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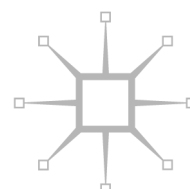
We ask for sole consideration of the project whilst it is under review.

## THE PROJECT

### 1. **Proposed title and subtitle**

Pynchon and Philosophy: Wittgenstein, Foucault and Adorno

2. **Brief description of project's scope and content**  
**Include here a description of what makes your project distinctive. What are the particular benefits offered by its content, scope, organisation and/or educational features? What needs does it aim to satisfy?**



This book presents thorough, comprehensive and previously unaddressed philosophical and ethical readings of Thomas Pynchon's fiction through Ludwig Wittgenstein, Michel Foucault and Theodor W. Adorno.

Thomas Pynchon, the most important living American author, is famed for his lengthy, complex and erudite fictions. Given these characteristics, an examination of the philosophical dimensions of Pynchon's works is long overdue. In this book I comprehensively and clearly redresses this balance, mapping Pynchon's interactions with the philosophy, ethics and politics of Ludwig Wittgenstein, Michel Foucault and Theodor W. Adorno, resulting in a fresh approach to these seminal novels.

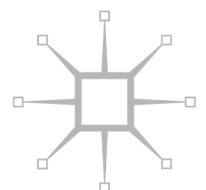
*Pynchon and Philosophy* is based on the notion that Pynchon's brand of postmodern literature mocks theoretical frameworks. On these grounds, Pynchon has been accused of being an anti-rationalist, a postmodern nihilist figure who revels in the collapse of logic. In this book I show that a fruitful showdown between these philosophical figures and Pynchon is now urgently needed to unearth the latent ethics within Pynchon's novels and to counter these wild claims. In this work I cover all of Pynchon's novels to date and read the corresponding philosophy in detail through a variety of methodologies, while finally demonstrating that Pynchon's work cannot be considered without evaluating his ethics; an ethics that I show requires philosophy.

### 3. Proposed Content

**Please attach a chapter by chapter synopsis of the project's planned content and main argument(s). We appreciate that this is bound to be provisional in some respects but in order to make a fair assessment of the project's potential, your initial presentation needs to be as detailed as possible (we would therefore suggest at least half a page per chapter). If you have sample material available, please submit that also.**

#### *Table of Contents*

1. Introduction
2. Logical Ethics
  - Wittgenstein and Pynchon (Historical Context)
  - The *Tractatus* and *V*.
3. Therapeutics
  - The New Wittgenstein, *The Crying of Lot 49* and *Inherent Vice*
  - Naming and Private Language in *Gravity's Rainbow*
4. Enlightenments
  - Foucault's Enlightenment (Historical Context)
  - Modernity and Globalisation in Foucault and Pynchon
5. Whose Line is it Anyway?
  - Judging Rationality and the Enlightenment in Pynchon
  - Was ist Aufklärung? [What is Enlightenment?]
6. Mass Deception
  - Locating Adorno (Historical Context)



*Gravity's Rainbow* and *Negative Dialectics*

7. Art, Society and Ethics

Pynchon and the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*

Pynchon and *Aesthetic Theory*

8. Conclusion

### Overview of Structure

This book systematically examines the interactions between Pynchon's novels and the philosophy of Wittgenstein, Foucault and Adorno. Beyond the book's introduction and conclusion, the main content is structured into two chapters on each theorist, with a framing introduction to the philosophical ideas under discussion at the start of every other chapter. The book begins with Wittgenstein, signposting throughout the ways in which Pynchon's hostility to Wittgenstein mirrors critiques by Adorno. In the second segment, on Foucault and Pynchon, I show that the shared querying of "enlightenment" undertaken by these writers leads, also, to an affinity with Adorno. The culminating sections, on Adorno, are, therefore, the logical outcome of the triangulation process that builds throughout the book.

### Chapter 1: Introduction

Keywords: *Introduction, ethics, theory, methodology*

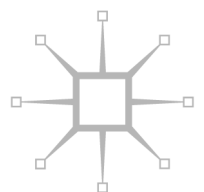
In this introductory chapter I give the rationale for, background to and methodology deployed in an ethical reading of Pynchon and philosophy. It traces, clearly, the reasons why this project has not been undertaken before (outlining Pynchon's perceived hostility towards philosophical readings) and the necessity for it now. As well as giving a general, critical background to Pynchon's writing, it details the parameters of engagement (including issues of translation) and selection of theorists, with appropriate biographical introductions.

### Chapter 2: Logical Ethics

Keywords: *Ludwig Wittgenstein, ethics, the Holocaust, narratology, V.*

In the second chapter, I begin with an explication of Wittgenstein's early philosophy and the ethical stances that can be deduced from this work. I then swiftly move towards the concrete textual engagement in *V.* that Pynchon stages with Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* and demonstrate that Pynchon's stance towards early Wittgenstein is definitively hostile, viewing the logical positivism therein as a reifying force that strips human beings of their individuation. This chapter is important for its introduction of my domain model of character in Pynchon's novels. Rather than critiquing Pynchon's characterization as "two-dimensional," as many have done, I instead note, following a different route, that Pynchon's model works more on cross-cutting resonances and juxtaposition. From this, I structurally situate the placement of Pynchon's direct citation of Wittgenstein within the domain of the Holocaust and Nazism. This then establishes, within my work, the first point of convergence with Adorno's critique of logical positivism, which Pynchon shares and to which the later parts of the book return.

### Chapter 3: Therapeutics



Keywords: *Ludwig Wittgenstein, New Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations, Romanticism*

The third chapter continues to examine Pynchon's ethics through Wittgenstein, but moves to appraise critical takes on this philosopher's late stages including the New Wittgensteinians and the orthodox *Philosophical Investigations* as read by Gordon Baker and P.M.S. Hacker. The conclusion from this is that late Wittgenstein's remarks on naming, private language and Platonism, in contrast to the views posited by his earlier writings, embrace and extend the readings of Pynchon's work as a rejection of a nationalism born of Romanticism, while simultaneously acknowledging that even counter-nationalistic stances are constructed from conflicting histories. The New Wittgenstein approach proves to be the most important in this chapter as this not only provides a way of reading Pynchon's linguistic micro-formations in conjunction with broader thematic concerns, but also presents an interesting take on Pynchon's apparent affinity with a demolition of the causal nexus. I end with considerations of the politics of Wittgenstein's philosophy and open some questions on relativism.

#### **Chapter 4: Enlightenment**

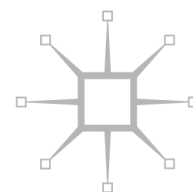
Keywords: *Michel Foucault, Enlightenment, Nationalism, Max Weber*

In this fourth chapter, I build upon the previous remarks on relativism to move into an analysis of Michel Foucault. As Foucault is a philosopher of stunning breadth, the primary point of interaction with Pynchon that I trace here is tactically limited to the theme of enlightenment as a process, and the Enlightenment as epistemological event, subdermally following this engagement through Foucault's paratextual articles, including those unavailable in English, from 1957 until his death. This chapter gives an introduction to Foucault's thought, his absence in Pynchon scholarship and examines the earlier phase of this genealogy to show that future work on "the Enlightenment" in Pynchon should be more careful in its terminology and decide *which* Enlightenment is under consideration. From this, I then unearth early instances of geographical specificity in *Mason & Dixon* in order to form the backdrop to Pynchon's questioning of the Enlightenment and to ask whether, via a destabilisation of Weber as the sole authority in readings of Pynchon's Enlightenment writing, there are sides to the Enlightenment beyond instrumental reason in Pynchon's works.

#### **Chapter 5: Whose Line is it Anyway?**

Keywords: *Michel Foucault, Enlightenment, Revolution, Sloth, Ethics*

The fifth chapter continues working on Foucault, but moves to examine resistance, revolution and the critical attitude alongside a focus on the Foucauldian sphere of ethics. This chapter posits Pynchon's negative and positive utopianism as a regulative idea in the Kantian tradition. Reading both Pynchon's fiction and his essays, particularly "Nearer My Couch to Thee," alongside Foucault's two pieces on Kant's "Was ist Aufklärung?," I conclude that the divide between Pynchon and Foucault hinges on ipseic constructions (those pertaining to the self) and the boundaries of knowledge and not necessarily, as has always been supposed, on who, or how, we can dominate. This conclusion is deduced from a detailed consideration of statehood in Pynchon that analyses his varying



depictions of nation states, most notably in *Against the Day*, before moving to a political consideration of *Vineland* and the ways in which Pynchon's views on incremental revolution tally with those of the late Foucault. This chapter is a crucial hinge point in the book as it moves the abstract critique of Enlightenment towards Pynchon's points of determinate politicised engagement with the 1960s.

## Chapter 6: Mass Deception

Keywords: *Theodor W. Adorno, Negative Dialectics, Idealism, Kant, Hegel*

The sixth chapter begins forming the central point for all this work, be that in a hostility to Wittgenstein's logical positivism, or an affinity with late Foucault's views on revolution, by introducing the work of Theodor W. Adorno and conducting an initial appraisal of Pynchon's work alongside *Negative Dialectics*. This co-reading begins by clearly explaining Adorno's terminology and outlining some of the ways in which it interacts with the German idealist tradition. The key point of this explication is the way in which Adorno's philosophical standpoint is rooted in a social and ethical stance that informs the entire corpus of his writing. Beginning to introduce this to Pynchon, I show how, in *Gravity's Rainbow*, there is a structural antipathy towards synthesising dialectics that sits alongside repeated references, in more positive contexts than the Wittgensteinian motifs, to non-identity. Indeed, I posit that this allows for a reading that evades Pynchon's notorious non-judgemental relativism as this meta-structure allows the reader to differentiate between two ethically conflicted sub-plots in *Gravity's Rainbow*: that of Vaslav Tchitcherine as opposed to Captain Blicero.

## Chapter 7: Art, Society and Ethics

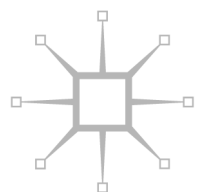
Keywords: *Theodor W. Adorno, Dialectic of Enlightenment, Aesthetic Theory, aesthetics*

The seventh and final content chapter appraises *Dialectic of Enlightenment* and *Aesthetic Theory* in relation to various aspects of Pynchon's fiction. In this chapter, I look closely at Pynchon's latest novel, *Inherent Vice*, and show once more that, from the micro-linguistic, up to the macro level, Pynchon replicates Adorno's structure of negative dialectical critique. In this case, focusing upon the rigorous interrogation that Pynchon mounts upon the '68 slogan that his novel takes as its epigraph, I demonstrate the ways in which Pynchon also mounts a determinate engagement with socio-ethical problems, such as racism. Moving this racial critique further, I finally examine Adorno's theories of art and his damning assessment of jazz music, wherein I distinguish crossovers with, but also divergences from, Pynchon's model, primarily through a reading of Charlie Parker in *Gravity's Rainbow*. I finish the volume with a short conclusion that sums up the book's stance.

## 4. Market and Competition

### 4.1 Please indicate the *primary market* for your project

- who are the main academic audiences for the work?
- where it the book going to sell in greatest numbers - and your best estimate of market size



The primary market for this book consists of:

1.) Advanced undergraduates and postgraduates studying Pynchon, whose *The Crying of Lot 49* features on many anglophone undergraduate syllabi

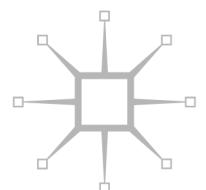
2.) Researchers working on Pynchon, American fiction more broadly and ethical intersections with philosophy/Theory in literature.

Even treated as a single-author study, the market for this book has a substantial baseline owing to Harold Bloom's prominent and consistent reiteration of Pynchon as the most important living American prose author. In terms of secondary reach/market, this is furthered when Foucault is added to the equation; Foucault remains among the most frequently cited post-War scholars. With the addition of work upon Adorno, this is increased; there is barely a literature undergraduate course or masters degree that does not, in some way or form, address Adorno's thought. The ethical turn that I take in this book also chimes well with contemporary thought in literary circles and refutes many of the claims of postmodern nihilism that have dogged Pynchon's work.

To demonstrate this breadth, I was able to ascertain that Pynchon is taught on undergraduate programmes (solely within the UK for demonstration purposes) at the following institutions, beyond my own course at Lincoln:

Aberystwyth	Birkbeck	Birmingham
Bolton	Brighton	Brunel
Cambridge	Canterbury	Cardiff
Dundee	Durham	UEA
Edinburgh	Exeter	Greenwich
Hull	KCL	Keele
Kent	Kingston	Lancaster
Liverpool	London Met.	Manchester
Newcastle	Nottingham Trent	Oxford Brookes
Portsmouth	Queen Mary	Reading
Roehampton	Royal Holloway	Sheffield
Sheffield Hallam	Southampton	Staffordshire
Stirling	Surrey	Sussex
Swansea	UCL	Warwick
Winchester	York	

It is also worth noting that many of these (and others not on the list such as St. Andrews) also teach Pynchon at MA level (Durham has a dedicated module on Pynchon) and beyond, but that the transatlantic market is likely to reach far further.



Other books on Pynchon have had substantial market success. Sam Thomas' *Pynchon and the Political* for instance was itself successful enough to recently be included in Routledge's trial print-on-demand service.

My substantial online and academic networks will significantly aid with publicity for the book. I intend to establish a website for the project and use my large social-media influence to promote the work. As an example of the reach that I can provide here, as of June 2013, I have 2,029 Twitter followers, most of whom are academics and literary types, and my website has received 55,000 unique visitors over the past year and a half. I will also push for reviews in as many high-ranking journals as possible, including *Textual Practice*, *Critique*, *Contemporary Literature*, *Modern Fiction Studies* and *C21* among others. I would also like to arrange for reviews in online venues so that the work has a presence extending beyond the walls of the academy in outlets such as *Berfrois* and *3:AM*.

I also intend to promote the work at the many conferences that I attend and organize. For instance, the 2014 *What Happens Now* conference, of which I am a co-organiser, will be a major event at which I can begin promoting the work, as well as the Birkbeck contemporary fiction research seminars, the London critical theory group and the British Association of American Studies annual conference.

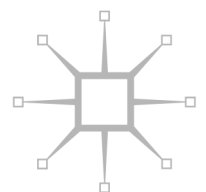
Subject associations that may be helpful, and which form the surrounding context for the work, include the Modern Language Association and the British Association of American Studies. Any of the following would be able to comment on how this research fits with current debates: LIST OF PROFESSORS.

#### **4.2 Please list any secondary markets that may exist for the project.**

There is a large international market for this book, both in the States and elsewhere. Indeed, Thomas Pynchon, the subject of this book, has an enormous American readership; this is, primarily, after all, a book about an American author. Professor X, of the University of Y, has expressed an interest in the project in my communications and would be a good contact for Stateside endorsements and marketing, as would Z of the University of U.

Pynchon's work, however, is studied worldwide, as can be seen from the broad selection of speaker affiliations at this year's International Pynchon Week Conference (of which I am a co-organiser). Indeed, beyond the US and UK contingent, there are representatives from Australia, Belgium, China, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Sweden and Taiwan, thus demonstrating a substantial global market. The broad range of languages into which Pynchon has been translated surely helps with this appeal, but the academic study of Pynchon and the philosophical issues raised by this book, are a worldwide phenomenon.

Finally, there is also a broad lay readership of critical material on Pynchon, as has been demonstrated through pictures that non-academics have posted to the Pynchon in Public Day event that includes them posing with their collection of academic Pynchon books!



**4.3 Please list (including author, title and publisher) those publications that your project will be competing with for the end purchaser's attention and money. These might not be direct competitors, but simply what your primary readership is buying/using at the moment. What are the key benefits of your project over and above these other publications that would persuade potential customers to buy it?**

James Gourmley, Terrorism and Temporality in the Works of Thomas Pynchon and Don DeLillo. Bloomsbury. 2013. £54.

Gourmley's book demonstrates the continuing and vast interest in the works of Pynchon and his contemporaries. The narrowed thematic focus of Gourmley's book, as opposed to the simultaneously broader ("philosophy") and narrower ("Pynchon") of mine, pitches these books as complements to, rather than competitors with, one another.

Simon de Bourcier, Pynchon and Relativity: Narrative Time in Thomas Pynchon's Later Novels. Continuum, 2012. £54.

This work is a theoretically sophisticated engagement with issues of time and narratology in Pynchon's works, particularly in a post-Einsteinian frame. That said, my is entirely distinct from Simon's, most notably in the fact that he has a very specific focus that does not overlap with my object of study, which is more closely related to Pynchon's philosophy, politics and ethics.

David Cowart, Thomas Pynchon & the Dark Passages of History. University of Georgia Press, 2011. \$24.95.

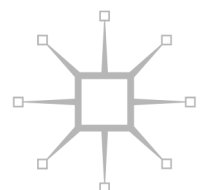
This broad work, which contains a series of Cowart's brilliant essays over the years, has more of a broad synoptic sweep to it. Although many of Cowart's readings have since become canonised (every part of this book was published elsewhere beforehand), this work, again, undertakes a very different project than my proposed book.

Sascha Pöhlmann. Pynchon's Postnational Imagination. Universitätsverlag Winter, 2010. £38.

This book admirably examines notions of "post-nationality" in Pynchon's fiction and is, for that reason, a reference point for my readings of Pynchon's nationalistic contexts. That said, this work is not, of course, engaged directly with the ethico-philosophical project that is the focus of my proposed book.

Samuel Thomas, Pynchon and the Political. Routledge, 2007. £50.

This volume, while hugely influential upon the field and also on my work, has left a clear space for an engagement with the thinkers of the Frankfurt School that it did not undertake itself. My section on Adorno explicitly continues this work but





also includes *Against the Day* and *Inherent Vice*, which were not available at the time of Thomas' book.

## 5. Additional Information

### 5.1 How long do you expect the project to be overall (in thousands of words and/or printed pages)?

85,000 words

### 5.2 Have you published any of the material included in the manuscript previously (for example as a journal article or working paper). If so give details, including details of the publisher of the work.

Portions of this work have appeared elsewhere in different form (journal articles and edited collection chapters).

Eve, Martin Paul, 'Whose Line Is It Anyway?: Enlightenment, Revolution, and Ipseic Ethics in the Works of Thomas Pynchon', *Textual Practice*, 26 (2012), 921–939 <doi:10.1080/0950236X.2012.709877>

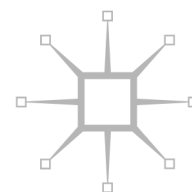
Eve, Martin Paul, 'Historical Sources for Pynchon's Peter Pinguid Society', *Pynchon Notes*, 56-57 (2011), 242–245

Eve, Martin Paul, 'Pynchon and Wittgenstein: Ethics, Relativism and Philosophical Methodology', in *Profils Américains: Thomas Pynchon*, ed. by Gilles Chamerois and Bénédicte Fryd (Montpellier: Presses Universitaires de la Méditerranée, forthcoming 2013)

### 5.3 Do you plan to include any third-party material requiring permission? In general Palgrave Macmillan recommends that you keep the inclusion of third party material (such as tables, figures, illustrations, photographs, quotations, epigraphs) to a minimum as seeking permission from copyright holders can be very time consuming. If you cannot avoid including such material please be aware that it will be your responsibility to obtain permission to use the material in print and online. Please confirm if you intend to include third party material and give details. For authors submitting a proposal to our UK office, please see further information available [here](#). For authors submitting a proposal to our US office, please ask the relevant editor for further details

No; quotation will be kept to a minimum so as to fall under fair dealing provisions.

### 5.4 Will the project include interviews carried out by you or your contributors? If so please give details.



No.

**5.5 Is the book based on your PhD/PhD research? If yes, is your thesis available electronically anywhere, e.g. an institutional repository?**

Yes. Not available electronically at present (embargoed for up to 5 years).

**5.6 Does the project require any illustration? Please indicate if you envisage including any of the following and, if so, approximately how many.**

No.

**5.7 Are there any other particular features you plan for the project?**

No.

**5.8 When do you realistically propose to deliver a final typescript?**

The typescript is finished and ready for delivery.

**5.9 Please provide names and affiliations of 3-5 academics in your area who might be well-positioned to evaluate the project and offer feedback. Note that we may not necessarily use these suggestions.**

REFERENCES HERE

**6. Author Information**

**Please provide complete contact information for yourself and any co-authors/co-editors below and a short biography as well as a full CV for each author/editor. For edited collections please provide the names and affiliations (but not full contact details) of all contributors as well.**

**Name(s)**

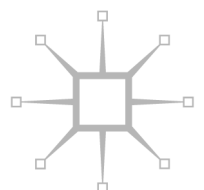
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**Short biography**

- Include any personal or professional information relevant to this publication – previous books, related teaching/research experience
- Include details of any social media activity you use to promote your work – e.g. blogs, personal websites, use of Twitter or Facebook etc

Dr. Martin Paul Eve specialises in contemporary American fiction, primarily the works of Thomas Pynchon, Don DeLillo and David Foster Wallace. Martin is the founding editor of the Pynchon journal, *Orbit*, and has work published or forthcoming in *Textual Practice*, *Neo-Victorian Studies*, *C21*, *Pynchon Notes* and several edited collections.

Martin tweets @martin\_eve, blogs at <https://www.martineve.com> and also writes for the *Guardian* <http://www.guardian.co.uk/profile/martin-paul-eve>.

