

Academia Letters

Your submission has been rejected

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THE THREE REJECTED LETTERS CAN BE LOCATED IN AESTHETHICS IN THE ESSAYS

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Rejected Submissions

These submissions have been rejected for the stated reason

An Ontological Circumambulation of Walden Pond

Academia Letters

Status:Rejected on 06/07/22

[View Submission](#)

AN ONTOLOGICAL CIRCUMAMBULATION OF WALDEN POND by Richard Denner

Henry David Thoreau may have been looking for a middle way between being a hermit living in the woods and, at the same time, being someone who appreciated the arts and sciences and found them useful. As he donned an ascetic's mantle and moved to Walden Pond, he was looking for solitude and the freedom to think his thoughts without the cacophonous energy of the industrial landscape that he found himself immersed in. Throughout his book, *Walden; or Life in the Woods*, first published in 1854, Thoreau admonishes his countrymen to realize how disconnected we are from Nature and how technology has added to our numbness and distress.

Thoreau deliberately chooses the woods as a place to deliberate on the meaning of life, a place where he can, as he puts it, *live deliberately*,—and I began to wonder about concepts like accident, adventitiousness, freedom, determinism, indeterminism, all the ways he “deliberately” went to the woods, when I flashed on his mention of *Atropos* at the beginning of his eulogy about the railroad in the chapter entitled “Sounds”:

We have constructed a fate, an *Atropos*, that never turns aside. (Let that be the name of your engine.) Men are advertised that at a certain hour and minute these bolts will be shot toward particular points of the compass; yet it interferes with no man's business and the children go to school on the other track. We live the steadier for it. We are all educated thus to be sons of Tell. The air is full of invisible bolts. Every path but your own is the path of fate. Keep on your own track, then (PT 294).

A long quotation, I know, but there are pithy themes, herein. Let me weed a couple of them out.

Atropos was the elder of The Three Fates of classical Greek mythology. *Atropos* cuts the thread of life spun by *Clotho*, the same thread that her sister, *Lachesis* had measured (Wiki). Thoreau plays with the word, “bolt.” A woven length of cloth is a bolt, as well as the shuttle that shoots a weft of thread. An arrow (especially from a crossbow) is a bolt,—and the engine of a train (that “shuttles” the children to school) “bolts” down the track in a straight direction. Thoreau links the fabric of life as fated, an education that keeps us on track, to a general description of all of us as sons of Tell, the legendary Swiss patriot who saved his son from the threat of death by shooting an apple off his head. Amid this wild mix of metaphors, the William Tell bit is a doozy. Why are we sons of Tell?—and sons who, like Tell's son, remain steadfast? Tell's act was deliberate, his aim was straight,—as was Thoreau's, when he wrote:—

I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived (PT 271).

The sage in Thoreau is saying that we can be free of a fated life, a life imprisoned by necessity, the clock-like Newtonian universe, if only we get in touch with our original selves. In the railroad eulogy, it might seem that his praise of all the new technology is off track, but the poet in Thoreau sees glory in all things. However, contrary to his own inclinations, he's fascinated; he has a World View for an instant, followed by ambivalence. He has looked the creator god, Brahma of the Hindus, in the face, but he knows his own path leads another way,—across the

ACCEPTANCES



David J. Nemeth The University of Toledo

Review

"Everyone should read, think, write about, and learn from, Thoreau these days – before it is too late. This essay on Thoreau by Richard Denner is a timely, urgent, wake-up call for university students standing at the edge of the Abyss searching for Truth. Who can you Trust these days. As Denner reminds us, we can trust Thoreau! "

Private Feedback

"Well done! Congratulations! "



Ashwini Kumar Aggarwal

Review

"Yes definitely.

Richard has made the soul of Thoreau alive in the harsh artificial distant unconnected landscape of today.

By his practical experience amidst pristine nature in Alaska and the Colorado Rockies, in silence and stillness, Richard has culled the essential Thoreau and made the essence simplified for the layman.

An inspirational paper that will be much appreciated by the peers and well digested by the readers, and evoke fresh longing for solitude and the purity in creation.

The ancient Yogic techniques of "Pranayama", and the word of much intrigue "Karma", both can be reflected upon and sought to be demystified by "Meditation", this is the crux of the paper. It may very well prove to be the guiding light, or a starting point, on a journey of self-discovery, which is what keeps the fabric of humanity intact, and our planet human, available, and beautiful.

Jai Gurudev

"



Kathryn LaFevers Evans, Three Eagles Pacifica Graduate Institute

Review

"Denner's commentary of seemingly unrelated snippets is indeed a pearl of transcendent perfection. Placing not only himself in the center of this circular pond, Denner draws the reader also into Thoreau's inner purpose. The piece embodies his practice."



Juampi Duboué Iuvaro Universidad Nacional de Cuyo

Review

"I particularly enjoyed the attempt at a yogic analysis of Walden as well as the sometimes conversational style of the paper. "



Sugato Dutt University of Hawaii at Manoa

Review

"Dr. Richard Denner joins a growing group of scholars who have reviewed the influence of eastern scriptures on the works of Henry David Thoreau. In his perceptive "circumambulation" he uniquely combines these insights with the determinism of Swiss folk hero William Tell and the Moiraic trio from Greek mythology to demonstrate how fatalism can be conquered. The author present a cogent analysis of Thoreau's thesis and its relation to Hindu theology. "



Dr. Melissa L . StrawserCapella University

Review

"Yes. It is worth reading by my peers. I believe that this paper spans numerous areas of study from education, literature, religious studies, wellness, and more. The connections between the studies is clear."

Private Feedback

"Thank you for the opportunity to preview your work! I loved the span of many areas of studies and the visibility into the world of Thoreau from a mystical/religious studies standpoint. As a Yogini, I appreciated the connections to the practice. "

REJECTIONS



Anonymous reviewer

Review

"This essay is a worthy and thoughtful evocation of Thoreau's thinking, but ends too abruptly after taking a sharp left turn at "having spent two winters" (perhaps the subject of another separate essay). The author should develop his original theme further (after surveying modern critical commentaries by others) and resubmit."

Private Feedback

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Anonymous reviewer

Review

"I appreciate the use of environmental autobiographies. Ground truthing Thoreau is similarly reasonable. A two page meditation on self with one source when a multitude of sources exists is unacceptable as an academic standard."

Nietzsche in a Nutshell

Academia Letters

Status:Rejected on 04/07/22

Rejected by reviewers

[View Submission](#)

NIETZSCHE IN A NUTSHELL by Richard Denner richardleedenner@gmail.com

Writing aphorisms is one thing; having something to say is another. As poet Robert Creeley exhorts: "If you have a song, sing it; if you have a bell, ring it." Nietzsche had a plan, much like Socrates, to deconstruct ideas and show what a rhetorical sham the conventional system of thinking is, and to refocus on morality, because whatever we are doing as a civilization is not working. He had a bell, and he rang the hell out of that bell.

The writing is not only aphoristic. Nietzsche jams on a lot of levels. In respect to his intelligibility, he writes, "One does not want only to be understood when one writes but just as surely not to be understood" (*Reader*, p. 18). Nietzsche wants to be read, but he does not want to be read as a curiosity by the philosophers or to be the chitchat of the literati. He wants someone who "reads" him, in the sense of taking on the vector of his ontological condition, his View.

The writing is dense. Poetry proceeds by hyperbole. Nietzsche mixes in maxims with his aphorisms and, when the need arises, adds an allegory or fable (e.g. *spirit-camel-lion-child* metamorphosis, *Ibid.*, p. 37). A terse flow of narrative, reaching for fundamental principles, interspersed with concise statements that cut to the heart of the matter. So, with Nietzsche, you get wisdom transmissions coming and going. It is not always easy to tell where the aphorisms leave off and the maxims begin.

Nietzsche As a Tonic for Our Times

If his medicine is to work on you, take him neat, no mixer, no ice, no chaser. This madman laughs cosmic laughter. Here is a quote from a 14th c. Dzogchen sage, Longchenpa: "Since everything is but an apparition, having nothing to do with good or bad, acceptance or rejection, one may well burst out in laughter" (*Treasury of Natural Perfection*). This kind of laughter can occur when you find something you lost, like your cell phone in your pocket or your glasses on top of your head, in the most obvious place; or it can be big stuff, like the "Rwandan genocide" or "environmental degradation" or "prevalence of disease." These are terms with strong rhetorical content to laugh at, when the pandemic numbers in the headlines are suffering human beings,—but riding on the tail of the Comet Neowise, looking at Earth in the distance—the tragedy fades, and the divine comedy comes into focus. Between tragedy and comedy, I feel comedy is the most tragic, while being comic, in the sense that no one is let off the hook. Easy to blame the Hutus. Easy to blame Trump. Keeps us from taking responsibility. Like Socrates, look at the terms. Like Nietzsche, cut through the rhetoric you tell yourself. Best to make it a clean cut.

Nietzsche knew his news would remain new, but what of the philosopher of the future? With a sense of qualified optimism, he sees us as wanting to remain an aporia: "As I divine them, as they let themselves to be divined—for it pertains to their nature to remain a riddle in some respects...,"—he went on to label us "attempters" in the hopes that we will not get hung up in our self-importance and our susceptibility to dogmatic utterances (*Ibid.*, p. 39). He would have us have a new spirit of exploration, a spirit that would require some rigorous purifications to take

An Ontological Circumambulation of Walden Pond

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ACCEPTANCES



Henry Vyner Tribhuvan University

Review

"Much of this essay is fun. Although it is really a poem, and an aspiration for compassion. And you have to sort of wade your way through the first page.

I think Richard is brave and on the verge of realizing:

1. That all truth is a paradox. It is both absolute and relative.
2. That bodhicitta can't be raised. It raises itself.
3. Doing nothing and allowing your mind to remain in its natural state is the crux of self-realization.

I enjoyed Andreas-Salomé's journal entries and the story of Nietzsche and the horse. Thank you.

"



Michael YorkCherry Hill Seminary

Review

"Most refreshing. Nietzsche is sadly misunderstood, and hopefully the insights Richard Denner provides, along with various citations (my favourites: "a cow without teeth" & "The Übermensch ... will likely be a black woman") might be able to rectify this philosopher and poet. The only (slight) difficulty was distinguishing between Andreas-Salomé's notebooks and Denner's concluding statements. But otherwise, my gratitude for this enjoyable paper."

REJECTIONS



Anonymous reviewer

Review

"I am unable to suggest this paper. The paper failed to understand Nietzsche comprehensively. Nietzsche's original works are not referred to in the piece of writeup."



Anonymous reviewer

Review

"The writer of this haphazard farrago seems to have discovered Nietzsche one day ago. Apparently, he has riffled through an anthology of Nietzsche's writing in bad English translation. He appears to have spent no more than fifteen minutes reading a few Anglicized words of Nietzsche in the form of a philosophy-for-morons anthology – though "reading" should be shielded in quotation marks. He never gives us the context in which these quotations appear and cites Lou Andreas-Salome at length, randomly, outlandishly, without any perceptible reason. Only someone who has mastered the German language and has assiduously studied the whole of Nietzsche (both the published and unpublished writings) in the original at least twice is qualified to comment on the oeuvre of Nietzsche – on the proviso that the commentator demonstrates a certain degree of intellectual rigor. There is no intellectual rigor here; nor is there even the most rudimentary familiarity with Nietzsche and his work.

My advice to the writer is to leave the work of Nietzsche alone, since it is above him."

Private Feedback

"The writer of this haphazard farrago seems to have discovered Nietzsche one day ago. Apparently, he has riffled through an anthology of Nietzsche's writing in bad English translation. He appears to have spent no more than fifteen minutes reading a few Anglicized words of Nietzsche in the form of a philosophy-for-morons anthology – though "reading" should be shielded in quotation marks. He never gives us the context in which these quotations appear and cites Lou Andreas-Salome at length, randomly, outlandishly, without any perceptible reason. Only someone who has mastered the German language and has assiduously studied the whole of Nietzsche (both the published and unpublished writings) in the original at least twice is qualified to comment on the oeuvre of Nietzsche – on the proviso that the commentator demonstrates a certain degree of intellectual rigor. There is no intellectual rigor here; nor is there even the most rudimentary familiarity with Nietzsche and his work.

My advice to the writer is to leave the work of Nietzsche alone, since it is above him."



Anonymous reviewer

Review

"This is by far the worst paper I have ever read from anyone. It's so bad that it's not even worthy of criticism. The author rambles on with no structure nor knowledge of his subject. The cited passages has no relevance to anything. Even the time of Nietzsche's encounter with Salomé is off by a decade. This must be a joke, surely. Calling it a bad paper would be praising it too highly. Sorry to be so frank and rude here, but this is trash that needs to go straight into the bin."

An Orphic Response to the Gamer's Dilemma

Academia Letters

Status:Rejected on 04/01/22

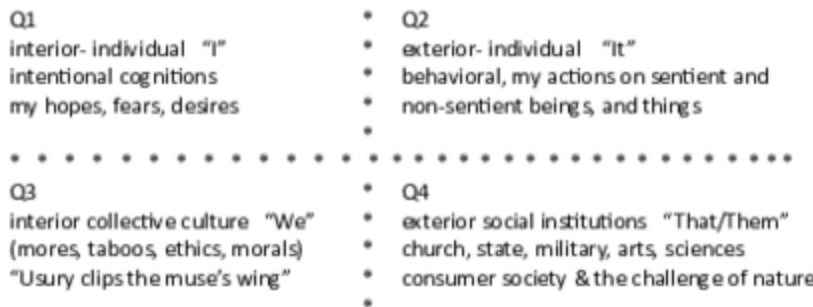
Rejected by reviewers

[View Submission](#)

Richard Denner
richardleedenner@gmail.com

AN ORPHIC RESPONSE TO THE GAMER'S DILEMMA

As a poet, who has wandered into the philosopher's domain, I propose an Orphic interpretation of the Gamer's Dilemma. An evaluation of the activities of the virtual mode are being conflated with the activities of the reality mode with a false analogy. With reference to the diagram below (extrapolated from Ken Wilber's *The Marriage of Sense and Soul*) of interior and exterior configurations of the human condition, I will analyze the aporia of the Gamer's Dilemma.



Following in the footsteps of Ali and Luck, I will analyze the dilemma and then dispel it by separating the dilemma into two value systems, (a) esthetics and (b) ethics. I will separate them a second time into the categories of (a) virtual reality and (b) reality outside of the game. As Orpheus aboard the Argos, I will sing a stronger song than the sirens. With the fury of a maenad, I will rip this dilemma limb from limb.

If virtual murder is permissible, because no one is harmed, the same justification applies to virtual pedophilia. Directing your attention to the upper-left quadrant (Q1): the gamer has hopes and fears, unresolved questions, future projections, as well as moments of self-reflection, asleep and dreaming, awake and taking care of business, and contemplative reveries, when the mood is right. This is our gamer. If the gamer has psychological problems, I will note this characteristic, when relevant; otherwise, the gamer is a philosophically neutered person, gendered hir.

Two sets of quadrants, one ethical, one esthetic

A. In a reality outside the game, murder and pedophilia are both considered wrong by church and state, but they occur in the world and are evaluated, in our society, in the context of laws



Anonymous reviewer

Review

"No. The manuscript makes sweeping claims (such as no infrastructure exists to feed the world on a vegan diet) without any evidence or reference. It is a grandiose manifesto, not an academic paper."



Anonymous reviewer

Review

"The paper poses some interesting perspectives. However, it is written too poetically with several ideas raised and not followed through. In its current form, the letter would perhaps serve better as a blog or Medium post. From an academic publication, I would expect a bit clearer wording, structure, better follow-through with the ideas, and more explicit conclusions. But could be that I'm just not the right target for such a letter."

Private Feedback

"Interesting article. In its current form and structure, I recommend you publish it as a blog or Medium post.

Perhaps even then try to be more explicit in your conclusions, less prosaic, and go more in-depth with the topic."



Anonymous reviewer

Review

"Syntactical, linguistic, and stylistic issues aside, the piece claims to have a grandiose Orphic solution to the "Gamer's Dilema" and doesn't even attempt to propose one. The author says that at the core of the dilemma is the imposition of real world ethics to virtual worlds and doesn't follow up. Conclusions presented are "we can analyze the problem" and "people should also do other things besides play video games." Interestingly, the piece also seems to ignore that the original Gamers Dilema article by Morgan Luck proposed several solutions."



Anonymous reviewer

Review

"The article is essentially an attempt at justifying pedophilia in virtual environment with calls to do so "Lay the blame for the gamer's dilemma at the feet of the poets and play on". While things people do in virtual reality in private do not cause harm to other individuals, and do not necessarily translate into actions outside virtual reality, they do affect the "gamer" leading him or her towards accepting on some (as the author suggests aesthetic) level certain actions (the author thus defends virtual pedophilia). False analogies and equivalences towards virtual violence are then brought up to reinforce the point of acceptance of virtual pedophilia. While a trendy strife in some academic (and not) circles, to justify pedophilia on aesthetic grounds, it does not merit publication as it is both approving and covertly calling for such actions taking it outside the supposed level of abstract academic discussion."



Anonymous reviewer

Review

“The author discusses the gamer's dilemma from a mix perspective that allows some poetic and philosophical components. This in turn allows the author to use a very personal tone in his short essay. The discussion to divide the dilemma between aesthetics and ethics, while relevant, lacks in terms of demonstration. The analysis of "game" is limited (there's much more than three kinds of games), but the argument can be heard nonetheless. The author sometimes use general, personal statement, that are not necessarily true nor backed by resources. Plenty of research has been done on the impact of (video)games on players, yet none is mentioned. They could give insight on how to address the gamer's dilemma and help the author to develop is ideas. While the author offers an interesting take on the topic, it could benefit from a stronger argument. As it is, the paper falls short on the review criteria.”

<https://www.academia.edu/journals/submissions>



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Richard

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Guidelines for Authors and Reviewers

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Academia Letters is no longer publishing articles and has stopped accepting submissions.

What happens to already-published articles?

All published articles will remain on the site.

What if my submission hasn't been published yet?

Unfortunately, we won't be publishing any more articles, even those already submitted.

Can I still visit my Author Portal?

If you've already submitted, you can still visit your Author Portal until July 15, 2022.

Why is *Academia Letters* stopping publication?

Academia Letters was an experiment in rapid, short-form publishing. We've decided to take what we learned and redirect our focus to journals that rapidly publish full-length articles.

Will *Academia Letters* resume publication in the future?

We may resume publication in the future. If so, we'll reach out to everyone who expressed interest in publishing with us.

[Author Guidelines](#)

Accepted article types

We accept submissions from multiple points in the research lifecycle:

- Thought-provoking hypotheses that don't yet have the data to confirm or refute them
- Commentary on the field as a whole
- Traditional short reports

We do not accept fiction or op-eds.

Submissions must not already have been published in any peer-reviewed publication.

Topics

Submissions can be on any topic of academic study.

Article length

Submissions must be between 800 and 1,600 words, excluding references.

Language

Submissions must be written in English.

Layout

The text should be single-column.

Reference style

References are mandatory and can follow any major style — APA, MLA, etc.

Deadline

We accept and publish submissions continuously — there is no deadline to submit.

[Review Process](#)

Because *Academia Letters* is an experiment in rapid publishing, some aspects of our review process are non-traditional. Our process is two steps:

1. Two academics in the field must recommend a submission for publication for it to be accepted.

2. Our editor will make the final decision about whether to publish an article. The key review criterion is: "Is this article worth reading by others interested in this topic?"

Other notes

We do not have a revise-and-resubmit process. Articles are accepted or rejected in their first round, with only minor revisions requested.

The review process is mostly transparent:

- The author's name will be shared with reviewers.
- Positive reviews and the reviewer's name will be published alongside the article.
- To ensure honest critical feedback, critical reviews will not be published. They will be shared anonymously with the author.

Publication Fees

What's the fee?

Academia charges an APC (Article Processing Charge) of \$500.00 which is due when your article is accepted for publication.

Why are we charging it?

Academia Letters are Open Access. Any article published by Academia Letters is immediately available online to read and distribute free of charge. To help mitigate the costs associated with article hosting, high-quality typesetting, and a streamlined publishing and peer review process Academia.edu charges our authors an APC upon submission acceptance.

Waiver program

We aim to publish research worth reading, regardless of the financial circumstances of the author. We offer a waiver program to authors who are unable to pay their APC because of financial hardship. You can apply for the waiver once your submission has been accepted.