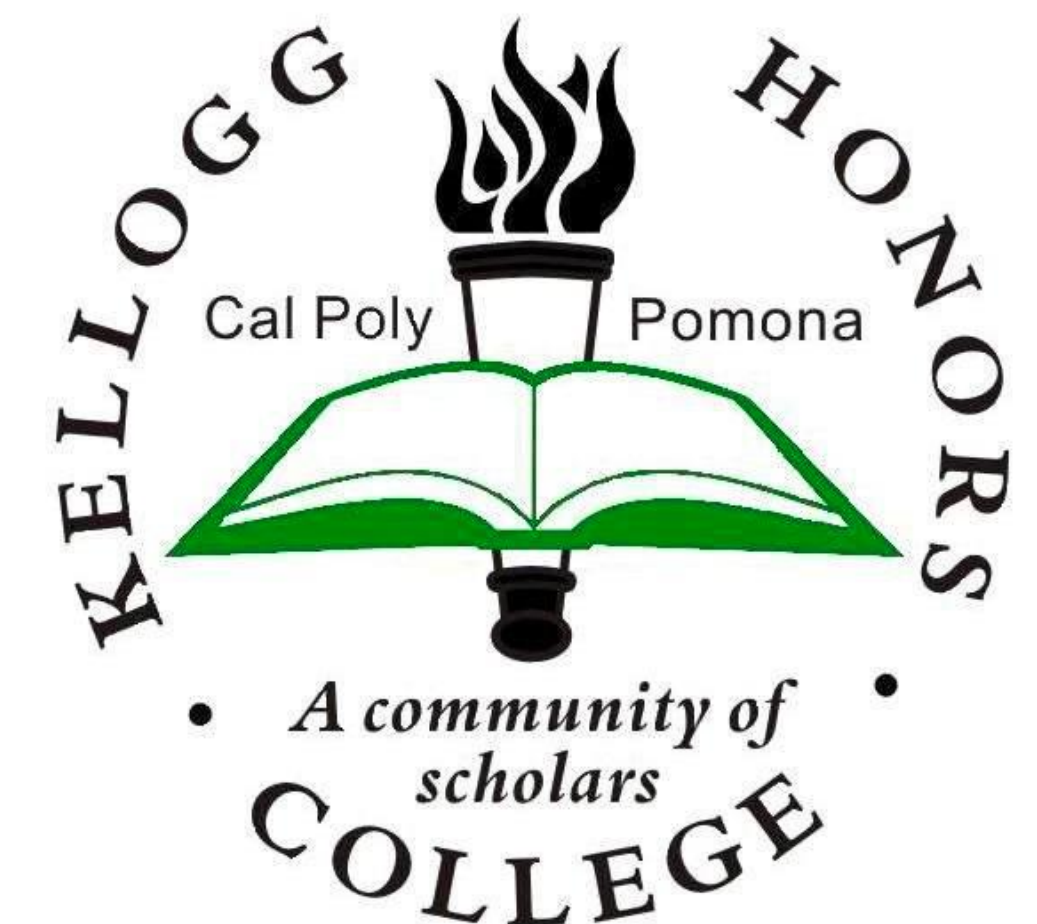


Quasi-Realism Is a Strange Loop

Why the Problem of the Schizoid Attitude Might Not Be Such a Big Problem



Mathew McGuthry, Philosophy
Mentors: Dr. Gendreau & Dr. Ding
Kellogg Honors College Capstone Project



My Project

This project proposes a novel solution to the problem of the schizoid attitude: that Simon Blackburn's expressivist plus quasi-realist package (EQP) does not face this problem because the EQP is a strange loop—a system that initially makes us think that it is a clean hierarchy, but surprises us when we realize that this belief is incorrect.

The EQP

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Expressivism: the view that all of the moral statements that we make (statements like, "Stealing is wrong" or "You have the obligation to always tell the truth") are merely expressions of our emotional attitudes, not facts about the world around us.

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Quasi-Realism: an attempt to use expressivism to give us a justification for speaking, feeling, and acting as though our moral statements really did express facts about the world.

The Problem of the Schizoid Attitude

A rather cutting criticism which has been raised against the EQP by Sharon Street. In the problem Street proposes, she argues that Blackburn's theory seems to put its proponents in the intolerable position of having to conclude that moral truths exist...but no one can know anything about those truths!

~~The EQP~~

Strange Loop: Gödel & Escher & Bach, Oh My!

A system that 1) initially prompts us to assume that it is a clean hierarchy—a system with a clear highest and lowest level—but 2) surprises us when we realize that this initial assumption of ours is incorrect. (Note: strange loops are also known as "tangled hierarchies".) Douglas Hofstadter coined the terms, "strange loop" and "tangled hierarchy" in his book, *Gödel, Escher, Bach*, and they apply to a wide variety of structures. Examples of strange loops include the self-referential sentence from Gödel's incompleteness theorem, many of Escher's paradoxical prints, and Bach's endlessly rising "Canon per Tonos."



"Ascending and Descending,"
Escher's strange loop of a staircase
that ends right where it starts.

**This sentence
is a lie.**

**The liar sentence. A sentence
that denies itself, making it
an example of a strange loop.**

Ask for more
information...

Main Argument

P1 (premise 1): The EQP causes us to strongly assume it is a clean hierarchy, but it actually folds back on itself in a way that keeps it from being one. (It denies itself, like the liar sentence.)

P2: If P1 is true, then the EQP is a strange loop.

P3: If the EQP is a strange loop, then a proponent of the EQP would not be able to occupy both of its levels, expressivism and quasi-realism, at the same time.

P4: If a proponent of the EQP would not be able to occupy both of its levels at the same time, then the problem of the schizoid attitude does not apply to the EQP.

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