Editorial

It is a year ago since we announced the topic for the journal's 2020 Essay Prize Competition: *Knowledge, Truth and Power in an Online World*. The pandemic was then in full swing and the topic must have seemed especially apposite, as many people were beginning to feel online fatigue after hours and hours of online meetings and of web-browsing in search of reliable news, information and entertainment. In fact, though, the topic for the competition had been selected months earlier – well before Covid-19 had shifted many of everyone's daily activities to the 'online world'.

We received over eighty submissions, focussing on a variety of topics – including AI, new forms of harm, personal identity and post-truth – and advancing myriad original ideas and arguments. We are immensely pleased to announce the joint-winners of the 2020 Essay competition: Lucy McDonald, with her essay entitled 'Please Like This Paper', and Nikhil Venkatesh, with 'Surveillance Capitalism: a Marx-inspired Account'. Together with the runner-up – Max F. Kramer's 'Teaching Drunk: Work, the Online Economy, and Uncertainty in Action' – they cover a raft of issues that may have become more acute in the past few months but are, undoubtedly, of lasting significance. They include some of the peculiarities and power-structure of online communication, with a case study of the nature and significance of the online act of 'liking'; the potential for exploitation and alienation arising from our willingness to exchange the 'free' use of online products for extensive personal data, which is then assembled, analysed and sold; or the destabilising consequences generated by a distinctive feature of much online work – such as asynchronous online teaching – namely, the absence of the sort of feedback that helps to ascertain the success of one's own work efforts.

The other papers featured in this issue nicely complement them. 'What is the Point of Being Your True Self? A Genealogy of Essentialist Authenticity', by Muriel Leuenberger, develops and

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defends a functional genealogy of essentialist authenticity, according to which authenticity is the result of discovering and realizing one's 'true self'. 'Salvaging Truth from Ontological Scrap', by David Cornell, critically considers various strategies for reconciling commonsense commitments with prima facie revisionary metaphysical theories. And 'Perverse Reasons', by Francesco Orsi, asks what exactly is wrong with normatively perverse motivation, in which one is motivated by considerations that also count against what they motivate. Together with reviews of books on aesthetics, value theory and the 'human condition', they provide plenty of absorbing reading material to while away the days, as we look forward with cautious expectation to the loosening of lockdown conditions wherever we happen to be.

We take this opportunity also to announce the topic of the 2021 Essay Prize Competition: *Self and Society*. The submission deadline is 1 December 2021 and the winning entry will be published in the July 2022 issue of *Philosophy*. Please submit entries by email to assistant@royainstitutephilosophy.org with the subject line 'Prize Essay'. Full details can be found here: https://www.royalinstitute-philosophy.org/publications/philosophy/essay-prize/

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