

Hope and Possibility
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Abstract

I analyze hope by looking at the various ways in which we use the word, focusing finally on a particularly enigmatic use, hope for past events such as "I hope he did not break his leg." I argue that because most understandings of hope focus on the futurity of what is hoped for, they understand hope in terms of future possibility. However, hope with regard to a past event suggests that hope is not best understood in terms of future possibility, but simply in terms of possibility. I then argue that possibility should be understood in terms of the openness of the world rather than in terms of sets of possible events that are not yet actualized.