Dr. Dave Yount’s Current, Unpublished Manuscripts and Papers

Book Length Manuscripts:

*Plato Meets His Critics: Volume I: Aristotle:* I give every major quotation where Aristotle is pretty obviously (or directly) criticizing Plato’s view (on the Forms, the Form of the Good’s relevance to ethics, and Plato’s ideal state), and give replies that I believe are open for Plato or a Platonist to make. This has never been done to my knowledge, curiously enough. This manuscript is currently under consideration at Oxford University Press.

*What Would Plato Do?* Imagine if we could bring Plato back to life today, and showed him around, everything from our current scientific thought, to our religions and gadgets and popular culture. Now imagine asking him what he thinks about all this, and that’s what I cover in this book. I answer questions about contemporary moral issues, and popular TV shows, etc., citing Plato whenever I make claims about what he says about, say, divorce, or women ruling in the ideal state, so, if the reader is interested, she can see where Plato says what I say he says. This manuscript is currently under consideration at Prometheus Books.

*Heaven: A Philosophical Study:* There are a nice handful of books that describe and explain heaven from the Christian perspective, either citing the Bible or reasoning from what the author’s view of God is, about what heaven is or should be like. In my work, I consider many different options that heaven could be (such as eternal (beyond time), everlasting (in time), or both; we gain knowledge upon entrance to heaven, we do not; we are perfect there, we are not perfect; it is a place where we obtain whatever we subjectively desire, or not; and so on), and for each option, I raise questions as to why that version of heaven would be desirable (i.e., heavenly!). I raise questions both assuming that God exists and is in charge of heaven, and if God does not exist, but heaven happens to be where we go when we die. I conclude that I cannot find a version of heaven that is desirable, but discuss a non-traditional version of heaven (not involving the afterlife) that might be desirable. This manuscript is currently under consideration at Oxford University Press.

*Plato By Subject:* In graduate school, when trying to learn Plato’s view well, I found it very useful to put the passages together on different subjects, such as dialectic, recollection, knowledge, Forms, arguments for the Forms, souls, reincarnation, arguments for the immortality of the soul, the receptacle, and so on, and put them next to each other so I could see what his view was on that issue, and if he changed his mind, etc. I have them arranged by epistemology, metaphysics, and ethics.

*Plotinus By Subject:* This project is the same as *Plato By Subject,* but is even more urgent, since in the case of Plotinus, he almost always refers to other parts of his system when he talks about any one part of it, or connects whatever he’s talking about to many of the other parts. So to have a collection of quotations in one place for his thoughts on one subject is very helpful.

Papers:

“Nibbāna, the Good, and the One: The Similarity Among Their Natures and Requirements, Among Buddha, Plato, and Plotinus’ Ultimate Experience.” I argue here that it is likely that the highest entities in Buddha, Plato, and Plotinus’ thought and experience are similar, if not identical, as well as the requirements necessary in order for one to obtain/attain them.

“Plato and Plotinus on Emanation” [A version of a section of my published book, *Plotinus: The Platonist*] Either Plato and Plotinus are both emanationists (that is, that the highest principle/entity has an outflow and creates the next highest entity, and that entity causes the next entity to exist, and so on), or they are not. Plotinus states that emanation (outflow) is merely a metaphor, so Plotinian interpreters over-emphasize emanation in Plotinus on the one hand. Platonic interpreters understate or ignore the extent to which Plato is an emanationist, on the other, which I show by giving passages in Plato show that at least metaphorically, he is an emanationist as well. In short, they do not essentially differ on the issue of emanation.
“Interpreting Plato’s One in the First Hypothesis of the Parmenides as equivalent to the Form of the Good” [A shorter version of a section of my published book, Plotinus: The Platonist] I look at the 18 statements made about the One in the First Hypothesis of the Parmenides (such as the One is not in space, the One is not one, etc.) and argue that ultimately, the only entity that this One could be referring to in Plato’s philosophy is the Good, since he states that the Good is not in space, and not a being but beyond being.

“Why Plato and Plotinus are Mystics” [A shorter version of a chapter of my published book, Plotinus: The Platonist] Either Plato and Plotinus are both best described as being mystics, or not, but it is not the case that, for any given definition, Plotinus is a mystic and Plato is not. It can be shown that they have similar requirements for the ultimate experience; similar outcomes related to happiness, knowledge; and similar features, that it is difficult and rare. Plato and Plotinus do not essentially differ on mysticism.

If you are interested in reading any of my works, please contact me at david.yount@mesacc.edu.