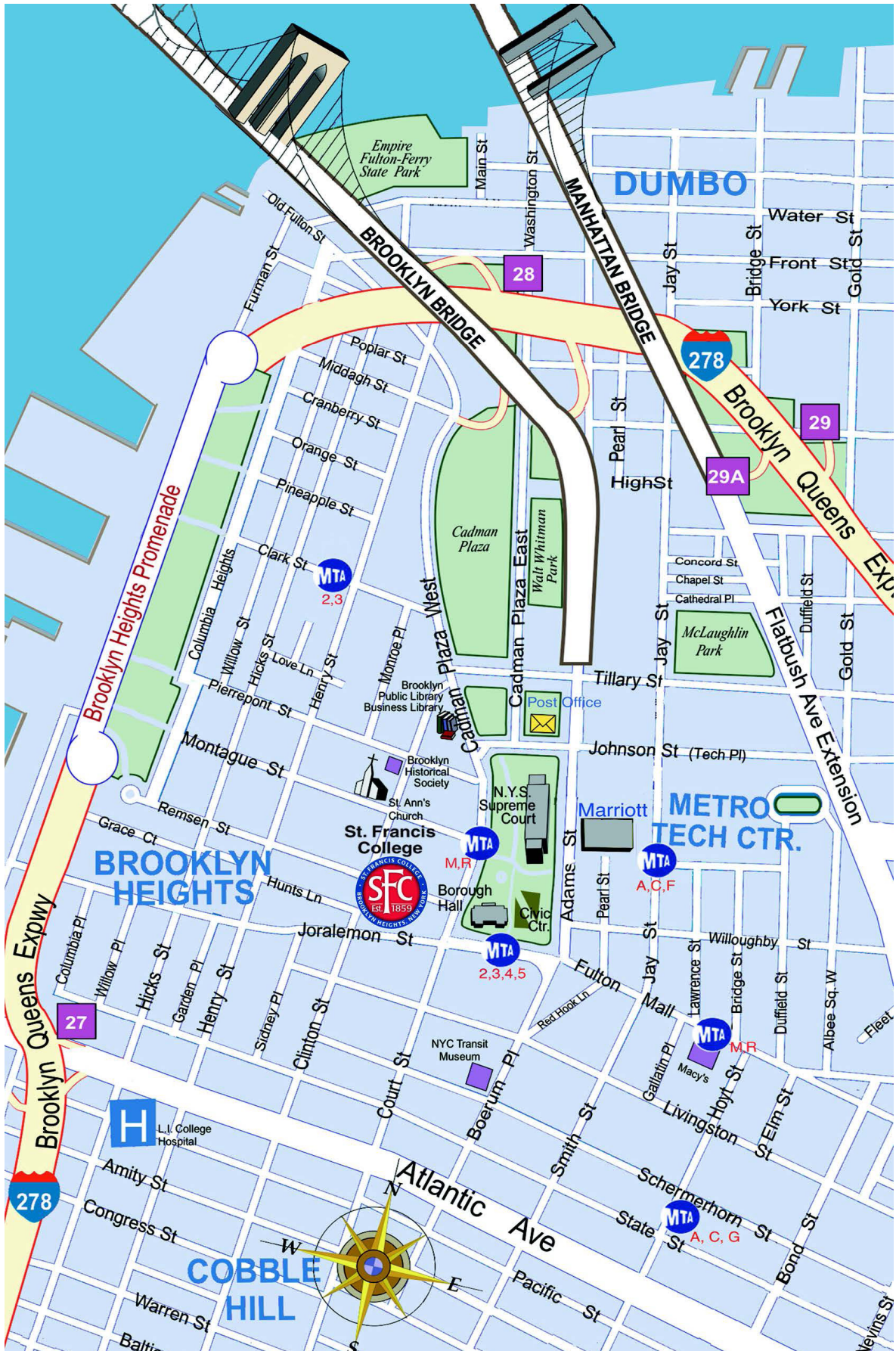
Hostels. From approximately \$50 to 75US per night. You might be best looking for a hostel in either lower or mid-Manhattan, a subway ride from Manhattan into Brooklyn Heights. If you stay at a hostel in Brooklyn, there is not telling which neighborhood you will be in (in terms of safety and transportation).

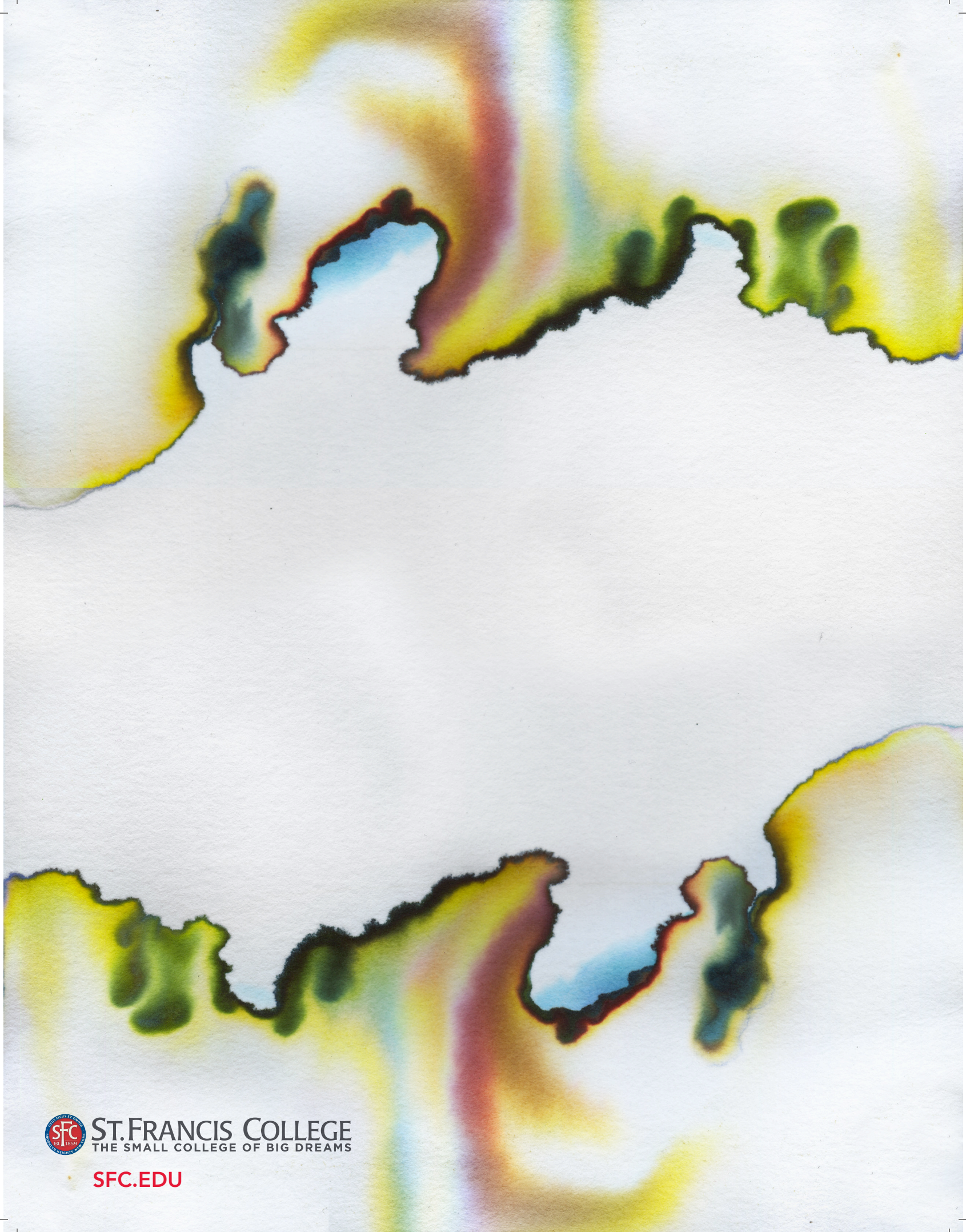
<http://www.hostelworld.com/hostels/New-York>

Trivago - the world's largest hotel search. Allows users to compare hotel prices with just a few clicks from over 200 booking sites for more than 700,000 hotels worldwide. More than 75 million travelers use the hotel comparison monthly and save an average of 35 percent for the same hotel room, in the same city. Our conference is in Brooklyn Heights, NYC.

<http://www.trivago.com/>

YOUR NOTES





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