

2015 Central Division Meeting

Colloquium and Submitted Symposium Abstracts

Infallibilism, Skepticism and Cultural Differences (IV-G, Friday, 9:00 a.m.)

Joshua Alexander, Siena College

Chad Gonneman, University of Southern Indiana

John Waterman, Colby College

Karen Yan, National Yang-Ming University

Epistemic universalism, the view that epistemic intuitions are culturally universal, plays an important role in underwriting ordinary practice in contemporary epistemology. But is it true? Here we present two studies that examine epistemic universalism through the lens of epistemic intuitions about infallibilism and unrealized possibilities of error. These studies suggest that there are structural universals, universal epistemic parameters that influence epistemic intuitions, but that these parameters vary in such a way that certain epistemic intuitions, in either their strength or propositional content, display patterns of genuine cross-cultural diversity.

What Instances of Novels Are (VI-L, Saturday, 9:00 a.m.)

Alexey Aliyev (University of Maryland)

The consensus is that a novel, like any other artwork, can be fully appreciated only through an experiential engagement with its well-formed instance. But what sort of entities can play the role of such an instance? According to an orthodox view, the entities that play this role are primarily concrete inscriptions (e.g., digital texts, texts printed on paper, papyrus manuscripts, etc.). I argue (a) that this view is misguided and (b) that it should be replaced with the view that well-formed instances of non-visual novels, or novels that do not have to be visually perceived in order to be correctly appreciated, are readings, whereas well-formed instances of visual novels, or novels that must be visually perceived in order to be correctly appreciated, are sums of readings and graphic elements.

Animal Euthanasia and the Moral Responsibility of Zoos (V-J, Friday, 1:30 p.m.)

Crystal Allen Gunasekera, Principia College

European zoos have caused considerable controversy lately by euthanizing healthy young animals as part of a captive population management strategy. While the zoos maintain that the practice (referred to as “culling”) is justified by the need to protect species into the future, and to promote the wellbeing of parent animals, I argue that it contravenes the responsibility that zoos have protect and respect the well-being of individual animals. I discuss possible bases for this responsibility of zoos, and argue that the duty is not overridden by competing considerations.

A Critical Look at Jesse Prinz’s Emotions-Based Account of Aesthetics (VI-L, Saturday, 9:00 a.m.)

Fritz Allison, University of Nebraska–Lincoln

Jesse Prinz offers a sophisticated account of the role of emotions in aesthetic evaluation. His account has the added benefit of his own complex and comprehensive theory of what emotions are, to which he adapts his account of aesthetic emotion. However, he only gives a brief survey of this theory in his account of aesthetic evaluation and this lack of full treatment of his wider philosophy of emotions makes the account of aesthetics more acceptable. I intend to show that, when one pays close attention to his theory of emotions, the application of it to the aesthetic experience ranges from being explanatorily unsatisfactory to completely problematic. The largest problem and the one I will focus on is that the analysis is incomplete and so cannot account for certain facets of the practice of aesthetic evaluation. Furthermore, many of the more straightforward attempts to complete his account will lead to circularity.

Children and Added Sugar: The Case for Restriction (V-J, Friday, 1:30 p.m.)

Theodore Bach, Bowling Green State University

It is increasingly clear that children’s excessive consumption of products high in added (or extrinsic) sugar causes obesity and obesity-related health problems like type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and metabolic syndrome. Less clear is how best to address this problem through public health policy. In contrast to policies that might conflict with adult’s right to self-determination—for example sugar taxes and soda bans—this article proposes that children’s access to products high in added sugars should be restricted in the same way that children’s access to tobacco products is restricted. The article considers contractalist, rights-based, and consequentialist arguments for this policy proposal. It also addresses several potential objections.

What Is a Sorites Series? (III-L, Thursday, 2:20 p.m.)

Jonathan Barker, University of Virginia

The most reliable way of establishing that it can be vague whether something has a feature F is to construct a Sorites series for F. For this reason, the Sorites series lies at the very heart of the problem of vagueness. But what is a Sorites series? If you wanted to construct a Sorites series for F, how would you go about doing it? I will argue that a Sorites series for a feature F is a puzzle about the way F relates to the feature in which it is grounded. After characterizing a rival answer to the question, I will argue that it matters greatly which of these two answers is correct. In particular, I will point out that the possibility of constructing a Sorites series for certain grounded but non-reducible features, such as composition, mental properties, and moral properties, hinges on how one answers the question.

Why Phenomenal Intentionality Isn't Compositional (VII-L, Saturday, 2:30 p.m.)

Galen Barry, University of Virginia

One of the aims of the phenomenal intentionality program is to explain the intentional properties of cognition in terms of the qualitative or phenomenal properties of cognition. I argue that such an explanation is incompatible with the compositionality of thought. Specifically, I argue that changes in attention alter the phenomenal character of cognitive states in a way that undermines the systematicity of thought. As such, the phenomenal intentionality program owes us an explanation for how the ability to think specific thoughts is seemingly tied to the ability to think other specific thoughts.

Marking the Perception-Cognition Boundary (III-H, Thursday, 2:20 p.m.)

Jacob Beck, York University

There is an intuitive difference between perceptual states such as seeing that an object is red or hearing the note of a trumpet, and cognitive states such as judging that justice is fairness or thinking about your deceased grandmother. Various debates in philosophy and psychology presuppose the perception-cognition distinction as well. This paper argues for two claims: (1) that the familiar suggestion that perceptual states differ from cognitive states in being stimulus-dependent is problematic because it cannot accommodate the perception of absence; and (2) that a principled perception-cognition boundary can nevertheless be drawn using the related notion of sensitivity-dependence.

Noncognitivism and Epistemic Evaluations (III-I, Thursday, 2:20 p.m.)

Bob Beddor, Rutgers University

According to noncognitivists, moral beliefs are closely akin to desires. Moral beliefs, like desires, have a world-to-mind direction of fit, whereas non-moral beliefs have a mind-to-world direction of fit. In this paper, I offer a novel challenge for noncognitivism, thus construed. The challenge starts from the observation that both moral and non-moral beliefs are epistemically evaluable: we evaluate them based on whether they are epistemically rational and whether they constitute knowledge. Desires are not epistemically evaluable: my desire for a drink cannot be epistemically rational or irrational; similarly, it cannot constitute knowledge. A natural explanation for this difference is that only psychological states with a mind-to-world direction of fit are epistemically evaluable. But noncognitivists cannot accept this explanation, since they hold that moral beliefs have a world-to-mind direction of fit. Noncognitivists thus need to give some other account about why beliefs are epistemically evaluable, whereas desires are not.

Practical Deliberation and Acting for a Reason: Two Arguments against Source Externalism (VI-H, Saturday, 9:00 a.m.)

Jeff Behrends, Illinois State University

The presence of a desire can sometimes affect what practical reasons an agent has. Although this may appear problematic for externalists on first glance, there are various moves available to externalists to attempt to accommodate the relationship between desires and reasons. For example, Brute Externalists can maintain that the fact that Φ -ing will promote the object of one of A's desires is always itself a reason that carries its normative force brutally; that is, its normativity is not derived relationally from A's actual or hypothetical desires. In this paper, I argue against Brute Externalism in two ways. First, I show that that Brute Externalism yields an implausible picture of practical deliberation, one that is objectionably inward-looking. Secondly, I show that Brute Externalism cannot explain how agents act for good reason in cases in which their desires are normatively relevant, even in the very simplest kind of cases.

Aristotelian Eudaimonism and Patriotism (V-G, Friday, 1:30 p.m.)

Noell Birondo, Wichita State University

This paper considers the prospects for an "internal" validation of the virtues of character. With respect to patriotism in particular, this approach for validating some specific trait of character as a virtue of character constitutes a plausible and nuanced Aristotelian alternative to the well-known defenses of

patriotism offered by Alasdair MacIntyre and Marcia Baron. According to this approach, patriotism can plausibly, though qualifiedly, be defended as a virtue, by stressing its similarities to another loyalty-exhibiting trait about which Aristotle has quite a bit to say: the virtue of friendship.

A Closer Look at Causal Bases and Its Implications for Reducing Dispositions (VI-G, Saturday, 9:00 a.m.)

David Blanks, Ohio State University

On the one hand, there are hypothetical properties, which include modal, counterfactual, dispositional and tensed properties, and on the other hand, there are categorical properties, which describe how objects actually are. Many think that hypothetical properties should be reduced to categorical properties since primitive hypothetical properties are unparsimonious. This means that dispositions should be reduced to categorical properties. This might seem like a problem for modalism since modalism says dispositions just are counterfactual properties. Some might think that two other views of dispositions—the identity view and functionalism—fare better, since on these views dispositions reduce to causal bases. The identity view says that a disposition just is the causal basis, and functionalism says that a disposition is having some causal basis or other. I argue in this paper that neither the identity view nor functionalism succeeds in reducing dispositions to categorical properties since causal bases are hypothetical properties.

Rescue, Beneficence, and Contempt (IV-H, Friday, 9:00 a.m.)

Adam Blincoe, University of Virginia

It is difficult to distinguish between duties of rescue and duties of beneficence in a way that (a) does justice to our moral intuitions and (b) is not morally arbitrary. This has led some philosophers to claim that there is no morally relevant distinction to be made. This move is intuitively implausible and also raises the spectre of an extreme demand. In this paper I will show how the potentially extreme demand of a utilitarian grounded duty of beneficence motivates a distinction between duties of rescue and beneficence. I will then outline Liam Murphy's failed attempt to address this problem. I will then develop a principle that grounds these positive duties in a way that adequately distinguishes them and thus avoids overdemandingness. This principle will link wrong actions to concerns of character; in particular, it will focus on contempt for humanity and callousness towards human need.

Metalinguistic Moral Disagreement (I-F, Wednesday, 6:00 p.m.)

Renee Bolinger, University of Southern California

The problem of moral disagreement has been presented as an objection to contextualist semantics for ought, since it is not clear that contextualism can accommodate or give a convincing gloss of such disagreement. I argue that independently of our semantics, disagreements over oughts in non-cooperative contexts are best understood in the framework of metalinguistic negation, which is easily accommodated by contextualism. If this is correct, then rather than posing a problem for contextualism, the data from moral disagreements provides some reason to adopt a semantics that allows variance in the meanings of oughts.

A Sinnless Solution to Frege's Puzzle (IV-L, Friday, 9:00 a.m.)

Paolo Bonardi, Université de Genève

My talk will criticize two solutions to Frege's puzzle—Nathan Salmon's and Kit Fine's—and will sketch a third solution. The new solution, like Fine's, involves *coordination* instead of modes of presentation. Coordination, however, will not be conceived, like in Fine, as a *semantic* relation (viz. as a relation entering the semantic content of sentences), but rather as a purely cognitive relation. I will accordingly assume, like Salmon, that sentences (in contexts) express Russellian propositions and proper names contribute to them solely with their referent. My proposal is able to solve a version of Frege's puzzle, devised by Fine, which is hardly resolvable using Fregean senses, Salmon's guises or the like; at the same time, it escapes certain difficulties that Fine's semantics encounters.

Against the No-Miracle Response to the Indispensability Argument (II-M, Thursday, 12:10 p.m.)

Kenneth A. Boyce, University of Missouri

One kind of response to the indispensability argument for mathematical realism—one that I will refer to as “the no-miracle response” (owing to its connection with Hilary Putnam's famous “no-miracles” argument in defense of scientific realism)—involves maintaining that since mathematical entities (if they exist) are causally inert, we need not postulate their existence in order to explain the empirical success of our best scientific theories. I argue that the no-miracle response is not an adequate reply to the Quine-Putnam indispensability argument. More precisely, I argue that the no-miracle response is inadequate unless it is supplemented by further considerations, but that those further considerations (if correct) constitute a distinct and successful response all on their own. My conclusion is that the no-miracle response either fails or turns out to be superfluous.

Berkeley's Semantic Argument (VI-M, Saturday, 9:00 a.m.)

Alexander Paul Bozzo, Marquette University

Berkeley believes that idealism and immaterialism can be deductively demonstrated, but he also believes that idealism and immaterialism can be intuitively known. He presents an argument for this latter claim (his so-called semantic argument) at *Principles* 3. However, most commentators regard this argument as blatantly invalid. In this paper, I show that Berkeley's semantic argument, as he intended it, is not invalid.

Quantifier Variance and Ontological Deflationism (IV-J, Friday, 9:00 a.m.)

Andrew Brenner, University of Notre Dame

Let's call "ontological deflationism" the thesis that ontological disputes (either in general, or of a certain sort) are merely verbal. Ontological deflationism is sometimes supported by an appeal to quantifier variance (QV) (chiefly defended by Putnam and Hirsch), the notion that there are multiple quantifier meanings equally capable of describing the world. Opponents of the move from QV to deflationism (for example, Sider) have generally responded by offering objections to QV. In this paper I seek to clarify the relationship between QV and ontological deflationism, concluding that the two theses are less intimately related than metaphysicians generally suppose—even if QV is true, it would fail to support deflationism. More specifically, we can distinguish between two components of QV. Neither of them entails deflationism without an auxiliary, independently motivated, commitment to a strong principle of interpretive charity which we have reason to reject.

Agency, Causalism, and Intentional Omissions (V-K, Friday, 1:30 p.m.)

Andrei A. Buckareff, Marist College

In some recent work on omissions, it has been argued that causalists about agency cannot account for how agency is exercised in intentionally omitting to act. For instance, Carolina Sartorio has argued that, whereas causalism can account for intentional actions, it cannot account for intentional omissions (Sartorio 2010a, 129).

In this essay, I argue that we should distinguish causalism as a general theory of agency from causalism as a theory of intentional action. Once we make this distinction and clarify the differences between causalism as a theory of agency and causalism as a theory of intentional action, the way will be made for us to see how causalists can respond to the challenge from omissions.

Platonic Particulars and Timaeus Tropes (VI-K, Saturday, 9:00 a.m.)

Christopher Buckels, University of California, Davis

A standard interpretation of Plato's metaphysics holds that sensible particulars are images of Forms; e.g., there is a Form of Laurel, and each particular laurel is an image of that, somehow being copied from the Form. Despite this initial dependence, such particulars seem fairly independent, and their interactions are mechanical, explained by the interactions of their constitutive elements rather than by appeal to Forms as causes. Thus Platonic particulars look a lot like Aristotelian substances. I argue that this interpretation is incorrect: Platonic particulars are not Form images but aggregates of Form images. The Form of Laurel would confer only the property of being a laurel upon the tree. Form images are not Aristotelian substances (i.e., ultimate subjects of predication), but property-instances, what metaphysicians call tropes. Sensible particulars are derivative entities, composed of more basic things, and their constituent tropes are themselves fully dependent on the Forms (and the Receptacle) for their existence. I defend these claims, focusing on the elemental triangles that compose the four traditional elements which, in turn, compose particulars. Next I show that Timaeus focuses on tropes in his cosmology, even going so far as to claim that tropes compose other things. I show this by examining 49e-50a, where Timaeus tells us that particulars are composed of "this-suches" (*ta toiauta*), and arguing that these are tropes. Thus no Form images are privileged as particulars in their own right. Finally I bring these strands together to argue that fundamental triangles are composed of tropes, so that everything in the sensible world is either a trope or composed of tropes.

Testimonial Traditions and Religious Disagreement (V-M, Friday, 1:30 p.m.)

Donald Bungum, Saint Louis University

Recently, some philosophers have argued that the testimonial basis for religious beliefs neutralizes the skeptical threat arising from religious disagreement. In this essay, however, I argue that the testimonial basis itself poses a skeptical threat to religious beliefs. Being a recipient of religious testimony requires being socially situated within an investigative practice, but few persons are socially situated so as to receive all or most of the relevant evidence contained in such practices. I contend that disputants who acquire their religious beliefs through religious testimony rationally ought to suspend belief when faced with religious disagreement, since they are forced to withhold belief concerning the adequacy of their own epistemic position. I conclude that the very same feature of religious testimony—its tradition specificity—that undermines the peer argument for religious skepticism lends support to the skeptical argument presented herein.

Relations, Cooperation, and the Problem of the Stranger (VII-M, Saturday, 2:30 p.m.)

Dan Burkett, Rice University

Thomas Scanlon proposes a theory of blame built upon the relationships between individuals. One problem for this view is how we are to make sense of blaming those with whom we have no relationship: namely, strangers. Scanlon attempts to solve this problem by appealing to the moral relationship, but George Sher provides a strong objection to such a move. In this paper, I attempt to bolster Scanlon's position by providing an alternative account of the relationship that holds between strangers. I begin with a brief rehearsal of Scanlon's account of blame, before moving on to consider Sher's criticism of this view. In response, I provide my own suggestion of the relationship that holds between strangers—a relationship based upon the disposition to cooperate. I argue that with the adoption of two common-sense assumptions, the relational view of blame can be rescued. I conclude by replying to one potential objection.

A Defense of Ought-Implies-Can (VI-H, Saturday, 9:00 a.m.)

Justin Caouette, University of Calgary

Peter Graham has argued that standard counterexamples to the "Ought-Implies-Can" principle have lacked dialectical punch. To remedy this, he offers a new counterexample to negate the principle. He tries to show that this new counterexample requires that we understand the act within the example as an impermissible act. I argue that his counterexample is not relevantly different from the standard counterexamples and that there is a better explanation of what justifies intervening in the example he proposes that does not appeal to impermissibility, thus he fails to successfully impugn the principle.

Teleological Functional Explanations: A New Naturalist Synthesis (II-H, Thursday, 12:10 p.m.)

Mihnea D. I. Capraru, Syracuse University

On the prevalent contemporary view, the teleological functions of biological traits are determined by what these traits were selected for. This view, however, can be shown to falsely exclude genuine teleological functions. To fix this, I replace the standard requirement—for full-blown natural selection—with a different Darwinian requirement—for past contribution to the dynamic endstates of the generating organisms. Dynamic endstates, known to us from systems theory, are states that systems are disposed to reach from diverse initial conditions and in spite of a range of perturbations. For instance, a target-seeking missile has the dynamic endstate to find its target. When an entity x has the teleological

function to cause *E*, this is in virtue of the fact that the causal explanation of *x*'s origin places *x* under a norm to cause *E* and thereby to contribute to the dynamic endstates of *x*'s generators.

Blameworthiness and Imaginary Moral Reasons (VII-M, Saturday, 2:30 p.m.)

Sean Clancy, Syracuse University

I argue that agents are blameworthy when they act in response to imaginary moral reasons; that is, when they act as though the features of their actions provide moral reasons when in fact they do not. Common intuitions about cases commit us to the view that unresponsiveness to actual moral reasons is a moral vice. Because responsiveness to imaginary moral reasons constitutes a symmetrical defect in character, we should conclude that it too is a moral vice. When coupled with the claim that agents are blameworthy for actions that are caused by their vices, this leads to the conclusion that agents are blameworthy when they act in response to imaginary moral reasons. This conclusion has the surprising implication that agents can be blameworthy even though neither their actions nor their attitudes are morally bad.

Perceptual Learning and Recognition (III-H, Thursday, 2:20 p.m.)

Kevin Connolly, University of Pennsylvania

In cases of perceptual learning, a person (often an expert) perceives the world in an improved way, due to learning. William James, for instance, writes about how one man learned to distinguish by taste between the upper and lower half of a bottle of a particular type of wine. The man in James's account perceives the wine differently from a novice, as a result of learning. Philosophers (including Susanna Siegel, Charles Siewert, and Christopher Peacocke) have discussed similar cases at length, but they tend to try to understand them as cases in which cognition influences perception: the man has gained a recognitional ability for the upper and lower half of the wine, and it changes his perception. I think this over-intellectualizes matters. On my view, the man's perception of the wine changes first, and this is what allows him to recognize the wine, not the other way around.

"This" (VI-K, Saturday, 9:00 a.m.)

Phil Corkum, University of Alberta

The expression *tode ti*, most commonly translated as "a this," plays a key role in Aristotle's metaphysics. For example, to be *tode ti* is a characteristic mark of at least some substances and so failing to be *tode ti* is a reason to reject such candidates for the substance of a thing as its matter. The nature of the expression, its extension and the interpretation of its role in Aristotle's metaphysics, however, are all

controversial. In this paper, I shall discuss the expression (§1), its extension and the various interpretations canvassed in the secondary literature of its philosophical role (§2). Then I shall offer a novel interpretation of the expression based on a discussion of demonstration (§3). I shall apply the interpretation to a much-discussed topic of individuals in categories other than substance (§4). And I shall conclude with a few speculative comments (§5).

Advice for Eleatics (II-I, Thursday, 12:10 p.m.)

Sam Cowling, Denison University

Eleaticism tethers ontology to causality by holding an entity to exist if and only if it is causally active. This paper examines the proper formulation of Eleaticism and the prospects for defending this view. Specifically, it is argued that Eleatics should be ideological causal realists in order to avoid a kind of regress challenge to the coherence of Eleaticism. In addition, a defense of Eleaticism on the basis of a causal essentialist account of properties is offered.

Mathematical Fictionalists Cannot Be Sceptics about Reference to Abstract Objects (II-M, Thursday, 12:10 p.m.)

James Davies, University of Toronto

I argue that scepticism about reference to mathematical objects is incompatible with the fictionalist view of mathematics described in Field (1980) and (1989). In (1989), Field argued that because abstract mathematical objects bear no spatiotemporal relations to us, platonists face the challenge of explaining how our mental or linguistic expressions can stand for or be about such objects. Because fictionalists do not believe that mathematical theories, read at face-value, are true, they face no such challenge. Nevertheless, face-value readings of mathematical theories conservatively extend nominalistic theories. So we can use mathematical statements when reasoning about concrete entities without incurring ontological commitments to abstracta. I argue that the claim that face-value readings of our mathematical theories conservatively extend nominalistic theories is incompatible with scepticism about reference to abstract objects. Thus if face-value readings of our mathematical theories conservatively extend nominalistic theories, then we have the capacity to refer to abstract objects.

Transmitting Prejudice: How Slurs Influence Us through Imagery (VI-I, Saturday, 9:00 a.m.)

Ralph DiFranco, University of Connecticut

Slurring words are effective vehicles for spreading prejudice. Relatedly, merely overhearing a slur often makes us feel sullied. An explanation of these features is among the desiderata for a theory of slurs. Recent attempts in the literature to satisfy the desiderata share a common lacuna: they fail to explain the cognitive and emotional effects of slurs on listeners. To fill it, I offer an imagistic theory of slurs. “Wetback” and “slanty-eyed,” e.g., invite us to form racist mental images of their targets. Empirical data suggest that mental imagery has the power to influence our thoughts, emotions and behavior. Thus, my imagistic approach is well suited to account for slurs’ capacity to elicit derogatory attitudes and make hearers feel tarnished.

Grounding, Determinables, and Supplementation (III-M, Thursday, 2:20 p.m.)

Scott Dixon, University of California, Davis

Partial grounding is often thought to be formally analogous to proper parthood in certain ways. For example, both relations are typically understood to be asymmetric (and hence irreflexive) and transitive, and as such, are strict partial orders. But how far does this analogy extend? Proper parthood is often said to obey the Weak Supplementation Principle. In this paper I argue that partial grounding does not obey a ground-theoretic analog of this principle. The case that causes problems for the supplementation principle for grounding also serves as a counterexample to another principle, Minimality, defended by Paul Audi.

An Epistemic Utility Argument for the Threshold View of Outright Belief (III-K, Thursday, 2:20 p.m.)

Kevin Dorst, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

“Epistemic utility arguments” propose (1) certain constraints on the class of acceptable scoring rules for evaluating credal states and (2) a decision rule that translates these evaluations into normative upshots. In this paper I apply this framework to the debate over the relationship between credences and outright beliefs by proposing an epistemic utility argument for the threshold view, which holds that it is rational to believe a proposition iff one is sufficiently confident in it. Since many theorists reject the threshold view, they may be inclined to treat my argument as a modus tollens and infer that there is something unacceptable about my assumptions regarding the class of permissible scoring rules. But this would itself be a significant result, for my assumptions are entirely standard within the epistemic utility

literature, so one can reject my argument only if one rejects this fruitful new approach to answering epistemological questions.

Anamnesia: Remembrance and Resistance in Benjamin and Fanon (VI-I, Saturday, 9:00 a.m.)

Taine Duncan, University of Central Arkansas

Rather than analyzing his personal experiences in Paris, the central location of Walter Benjamin's own exile, Benjamin offers an exposé of the culture and space of nineteenth-century Paris in the *Arcades Project*. Through an analysis of Benjamin's article "A Berlin Chronicle" alongside his *Arcades Project*, I argue that Benjamin's later distancing from personal experience is a deliberate critical technique. Then, I offer a possible alternative account of critical remembrance using Frantz Fanon's autobiographical method in *Black Skin, White Masks*. The act of remembrance—whether personal, historical, or both—provides a bridge between the personal and the universal, the individual and socio-cultural.

Meaning without Fulfillment (V-I, Friday, 1:30 p.m.)

Kirsten Egerstrom, Syracuse University

In Susan Wolf's (2010) *Meaning in Life and Why It Matters*, Wolf defends a compelling conception of meaning in life. For Wolf, one necessary ingredient of a meaningful life is a feeling of fulfillment. The implication of this view is that a meaningful life necessarily feels good. In contrast to Wolf, I argue that some types of painful, difficult or (more generally) negative experiences—ones associated with predominately negative emotions—can also be meaningful. For example, a markedly negative romantic relationship or getting kicked out of graduate school may count as meaningful. Wolf's insistence that positive affect is a necessary condition of meaning in life would ultimately rule these types of formative life experiences out as unworthy of consideration. I will argue, contra Wolf, that a person can draw meaning from some life experiences in spite of the fact that they are not fulfilling.

In Defense of Simples in Contact (VII-I, Saturday, 2:30 p.m.)

Landon D. C. Elkind, University of Iowa

Dean W. Zimmerman, in his 1996 "Could Extended Objects Be Made Out of Simple Parts? An Argument for 'Atomless Gunk'," contended that extended objects composed entirely of simple parts cannot come into contact. I argue that his argument is mistaken for mathematical reasons: Zimmerman relies on false claims concerning metric spaces and infinite sets.

Truthmaking as a Suárezian Legacy: The Semi-Extrinsic Denomination View of Truth in 17th-Century Scholasticism (V-H, Friday, 1:30 p.m.)

Brian Embry, University of Toronto

This paper is about the view of truth that gives rise to the notion of a truthmaker [verificativum] in 17th century scholasticism. What I call “the semi-extrinsic denomination view of truth” has its roots in some aporetic remarks made by Francisco Suárez in his discussion of the question, “What is the truth of cognition?” I argue that, according to the semi-extrinsic denomination view of truth, truth is not a property or a relation but a mereological sum of a mental sentence and its intentional object. This view entails that any mental sentence “S” is true if and only if its intentional object exists, which entails in turn that every true mental sentence has a truthmaker, its intentional object.

Defeating Extreme Modal Skepticism (I-E, Wednesday, 6:00 p.m.)

Lars Enden, University of Washington

By “extreme modal skepticism,” I mean the view that no one is ever justified in his or her beliefs concerning non-actual possibilities. There is a powerful argument in favor of this view, which is in need of a response if modal epistemology is to make any progress. In this paper, I present the argument in favor of extreme modal skepticism, reject some possible responses to it, and ultimately aim for what I take to be its weak spot. The result will be the beginnings of a new metaphysics of modality and a fresh approach to modal epistemology.

Emotion and Deadly Force: A Sartrean Phenomenological Analysis of “Stand Your Ground” Laws (VI-I, Saturday, 9:00 a.m.)

Kimberly Engels, Marquette University

“Stand Your Ground” laws allow someone who is in “reasonable fear of imminent death or great bodily harm” to use deadly force anywhere he legally has the right to be, regardless of whether his life is actually in danger, while having no duty to retreat. In this paper I utilize Sartre’s phenomenological account of emotion to give an analysis of how we experience negative emotions such as fear from the first person point of view, and how this experience typically affects our behavior. After giving support for Sartre’s analysis of fear, I conclude that Stand Your Ground laws are inherently problematic because when one is in a state of fear, he projects distorted affective qualities upon objects, and the most common problem solving behavior in fear, running away, is discouraged by Stand Your Ground as the law states the agent has no duty to retreat.

Aquinas on Intentionality and Intelligible Species: A Problem for Primitive Accounts (VI-K, Saturday, 9:00 a.m.)

Kendall Englund, Syracuse University

Aquinas accounts for the intentionality of mental states by positing intentional species that inhere in the intellect and bring about cognition of extramental objects. Brower and Brower-Toland defend a primitive account of the intentionality of species. On their view, the fact that a species represents an object is brute. I argue that this primitivism is problematic because it conflicts with well-accepted Thomistic principles and undermines the justification for a central inference in Aquinas's argument for the incorporeity of the intellect. Not only are the principles prominent throughout Aquinas's work, but the argument for incorporeity figures prominently in Aquinas's argument for the immortality of the soul. I contend that any interpretation that conflicts with such central lines of Aquinas's reasoning ought to be rejected. If primitivism is to be a viable option, the appeal to primitiveness must be restricted to avoid such problems.

Good Moral Judgment and Decision-Making Without Deliberation (VI-H, Saturday, 9:00 a.m.)

Asia Ferrin, University of Washington

A central normative question in moral psychology asks whether reflection is a necessary feature of good moral judgment and decision-making. In this paper, I discuss three arguments that answer in the affirmative: (1) reflection ensures reliability in moral judgment and decision-making, (2) reflection is necessary for developing good moral judgments and skills, and (3) without reflection, our moral judgments and decisions are not ours; that is, they are not an expression of our agency. I argue that none of these arguments successfully shows that reflection is a necessary component of good moral judgment and decision-making. This implies that good moral judgment and decision-making can result from entirely automatic and subconscious processes.

What Does Belief Have to Do with Truth? (II-M, Thursday, 12:10 p.m.)

Iskra Fileva, University of Colorado, Boulder

I argue that the widely held view that belief aims at the truth is false. I acknowledge that there is an important connection between truth and belief but propose a new way of interpreting that connection. On the account I offer, evidence of truth constrains belief without furnishing an aim for belief.

Counterlegal Dependence and Causation's Arrows (II-K, Thursday, 12:10 p.m.)

Tyrus Fisher, University of California, Davis

A counterlegal is a counterfactual containing an antecedent that is inconsistent with some law. Backtrackers are counterfactuals that tell us how things would be at a time earlier than that of their antecedent, were the antecedent to obtain. Typically, theories that handle counterlegals appropriately handle backtrackers poorly, and vice versa. Two cases in point: Lewis's (1979) ordering semantics handles counterlegals well but not backtrackers. Hiddleston's (2005) causal-model semantics handles backtrackers nicely but not counterlegals. Taking Hiddleston's account as a starting point, I offer steps toward a unified theory capable of handling both counterlegals and backtrackers. The core contribution of this paper is a means for evaluating counterlegals relative to minimally-illegal models.

Thomas Reid on Remembering Events (VI-M, Saturday, 9:00 a.m.)

Marina Folescu, University of Missouri

Reid's account of memory has attracted less interest from Reid scholars than his account of perception. It is true that on his view memory is so closely related to perception, that when all is said and done, not much seems to be importantly different for memory. There are some very good articles explaining how it is possible to have direct knowledge of the past and what consequences this has for Reid's direct realism. However, no one seems to have noticed that, on Reid's understanding of perception and memory, motion and other types of events cannot actually be remembered, because they cannot ever be perceived. The goal of this paper is to show what elements of Reid's theory engender this problem and to argue that, unless we are ready to adopt a certain metaphysical position of events, there is no good way of solving it.

Normative Naturalism and the Wrong Type of Reasons Problem (III-I, Thursday, 2:20 p.m.)

Andrew Forcehimes, Vanderbilt University

In recent years, an impressive research program has developed around non-analytic reductions of the normative. This puts, despite its resurgence, non-naturalism under serious threat. One popular way of challenging such reductions maintains that naturalizations conflate *making* something normatively significant with something *being* normative. The argument based on this distinction, however, has little purchase against non-analytic reductions of the sort developed by Schroeder (2005; 2007). This essay aims to develop an argument that can be marshaled against Schroeder-style accounts: Either Schroeder needs to give the same reductive analysis for epistemic and practical reasons, or he needs to give

different analyses by treating epistemic and practical reasons as species of a larger genus. In this paper I focus on the former horn. For a normative reduction to be successful, any reason-providing implications of this success need to be reducible. Since reductive success would be reason-implicating, the reasons provided by this success should thus be of a piece with the naturalistic reduction of reasons—e.g., desire-based. But they aren't. Reduction, on this horn, accordingly fails.

Basic Mistakes in Performance (V-K, Friday, 1:30 p.m.)

Kim Frost, Syracuse University

I argue that there are basic mistakes in performance, and if so, then we should reject a common dogma: that every exercise of the power of agency is founded on some perfect exercise of the power of agency. If the dogma is false, then we need a conception of the power of agency that allows for immediately imperfect exercises. This demand is not met by heterodox action theories that reject the dogma, such as Thompson (2008), nor can it be accommodated by dispositional conceptions of the power of agency, given how dispositions are commonly understood.

There Is No Circle in the Fourth *Meditation* (II-G, Thursday, 12:10 p.m.)

Everett C. Fulmer, Saint Louis University

Scott Ragland, Saint Louis University

Descartes must solve two problems in the *Fourth Meditation*. First, he must show that his theological grounds for the Truth Rule (TR)—“everything I clearly and distinctly perceive is true”—do not entail a patently false conclusion (“I never err”). To do that, he relies on the “norm of assent” (NA): we should assent only to what is clear and distinct. According to Michael Della Rocca, Descartes’s argument for NA circularly presupposes a “Super Truth-Rule” (STR): only clear and distinct ideas are guaranteed to be true. We show that assuming STR would not be vicious for purposes of solving Descartes’s first problem. But it would be for solving his second problem—which is to show why TR follows from God’s veracity. His argument here also depends on NA, but we show that he does not ground NA on STR, avoiding circularity.

Dogmatism Without Mooreanism (VI-J, Saturday, 9:00 a.m.)

Jonathan Fuqua, Purdue University

One common way of attacking dogmatism is to attack its alleged Mooreanism. The thought is that dogmatism includes (or perhaps entails) Mooreanism, but that Mooreanism is false and thus so is dogmatism. One way of responding to this charge is to defend Mooreanism. Another strategy is to

articulate a version of dogmatism without Mooreanism. This paper is an attempt to articulate such a view.

A Problem for Intellectualism about Knowledge-How (VII-J, Saturday, 2:30 p.m.)

Georgina Gardiner, Rutgers University

Anti-intellectualism about knowledge-how claims knowledge-how is different in kind from knowledge-that. Intellectualism, by contrast, argues that knowledge-how is a kind of knowledge-that. One version of intellectualism, advanced by Jason Stanley, holds that to know how to do something is to (propositionally) know the answer to the question “how could you do it?” In this paper I suggest a problem for this view: I argue that knowledge-how and propositional knowledge have different epistemic profiles, and I draw on Ernest Sosa’s recent “Simone vignette” to develop and illustrate this claim. I thus provide support for anti-intellectualism about knowledge-how.

Formal Purposiveness in Kant’s Aesthetic Judgment (V-N, Friday, 1:30 p.m.)

Gerad Gentry, University of South Carolina

Kant saw the principle of purposiveness as central not merely to aesthetic judgments, but also (via aesthetic judgments) to the unity of cognition in general. In this essay, I argue that this aesthetic principle of purposiveness is a purely cognitive relation between the imagination and the understanding. I start by situating my argument in conversation with Rachel Zuckert’s interpretation. I differ from Zuckert in that while she defends the notion of purposiveness as an object-to-mind relation (“whole-formalism”), I contend that Kant has in view a mind-to-mind relation. Purposiveness is first and foremost a formal cognitive relation. This understanding of purposiveness allows for further interpretations like Zuckert’s, but lays a stronger foundation by first shifting the emphasis from the object to the mind, which in turn will pave the way for a richer integration of aesthetic judgments into a unity of the faculties of cognition.

Dilemmas for Higher-Order Thought Theories of Consciousness (VII-L, Saturday, 2:30 p.m.)

Martha Gibson, University of Wisconsin–Madison

To adequately account for cases of misrepresentation and vacuity, higher-order thought (HOT) theorists have moved away from a strictly relational account of consciousness. The particular relation the HOT stands in to the properties of the first-order sensory state (FOS) now no longer explains why, when we

are in the sensory state, things seem—look, taste, feel—some way to us. Instead, the content of the thought is sufficient to explain the phenomenology that accompanies the FOS. I argue that, in severing the relation of the HOT to the properties of the FOS, the theory jettisons the very thing that might explain how some HOTs produce phenomenology, while others with the very same content do not. It also violates the intuition which is supposed to motivate HO theories, namely, that a state is a conscious one because we are conscious of it.

Reasons-Explanations and Normative Significance (V-K, Friday, 1:30 p.m.)

Andrew Greenlee, University of Rochester

There is a long-standing dispute about whether the reasons invoked in explanations of action are supposed to play a role in the causal etiology of the action. Causalists, such as Donald Davidson and Alfrede Mele, argue that we cannot make sense of reasons-explanations without assuming that an agent's reasons are supposed to cause (or help cause) his or her actions. Even if we accept this claim, some important questions remain: are reasons-explanations just causal explanations? Is being the right kind of cause, or being involved in the right kind of causal process, sufficient for being a motivating reason? I will argue that the answer to both of these questions is no. Whether or not something counts as an agent's reason for an action depends, not just on its causal relation to the action, but on its normative significance. The normative significance of motivating reasons is at least part of what makes them capable of explaining action.

The Metaphysics of Social Construction: A "Grounding" Account (IV-I, Friday, 9:00 a.m.)

Aaron Griffith, Central Michigan University

This paper outlines a new metaphysical account of social construction. The account brings recent work on the notion of "metaphysical grounding" to bear on the phenomenon of social construction. According to the "grounding account" of social construction, for a subject S to be socially constructed as being of a social kind K (e.g., being a woman) is for the fact that S is a K to be grounded in certain social, rather than biological, facts. The account situates the phenomenon of social construction within more general discussions of the metaphysical structure of reality. Insofar as it brings together two bodies of literature that have, heretofore, not been in contact, the grounding account is beneficial to both parties: to social constructionists who want a metaphysical framework for their theories of gender, race, etc. and to metaphysicians interested in new applications of a theory of grounding.

An “American Sublime” in Nineteenth-Century American Art and Philosophy (V-N, Friday, 1:30 p.m.)

Nicholas Guardiano, Southern Illinois University Carbondale

A unique sense of the sublime before the greatness of nature is expressed in the American landscape paintings of the nineteenth century, such as those by Martin Johnson Heade and Frederic Church. This “American sublime” is grounded in the Transcendentalist philosophy of Emerson, and it varies from traditional conceptions of the sublime found in the history of aesthetics. Contrary to Burke’s theory that emphasizes the negative feeling of terror and the inhibition of thinking and acting, it involves a peaceful feeling of tranquility and a state of creative contemplation. Contrary to Kant’s theory that analyzes the dynamics of human subjectivity and associates the sublime with our intellectual superiority over nature, it takes nature as the ultimate measure of things. The landscape paintings not only contribute to the aesthetics of the sublime, they moreover challenge limited conceptions of art’s powers of representing different kinds of subject matter.

Two Aims in Artistic Interpretation: Thesis and Theme (VI-L, Saturday, 9:00 a.m.)

James Harold, Mount Holyoke College

Monroe Beardsley famously distinguished between two ways of interpreting an artwork: looking for a thesis, and for a theme. A theme is a subject matter—an “abstract noun or phrase,” not a statement. A thesis, by contrast, is a truth-evaluable claim. The aim of the paper is to rehabilitate Beardsley’s distinction between thesis and theme, and to develop a novel problem for interpretative approaches that privilege the search for thesis over theme. Having a thesis is plausibly a bad-making feature of an artwork, and a principle of charity in interpretation suggests that we ought to focus on theme, not thesis.

A New Solution to the Problem of Old Evidence (III-K, Thursday, 2:20 p.m.)

Stephan Hartmann, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München

The Problem of Old Evidence has troubled Bayesians ever since Clark Glymour first presented it in 1980. Several solutions have been proposed, but all of them have drawbacks and none of them is considered to be the definite solution. In this short note, I propose a new solution which combines several old ideas with a new one. It circumvents the crucial omniscience problem in an elegant way and leads to a considerable confirmation of the hypothesis in question.

The Self-Defeat Argument for Phenomenal Conservatism (VI-J, Saturday, 9:00 a.m.)

Landon Hedrick, University of Nebraska–Lincoln

Michael Huemer defends the Self-Defeat Argument for phenomenal conservatism. The basic idea is that when someone believes that phenomenal conservatism is false, such a belief is either false or, if true, doxastically unjustified. This undesirable result results from the fact that we (human cognizers) form our beliefs on the basis of seemings, and beliefs need to be based on a source of propositional justification in order to be doxastically justified. In this paper I show that two recent criticisms of the argument are misguided: that of Clayton Littlejohn and Moti Mizrahi. Then I raise a real problem with the argument. The problem is that there are theories of justification which are incompatible with phenomenal conservatism but which would allow us to have a doxastically justified belief in the falsity of phenomenal conservatism *even if* such a belief is based on a seeming.

Introspecting the Temporal Structure of Perceptual Experience (III-H, Thursday, 2:20 p.m.)

Aaron Henry, University of Toronto

I defend representationalism against a recent challenge put forward by Soteriou (2013). Soteriou rejects representationalism in part because he argues it fails to accommodate introspective evidence about the phenomenal character of perception. The problematic evidence consists in a set of claims about the phenomenology of temporal perception and its transparency to introspection. Representationalism's failure to accommodate these claims, Soteriou argues, undermines the view's adequacy as a theory of perception's phenomenal character. I argue that one shouldn't accept the alleged introspective evidence that Soteriou raises against the representationalist. Specifically, one should deny that introspection reveals the apparent temporal structure of a perceptual experience as opposed to the apparent temporal structure of what it is an experience of. I argue that Soteriou's claim to the contrary conflicts with two plausible phenomenological principles which are central to his project.

An Empirical Reductio of the Expert/Gender Principle (IV-G, Friday, 9:00 a.m.)

Geoffrey Holtzman, The Graduate Center, CUNY

Lately, there has been a good deal of discussion regarding the potential causes of the dearth of women in philosophy. In particular, special attention has been given to a hypothesis put forward by Buckwalter and Stich (2014), who suggest that philosophical "differences could be playing a significant role in shaping the demography of the profession." My purpose here is to reject the arguments they put

forward, and suggest that instead, the nature of philosophical debate enables pre-existing gender biases—similar to those that exists in other fields—to take foot in a way that it cannot take foot in other fields in which women have traditionally been underrepresented. I do this through both logical and empirical analysis.

Immodesty and Educated Guesses (II-J, Thursday, 12:10 p.m.)

Sophie Horowitz, Rice University

How can degrees of belief, or credences, “get things right,” given that they cannot be true or false? I defend a novel view: credences get things right by licensing true “educated guesses.” The idea is that an agent’s credences license all-or-nothing verdicts, which can be elicited in forced choice scenarios; credences get things right to the extent that these all-or-nothing verdicts tend to be true. This account vindicates a popular and plausible thought that rational credence is stable: if you know your credences are rational, you should not want to change them without receiving new evidence.

Virtue in Machine Ethics: An Approach Based on Evolutionary Computation (V-J, Friday, 1:30 p.m.)

Don Howard, University of Notre Dame
Ioan Muntean, University of Notre Dame

In this paper we discuss philosophical aspects of one implementation of artificial normative agency. We argue for an artificial moral agent (AMA) based on two components: (i) a version of virtue ethics (VE); and (ii) an implementation based on evolutionary computation (EC), more concretely genetic algorithms. The reasons to choose VE and EC are related to two elements that are, we argue, central to any approach to artificial morality: autonomy and creativity. The greater the autonomy an artificial agent has, the more it needs moral standards. In the virtue ethics model, each agent builds its own “character” in time. In this paper we show how both VE and EC are more adequate to a “social approach” to AMA when compared to the standard approaches based on deontological or consequentialist models implemented through standard computational tools. The project of an autonomous and creative Artificial Moral Agent (AMA) thus implemented is the GAMA=genetic-inspired autonomous moral agent. Unlike the majority of other implementations of machine ethics, our model is agent-centered; it emphasizes the developmental and behavioral aspects of the ethical agent.

Williamson, Closure and KK (III-K, Thursday, 2:20 p.m.)

Daniel Immerman, University of Notre Dame

This paper focuses on the relative merits of two different types of principle. The first type, closure principles, say that if you know some proposition, this proposition entails a second proposition, and you meet further conditions, then you know the second proposition. The second type, KK principles, say that if you know some proposition and you meet further conditions then you know that you know the proposition. Closure principles are often thought to be far more plausible than KK principles. This is thanks in part to an influential argument against KK principles by Timothy Williamson. In this paper I construct a parallel argument against closure principles and show that it is just as threatening to closure principles as Williamson's original argument was to KK principles.

Some Challenges to a Contrastive Treatment of Grounding (III-M, Thursday, 2:20 p.m.)

Amir Arturo Javier Castellanos, Syracuse University

Jonathan Schaffer has provided three putative counterexamples to the transitivity of grounding, and has argued that a contrastive treatment provides a resolution to them, which in turn provides some motivation for accepting such a treatment. In this paper, I argue that one of these cases can be turned into a putative counterexample to a principle which Schaffer's proposed resolution depends on. This puts some pressure on the contrastivist to dismiss the original case, which weakens the motivation for accepting his treatment. In the remainder of the paper I argue that the prima facie most promising strategy for the contrastivist, which is to place some restriction on which contrastive facts are admissible in grounding explanations, faces some important difficulties. While these difficulties are not insurmountable, they do pose a substantial challenge for the contrastivist.

Is "Life" a Core-Dependent Homonym?: A Response to Christopher Shields's "The Dialectic of Life" (V-L, Friday, 1:30 p.m.)

Gideon Jeffrey, Saint Louis University

Despite philosophical interest in the project of defining "life," a number of philosophers have recently suggested that no adequate definition is possible. In a recent paper, Christopher Shields argues that this pessimism is generated by an unwarranted assumption: namely, that any adequate definition of "life" must be univocal. He then proposes a novel definition of "life" which does not depend on this assumption. In brief, he holds that "life" is a core-dependent homonym, the core of which is being an intrinsic teleonomic system. In this paper I argue that Shields's proposal fails. My thesis is that his

definition is internally inconsistent: given Shields's own accounts of core-dependent homonymy, intrinsicity, and teleonomy, being an intrinsic teleonomic system cannot be the core of a core-homonymous definition of life. In closing, however, I suggest that a univocal modification of his proposal may itself furnish an adequate definition of "life."

Tyrannized Souls: Plato's Depiction of the Tyrannical Man (V-G, Friday, 1:30 p.m.)

Mark A. Johnstone, McMaster University

In Book 9 of Plato's *Republic*, Socrates describes the nature and origins of the "tyrannical man," whose soul is "like" a tyrannical city. In this paper, I examine the "government" that exists within the tyrannical man's soul. I begin by demonstrating the inadequacy of three views sometimes found in the literature on Plato: the view that the tyrannical man's soul is ruled by "lawless" unnecessary appetites, the view that it is ruled by sexual desire, and the view that it is ruled by a lust for power. I then present my own account. On the view I defend, the tyrannical man's soul is ruled by a single, persistent, powerful desire for bodily pleasure: as much as he can get, and however he can get it. I show how understanding the tyrannical man in the way I recommend helps to address some common concerns about his depiction in the *Republic*.

Philosophical Individualism (IV-G, Friday, 9:00 a.m.)

John A. Keller, Niagara University

What is required for an argument to be "successful," where successful arguments are the kind of arguments we (should) aim to produce? Some hold that there is an objective (mind-independent) criterion of success, such as soundness. Others hold that success depends on the reactions of some *ideal* audience. Still others hold that successful arguments must be convincing to one's interlocutors. I argue against these standard positions, and defend a form of relativism about success, where an argument can only be said to fail or succeed relative to some individual (or class of relevantly similar individuals). Very roughly, I defend the view that an argument *A* is successful for individual *i* if and only if *i* knows that *A* is sound (and non-fallacious). Despite its novelty, this view comports surprisingly well with our pre-theoretic intuitions and is the only criterion that ranks some arguments for substantive *philosophical* conclusions as successful.

Against Cognitive Propositions (IV-L, Friday, 9:00 a.m.)

Lorraine Keller, Niagara University

In this paper, I present an objection to Scott Soames's theory of cognitive propositions (CP). I argue that CP faces the following dilemma: (i) there are true mathematical propositions that CP entails do not exist or (ii) CP entails that, possibly, an infinite intellect exists. The first horn leads to obvious falsehood; and since CP is supposed to be a naturalistic theory of propositions, the second is unacceptable as well. Thus, CP fails as a theory of propositions.

A Kantian Critique of Our Epistemological Common Sense (VI-J, Saturday, 9:00 a.m.)

Matthew Kelsey, Tarrant County College

Following Kant's suggestive discussion of the "preformationist" error in philosophical theorizing, I identify structurally similar methodological commitments at the heart of standard contemporary models of epistemological reflection and justification. Because of their defining construal of our considered judgments as the "data" corresponding to our epistemic "theories," such models prove unable to motivate an assent to the norms of human cognition as genuine norms. Thus, the core methodological commitments of what I call "standard analytical epistemology" lead in the end to absurd consequences, regardless of their specific content or conclusions. Kant's counterproposal of radically dissociating normative questions of right from explanatory questions of fact, by contrast, presents a viable alternative to these metaphilosophically inadequate approaches.

Refining Four-Dimensionalism (II-F, Thursday, 12:10 p.m.)

Shieva Kleinschmidt, University of Southern California

Current formulations of Four-Dimensionalism may be objected to on grounds that they are too inflexible: the formulations do not seem to allow for enough variety in the views they are paired with. For instance, Kit Fine has noted that formulations of Four-Dimensionalism in terms of instantaneous parts may be too demanding for Four-Dimensionalists who believe nothing is instantaneous. And Trenton Merricks has argued that one can think something persists four-dimensionally without taking it to have proper temporal parts (i.e., temporal parts distinct from the whole object), and claims that our formulation of Four-Dimensionalism should be revised to allow for this. I will add my own worries to those of Fine and Merricks. I will note that current formulations of Four-Dimensionalism are not sufficiently neutral with respect to the structure of time, with respect to how liberally objects decompose into parts, and with respect to whether objects and the regions they fill match in mereological structure. I will then attempt

to give a single formulation of Four-Dimensionalism that is sufficiently neutral, capturing what is central to four-dimensional persistence without including any of these needless commitments. We are thus left with something harder to object to than its more commitment-laden counterparts, and perhaps also something that sheds light on what is really at stake in debates about whether things persist four-dimensionally.

A Defense of Epistemic Instrumentalism (VII-J, Saturday, 2:30 p.m.)

Matthew C. Kopec, Northwestern University

Epistemic Instrumentalism, which is roughly the view that epistemic rationality is a subspecies of practical rationality, fell from prominence after an attack on the view by Thomas Kelly in his article “Epistemic Rationality as Instrumental Rationality: A Critique.” In this essay, I show that Kelly’s arguments fail, thus leaving Epistemic Instrumentalism as a live alternative.

Metaphysical Explanation without Grounding (VI-G, Saturday, 9:00 a.m.)

David Mark Kovacs, Cornell University

In recent years, there has been a surging interest in grounding, a supposedly primitive notion of metaphysical determination. One commonly cited argument for the indispensability of grounding is that it is an “explanatory relation,” while the more familiar (modal, mereological, set-theoretic etc.) relations it is invoked to replace are not. For example, the explanatory asymmetry between the fact that Socrates exists and the fact that its singleton set {Socrates} exists, cannot be guaranteed without appeal to ground. In this paper, I offer what I take to be a charitable reconstruction of this argument and then criticize it. I argue that there is an as of yet neglected model of metaphysical explanation according to which the explanatory power of a metaphysical explanation isn’t due to any particular “explanatory relation.”

Modally Plenitudinous Endurantism (V-F, Friday, 1:30 p.m.)

Irem Kurtsal Steen, Boğaziçi University

According to the plenitude thesis, for every non-empty space-time region, there is at least one object that exactly fits there and persists through its temporal axis. According to modally full plenitude, for every modal profile satisfied by a non-empty space-time region there is a distinct such object. The plenitude views are consistent with endurantism and with perdurantism about persistence. A major argument for plenitude or modally full plenitude is the argument from anthropocentrism. I argue that a

parallel and equally strong argument supports endurantism. Specifically, objects must be endurers and events must be perdurers.

Concept Individuation for the Neo-Millian in Cases of Belief Revision (IV-M, Friday, 9:00 a.m.)

Kyle Landrum, University of Houston

Several theorists in the Millian tradition have recently distinguished themselves by separating issues of concept individuation from those of conceptual content. Granting the soundness of this strategy, one may wonder how best to individuate concepts. This paper will adjudicate between three camps: inferential, epistemic, and historical theorists. After explaining each view, the three will be compared in their capacity to handle cases of belief revision. The paper will argue for an interpretation of such cases according to which a subject retains one and the same concept across the revision. This entails problems for the epistemic and inferential theorist. The upshot is that only the historical theorist handles such cases in a natural way.

On the Distinctive Value of Knowledge (IV-K, Friday, 9:00 a.m.)

Kok Yong Lee, University of Missouri

In *The Value of Knowledge and the Pursuit of Understanding*, Jonathan Kvanvig argues that since justification sufficient for knowledge is not more valuable than mere justification, knowledge is not distinctively valuable. In this paper, I first examine closely Kvanvig's argument, showing that his argument fails to prove that knowledge is not distinctively valuable. I then argue that given that knowledge does not, while mere justified true belief does, depend on some falsehoods essentially, knowledge is in general more valuable than mere justified true belief, since truths (falsehoods), presumably, are epistemically valuable (disvaluable). This suffices to show that knowledge is distinctively valuable.

Theories of Welfare: Monistic or Pluralistic, Enumerative or Explanatory? (V-I, Friday, 1:30 p.m.)

Eden Lin, Rutgers University

Monistic theories of welfare identify a single basic good, whereas pluralistic theories identify more than one. This distinction is familiar enough, but it might be thought that the same theory can count as monistic or pluralistic depending on how it is described. Desire satisfactionism sounds monistic when it's glossed as the view that getting what you want is the only basic good, but couldn't it also be regarded as pluralistic on the grounds that we want many things? I propose an account of basic goods that explains

(i) why theories are monistic or pluralistic independently of how they are described, and (ii) why it matters whether monism or pluralism is true. This account also contravenes the recent proposal that some theories merely enumerate the basic goods while others explain why the things that are basically good have that property: on my view, every theory is both enumerative and explanatory.

When “Or” Meets “Might”: A Compositional Acceptability-Conditional Semantics for Classical Logic and Epistemic Modality (VII-K, Saturday, 2:30 p.m.)

Hanti Lin, Australian National University

I want to do a case study about epistemic modals and disjunctions—but with a very general goal: to demonstrate the possibility of taking acceptability conditions as compositional semantic values in natural language semantics. When one asserts the disjunction “the keys might be in the drawer, or they might be in the car,” the speaker seems committed to both disjuncts, “the keys might be in the drawer” and “they might be in the car.” Namely, “or” behaves like a conjunction “and” when it meets epistemic modality “might.” It has been noted that it is very difficult to explain this phenomenon by conversational implicature (Zimmermann 2000); a semantic explanation is worth pursuing. This paper proposes the first semantics that explains the conjunctive “or” as a semantic phenomenon and still preserves classical logic when ‘might’ is absent, without *ad hoc* case distinctions. The proposed semantics provides *acceptability conditions* rather than truth conditions. To be more specific, information states are modeled as sets of possible worlds, and each sentence is *compositionally* evaluated in each information state as acceptable or not—without a detour through objective truth, relative truth, context change potential, or other semantic values. That is why Ockham-Grice’s Razor favors this style of semantics, or so I will argue.

Is Grounding an Internal Relation? (III-M, Thursday, 2:20 p.m.)

Jon Litland, University of Texas at Austin

Most authors on metaphysical grounding have taken full grounding to be an internal relation in the sense that it’s necessary that if the grounds and the grounded both obtain then the grounds ground the grounded. In this paper I exploit empirical and provably non-paradoxical self-reference to prove conclusively that even immediate full grounding isn’t an internal relation in this sense.

Are Skill Selective Immigration Policies Just? (III-J, Thursday, 2:20 p.m.)

Douglas MacKay, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Many high income countries have skill selective immigration policies, favoring prospective immigrants who are highly educated and/or highly skilled. In this paper, I investigate whether it is permissible for high income countries to adopt such policies. In addressing this question, I adopt what Joseph Carens calls a “realistic approach” to the ethics of immigration, that is, an approach that works within the constraints of existing moral, institutional, behavioral, and political realities. I therefore assume that legitimate states possess a moral and legal right to exclude, and ask how they should exercise it. I first address the question of whether skill selective immigration policies are just in principle. Here, I ask whether it is in principle permissible for states to take skill as a reason for inclusion, that is, a consideration in favor of selecting one prospective immigrant rather than another. I argue that it is. The goals of economic growth and ensuring a sufficient tax base are legitimate purposes of states and so it is in principle permissible for high income countries to design their immigration policies to realize them. I present this argument in part 1. In part 2, I consider the justice of high income countries’ skill selective immigration policies in light of their likely effects on residents of low and middle income countries. I argue that such policies are not unjust, even in cases where they are harmful to residents of low and middle income countries. High income countries are permitted to exercise their right to self-determination to a reasonable degree, which includes favoring skilled prospective immigrants from low and middle income countries. However, I do argue that high income countries’ skill selective immigration policies contribute to an unjust relation between high income countries and low and middle income countries to the extent that these policies are a factor in high income countries’ nonfulfillment of their duty to aid residents of low and middle income countries.

How Virtue Epistemologists Should Handle Epistemic Luck (IV-K, Friday, 9:00 a.m.)

John Mahlan, University of Virginia

Virtue epistemologists claim that knowledge is true belief held because of an agent’s intellectual virtue. But critics argue that in cases of environmental epistemic luck an agent can hold a true belief because of her intellectual virtue and nevertheless fail to have knowledge. Knowledge, critics argue, therefore cannot be identified with true belief held because of an agent’s intellectual virtue. In this paper I propose a new solution to this problem. In cases of environmental luck the exercise of intellectual virtue is not the most salient explanatory factor for why an agent holds a true belief. Her true belief is therefore not because of her intellectual virtue, and so does not threaten the identification of

knowledge with true belief held because of intellectual virtue. I show that my view has another implication: epistemologists have been wrong to hold that understanding—as distinct from knowledge—is compatible with environmental luck.

The Perspective of Rational Deliberation (VII-J, Saturday, 2:30 p.m.)

Sharon Mason, Indiana University Bloomington

Many philosophers take there to be something epistemologically significant about having a view of the reasonableness of one's own beliefs. But under what conditions does a person count as having such a perspective? I argue here that there is a special circumstance where a person who engages in an entirely first-order rational deliberation (involving no self-regarding thoughts) and draws a first-order conclusion has a second-order perspective on the reasonableness of her own beliefs. In doing so, I defend two claims: first, when a person believes that p as the result of her first-order rational deliberation, she undertakes a second-order commitment to taking herself to have good reasons for believing that p . Second, when a person believes that p as the result of her first-order rational deliberation, she will also have a second-order view that she has good reasons for believing what she does.

"Climate Change Deniers" and Nietzsche (IV-I, Friday, 9:00 a.m.)

Phillip A. McReynolds, University of North Carolina, Charlotte

This paper is a Nietzschean critique of an aspect of the environmental movement responding to what used to be known as "the greenhouse effect" or "global warming", but which is now commonly called "global climate change." In this paper I utilize Nietzschean critique to examine the uses to which truth is put in responding to climate change and to show how these uses, or, more properly, the forces that drive them, undermine the goals of environmentalism.

A Problem for Theories of Power (IV-I, Friday, 9:00 a.m.)

Torsten Menge (Georgetown University)

Social power is commonly understood as a causal capacity of agents. In this paper, I argue that no substantive theory is available that would redeem attributions of power-as-capacity. I argue that all candidates for a substantive theory face the same challenge: to explain what grounds the social power of an agent, we need to make reference to the social power of other agents, which in turn requires explanation. Unless it bottoms out in non-social capacities, the substantive account will remain incomplete. I discuss four strategies to solve the problem: Strategies that attempt to ground social power in non-social capacities, such as (1) the ability to use physical force, or (2) the ability to access and

use material resources. And attempts to ground power in (3) regular patterns of interaction between aligned agents, or in (4) the collective acceptance by aligned agents. I argue that all four strategies fail.

At Enmity with Unreality: Is Abolitionism Self-Defeating? (VII-M, Saturday, 2:30 p.m.)

Per-Erik Milam, University of California, San Diego

Abolitionism is the view that if no one is responsible, then we ought to abandon the reactive attitudes, like resentment, indignation, and guilt. Anti-abolitionists hold that we are not required to abandon the reactive attitudes even if no one is responsible. They claim either that it is impossible to abandon the reactive attitudes and so we cannot be required to do so, or that the losses from doing so outweigh the gains and so we are not required to do so. In this paper, I defend abolitionism against what I call the Self-Defeating Argument. The SDA suggests that one of the main abolitionist reasons for abandoning the reactive attitudes is self-refuting. In particular, it suggests i) that taking a wholly non-reactive stance necessarily involves a performative contradiction, and ii) that doing so does not allow us to live in accordance with the facts. I show that this argument fails.

Plain Truth and the Incoherence of Alethic Functionalism (III-L, Thursday, 2:20 p.m.)

Jay M. Newhard, East Carolina University

In this paper, it is argued that plain truth leads to several serious problems for alethic functionalism. First, extending an argument by Stewart Shapiro, it is argued that plain truth does not merely threaten alethic functionalism with collapse to alethic monism, but that collapse is immediate. Second, it is argued that alethic functionalism is incoherent as a result of conflicting commitments to a manifestation relation which is both reflexive (to accommodate plain truth) and irreflexive (to accommodate other cases). Third, it is argued that incorporating plain truth leads to the contradiction that a lower level alethic property which manifests truth is both identical to and distinct from truth itself. Fourth, it is argued that incorporating plain truth leads to the collapse of the core truisms to the correspondence intuition. Finally, it is argued that the first and fourth problems jointly entail a collapse of alethic functionalism to correspondence monism.

Microphysical Causation and the Case for Physicalism (VI-G, Saturday, 9:00 a.m.)

Alyssa Ney, University of Rochester

This paper explores a tension between physicalism and a position that has become increasingly widespread: the rejection of microphysical causation. The trouble is that the case for physicalism as it is standardly understood today rests on inductive support for the principle that all physical effects have physical causes (the Completeness of Physics). The case for this principle, however, explicitly relies on claims about microphysical causes. Two strategies are explored for resolving this tension while maintaining the spirit of the arguments behind both views.

Well-Being, Self-Regarding Reasons, and Morality (V-I, Friday, 1:30 p.m.)

Howard Nye, University of Alberta

It seems that we should want to avoid becoming intellectually disabled. It is common for philosophers to infer from this that those of us without intellectual disabilities are intrinsically better off than individuals with intellectual disabilities, and that there are consequently stronger moral reasons for others to preserve our lives than to preserve the lives of intellectually disabled individuals. In this paper I argue against this inference from what states we should prefer for ourselves to how much moral reason others have to maintain these states on our behalves. I argue that there is an important sense in which an outcome contributes to our well-being to a certain degree, namely the extent to which others should want it out of care for us, which plays a central role in determining the moral priority of ensuring the outcome for us over ensuring distinct outcomes for others. But an outcome's contribution to our well-being in this sense can come apart from the extent to which we should prefer it for ourselves.

Major Problems in Evolutionary Transitions: Toward a Metabolism-Based Account of Macroevolution (V-L, Friday, 1:30 p.m.)

Russell Powell, Boston University

The model of major transitions in evolution (MTE) devised by Maynard Smith and Szathmáry has exerted tremendous influence over evolutionary theorists. Although MTE inconsistently combines different types of event, its appeal lies in depicting hierarchical increases in complexity by means of evolutionary transitions in individuality (ETIs). We consider the implications of major evolutionary events overlooked by MTE and its ETI-oriented successors, such as the biological oxygenation of Earth and the acquisitions of mitochondria and plastids. We argue that a metabolic perspective, which has been neglected in philosophical theorizing of macroevolution, not only accommodates major events that are missed by

MTE and its successor theories—including significant shifts in the form and organization of life—but also provides a crucial explanatory component to putatively non-metabolic major transitions that are picked out by existing MTE theory. We discuss the virtues and drawbacks of such a metabolic perspective, including the theoretical implications of broadening philosophical accounts of macroevolution beyond replication, individuals, and morphology. We conclude that due to the diversity of formative mechanisms and events in the history of life, a complete and unified theory of major transitions is not likely to be found.

Intergenerational Justice and Discounting the Future (III-J, Thursday, 2:20 p.m.)

Duncan Purves, University of Wyoming

Cost-benefit analysis as employed by economists attributes diminished (dis)value to future payouts (costs and benefits). Though discounting the future is a standard feature of the work of economists, attempts to justify discounting appear to rely on dubious moral or empirical assumptions. This gives the appearance that the practice of discounting contravenes our duties of justice to future people. I defend the practice of discounting future pay-offs against this concern: First, I argue that harmful choices are morally worse than those that are not harmful. Second, I argue that because public policy choices are “identity-affecting,” the probability that some policy choice will constitute a harm for members of a population diminishes the further we look into the future. These two facts together constitute a sound moral justification of discounting the future.

How Not to Defend the Factoring Account (III-I, Thursday, 2:20 p.m.)

Sarah Raskoff, University of Arizona

It is natural to think that whenever it is rational for an agent A to phi, A has reason to phi. It is also natural to think that A has a reason to phi just in case there is some reason to phi R and A “has” or “possesses” R. Let’s follow Mark Schroeder and call this second natural view, the one that factors the has-a-reason relation into the reason and the having or possession of that reason, “the factoring account” (TFA). Recently, TFA has come under attack. Schroeder argues that cases in which an agent has false beliefs are counterexamples to TFA. In these cases, Schroeder claims, because of the agent’s false beliefs, there is no plausible candidate R such that R is a reason to phi and the agent has R. Schroeder maintains that an agent can have a reason to phi R without R being a reason to phi independently of the agent having it. In recent work, Errol Lord defends TFA. He argues that the same true propositions that make it rational for A to believe that she has reason to act are full-fledged reasons to act, given the requisite desire. I argue that Lord’s account, like other factoring accounts, faces a dilemma: either it

gives an implausible account of the bases of action in deceived cases, or else must concede that actions in those cases are not rational after all. The upshot is that the most promising strategy for those convinced that the reasons that one has must be true propositions is to give up TFA entirely.

Embodied Virtue in the *Phaedo* (IV-F, Friday, 9:00 a.m.)

Douglass Reed, University of Virginia

I argue that in the *Phaedo* Socrates believes that a person can possess virtue while her soul is embodied. Most readings of the dialogue rule out this possibility because commentators attribute to Socrates the following two claims. First, a soul cannot possess wisdom while embodied (66e4). Second, virtue requires wisdom. Together these claims entail that an embodied soul cannot possess virtue. In order to resist this conclusion, I argue that Socrates does not think that virtue requires wisdom. Although he never actually asserts this, consensus among commentators is that he commits to it in a long and notoriously difficult sentence at 69a5-c2. Accordingly, I set out to provide an interpretation of this sentence that does not commit Socrates to this view. In order to provide this interpretation I investigate three other relevant passages. In the first two—the defense of his decision to die (63e6-69e4) and the end of the Affinity Argument (80c1-84b5)—Socrates discusses virtue. In the third passage (79d1-6) he offers an explicit characterization of wisdom. Through a careful study of these passages I reconstruct Socrates' view of the relationship between virtue and wisdom, according to which it is virtue that is required for wisdom. With this view in hand I return to and provide an interpretation of the sentence at 69a5-c2 that does not commit Socrates to the claim that virtue requires wisdom. If this is correct, in this paper I will show that commentators are wrong to attribute to Socrates the claim that virtue requires wisdom. Moreover, I will provide positive evidence that in the *Phaedo* he believes that embodied virtue is possible.

All You Need Is Virtue (with a Little Help from Your Friends) (IV-K, Friday, 9:00 a.m.)

Jonathan Reibsam, Saint Louis University

Robust virtue epistemology refers to any account of knowledge that includes only virtue-theoretic epistemic conditions. Advocates of robust virtue epistemology claim that their view is anti-skeptical and that it solves the Gettier problem, while retaining a certain theoretical simplicity. However, a number of philosophers have recently argued that robust virtue epistemology requires a kind of epistemological individualism, and that this epistemological individualism forces robust virtue epistemologists into the dilemma of either embracing skepticism regarding knowledge gained through epistemic dependence or losing their solution to the Gettier problem. I will argue, to the contrary, that a “socialized” virtue

reliabilist theory is available that both qualifies as a robust virtue epistemology and is sufficiently anti-individualistic to avoid the dilemma. I conclude that robust virtue epistemology is compatible with robust epistemic dependence.

Must a Cause Precede Its Effect? (V-L, Friday, 1:30 p.m.)

John Roberts, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

It is widely held that space-time theories like General Relativity can make backwards-in-time causation possible by means of closed time-like curves. But it is also widely held that such backwards causation is limited: one event C can cause an earlier event E just in case there is a forward-pointing time-like or light-like path from C to E . Thus, a cause C can be later than its effect E only if it is also earlier than E . (In these cases, each event is both earlier and later than the other, since you can get from either of them to the other via a forward-pointing time-like curve.) Call this weak backwards causation. I argue here that this is a mistake: If closed time-like curves make backwards causation possible at all, then they also make possible strong backwards causation, in which the cause is later and not also earlier than the effect.

Responsibility for Disjunctions and an Alleged Counterexample to Rule A (IV-H, Friday, 9:00 a.m.)

Michael Robinson, Washington & Jefferson College

Charles Hermes argues that the Direct Argument for the incompatibility of determinism and moral responsibility fails because one of the inference rules on which it relies, Rule A, is invalid. Rule A states that if a proposition p is broadly logically necessary, then p is true and no one is, or ever has been, even partly morally responsible for the fact that p . Hermes purports to offer a counterexample to Rule A which focuses on agents' moral responsibility for disjunctions. I defend the validity of Rule A against Hermes's objection.

Heraclitus on Political Order (V-G, Friday, 1:30 p.m.)

Jan Maximilian Robitzsch, University of Pennsylvania

In this paper, I contribute to the examination of Heraclitus's political thought by discussing the question of what type of political ideology Heraclitus's fragments are most amenable to. This question is somewhat anachronistic as political vocabulary is just evolving at the time that Heraclitus is writing. Nevertheless, Heraclitus was certainly also confronted with different ideas of political organization and he may have had a preference in regard to which kinds of political order are best. In "Equality and

Justice in Early Greek Cosmologies,” Vlastos argues for the view that Heraclitus was a supporter of a limited democracy. In the paper, I assess this argument and argue that this interpretation of Heraclitus is misleading: Heraclitus was most likely a supporter of aristocratic ideology.

Necessitism and the Abstract/Concrete Distinction (I-E, Wednesday, 6:00 p.m.)

Daniel Rubio, Rutgers University

The distinction between abstracta and concreta is often invoked in analytic metaphysics, but it has so far resisted reductive analysis. Nevertheless, it does important work in many well-known theories of modality. In this paper, I approach the question from the perspective of modal necessitism, defended most recently by Timothy Williamson. I begin by laying out the work Williamsonian Necessitism assigns the distinction. Next, I survey extant proposals in the literature in search for a reduction for necessitists. Finally, I settle on a promising candidate—which I name the location analysis and defend against troublesome counterexamples, arguing that certain popular theories of properties are problematic within a necessitist framework. I conclude that, unlike their contingentist opponents, Williamsonian Necessitists have an adequate reductive account of the distinction, providing another example of metaphysical work the theory can accomplish.

The Failure of the Ineliminability Argument for Causal Role Functions (IV-M, Friday, 9:00 a.m.)

Jannai Shields, University of Rochester

In an influential paper, Ron Amundson and George Lauder argue that causal role (CR) functions, as studied in functional anatomy, cannot be eliminated in favor of selected effect (SE) functions. The argument fails, and despite the attention Amundson and Lauder’s paper has received, no one has yet shown where the argument goes awry. I do so here. The upshot of their argument’s failure is that it is still reasonable for people to take the position that the SE analysis of function is the uniquely appropriate analysis for evolutionary biology.

Quasi-realism and the Problem of the Schizoid Attitude (I-F, Wednesday, 6:00 p.m.)

Kenneth Shields, University of Missouri

Quasi-realism about morality is the combination of two positions: expressivism about the nature of normative judgment and the preservation of ordinary normative realist-sounding discourse. But this combination has seemed inherently unstable, because of what Alexander Miller calls the problem of the

schizoid attitude. Sharon Street has recently argued that quasi-realism cannot evade this problem. In this paper, I argue that Street's argument fails to show this about Simon Blackburn's quasi-realism. However, I think the problem of the schizoid attitude may still remain a challenge for even Blackburn's position, when quasi-realism is paired with a deontological outlook.

Reason and Literary Form in Descartes's *Meditations*: The Case of the Cartesian Circle (V-H, Friday, 1:30 p.m.)

Matthew Simpson, Luther College

The well-known problems in the argumentation of Descartes's *Meditations* have led some scholars to propose that the work contains dissimulation, that Descartes didn't mean what he said. A parallel scholarly conversation has considered the literary form of the *Meditations*, especially with reference to spiritual exercises in the Roman Catholic tradition. The question of literary form has important consequences for the issue of dissimulation because judgments about the work's sincerity will hinge on what kind of book we think Descartes wrote and, in particular, on our understanding of the role of argumentation within the literary form in question. This essay takes the Cartesian Circle, a familiar problem in the third *Meditation*, as a case study of the ways that Descartes's text functions as "cognitive exercises" and of how logical fallacies might come to have a place within this literary form.

On the Performativity of Deontic Must (VII-K, Saturday, 2:30 p.m.)

Daniel Skibra, Northwestern University

Dilip Ninan (2005) raises two puzzles of deontic modality; although ought and must are deontic necessity modals, (1) an assertion "must p " cannot be felicitously conjoined with a denial of p , and (2) deontic must cannot take Perfect complements. Deontic ought has neither of these properties. Ninan's proposed solution to these puzzles involves the claim that there is a performative dimension to must that accounts for this surprising behavior. In this paper, I focus on the second of these puzzles, that must cannot take Perfect complements, and argue that this puzzle should be disentangled from discussions of the performativity of modals. I argue that this behavior is in fact an instance of a more general phenomenon pertaining to the interaction of modals and aspectual class. This phenomenon, in turn, points to the need to investigate the connection between modality and aspectual class in greater detail.

Comparing Tastes: A New Problem for Relativism (III-L, Thursday, 2:20 p.m.)

Eric Snyder, Ohio State University

So-called predicates of personal taste (PPTs) like “tasty” and “fun” are curious in that on the one hand, they are prototypical examples of “subjective” expressions, and yet dialogues involving them often lead to genuine disagreement. Two views about PPTs, Contextualism and Relativism, have come into prominence in recent times. The primary advantage of Relativism is that, supposedly, only it can account for the sort of “faultless disagreement” characteristically accompanying disagreement dialogues, including those involving comparative PPTs like “tastier.” However, it turns out that Relativism’s explanation for why those disagreements are in fact “faultless” is inconsistent with a Relativist degree-based semantics for cases like (1a,b):

- (1) a. Cake is tastier for Mary than for Fred.
 b. Mary finds cake tastier than Fred does.

These independently suggest that we should adopt a Contextualist semantics of PPTs instead.

The (Non-) Psychology of Virtues: Radical Virtue Externalism (IV-H, Friday, 9:00 a.m.)

Charles Starkey, Clemson University

In this essay I argue for a radical shift in our assumptions about the psychology of virtue. Virtue externalism has gained widespread attention in recent years, and holds that virtues are character traits that systematically produce good or some other desirable state. The most popular and powerful theory of this sort has been articulated and defended by Julia Driver. I’ll demonstrate that Driver’s view—what I call moderate virtue externalism (MVE)—is untenable and that an alternative, radical virtue externalism (RVE) is more viable than both MVE and traditional virtue theories. Moreover, recent work in virtue epistemology, I argue, decisively supports RVE over virtue internalism or traditional mixed views, so that no psychological feature is a necessary component of the virtues. The arguments that substantiate this have a surprising but I believe undeniable implication: *virtues are not character traits*.

Between Arbitrariness and Redundancy (IV-J, Friday, 9:00 a.m.)

Stephen Steward, Syracuse University

I present a dilemma for Theodore Sider’s theory of joint-carving. Sider says the joint-carving terms are sparse, and that we should not arbitrarily decide that one term rather than another is joint-carving. Sometimes, multiple terms have an equally good claim to be joint-carving, but there is no need for both

to be joint-carving. In such cases, Sider must say that one term is joint-carving, or the other is, or both are. To choose one rather than the other would be arbitrary, and to choose both would be redundant. Sider's theory forces him to choose between the vices of arbitrariness and redundancy. I offer a theory whose central notion is real definition. My theory allows distinct terms to appear in each others' definitions, so each may be primitive relative to one system of definitions. This allows us to split the horns of the dilemma. I argue that my solution is preferable to other responses, which appeal to qualitative parsimony, indeterminacy, and plural structure.

What Makes Sounds into Meaningful Words? (IV-L, Friday, 9:00 a.m.)

Megan Stotts, University of California, Riverside

In this paper I give an account of expression meaning (i.e., the public, semantically encoded meaning of a linguistic item) that does not make use of a notion of speaker meaning. More specifically, I argue that a type of sound or gesture *S* is a meaningful expression in virtue of the production of *S* becoming some group's conventional way of getting people to involve particular sorts of objects or relations in their activity. To support this thesis, I present an account of conventions as copied, effect-sensitive behavior with accessible alternatives. Then I argue that the "getting people to involve objects or relations in their activity" part of the thesis is needed to capture two key features of expression meaning. This leaves us with an account of expression meaning that emphasizes language's primary role as a tool for changing the world around us by affecting others' behavior.

Emergent Panpsychism, Emotional Zombies, and Fundamental Kinds (VII-L, Saturday, 2:30 p.m.)

Maxwell Suffis, Rice University

Panpsychism is the view that some fundamental physical particles have phenomenally conscious experience. The main appeal of panpsychism is that it shows promise in circumventing the explanatory gap of physicalism and the interaction problem of dualism. However, panpsychism suffers from its own explanatory gap called the combination problem. This is where physical and micro-mental facts (facts about what it is like for fundamental types of physical entities to be phenomenally conscious) do not ground facts about our mentality. The overall goal of this essay is to undermine panpsychism by arguing that emergent panpsychism, the only view in the marketplace that has the resources to defuse the combination problem, fails. I do this by showing that emergent panpsychism has the problematic consequence of accepting an inexplicable amount of fundamental kinds of things over and above the mental and the physical. I then argue why this bloated ontology should be resisted.

Idealizations, Truth, and Understanding (II-I, Thursday, 12:10 p.m.)

Emily Sullivan, Fordham University

One important question regarding the nature of understanding is whether or not understanding is factive. In other words, is it possible to understand something that is false? Epistemologists do not agree on this issue. On the one hand, there is a strong intuitive pull to say that one cannot understand something false, especially if it is about the natural world. However, if we turn to cases of understanding in science, a factive account of understanding becomes unattractive. Taking scientific explanation as a paradigm case for understanding, we have reason to suppose that understanding is not strictly factive. Scientific explanations routinely depend on idealizations to explain phenomena. Idealizations are deliberate distortions of the facts; strictly speaking, they are false. Some, such as Elgin (2007) and Rice (2013), argue that we have to abandon the truth criterion for explanation and understanding altogether; understanding can come from falsehoods. Others, such as Kvanvig (2003) and Mirzarhi (2012), have argued for a quasi-factive approach. Truth is centrally important but one can still understand while having false propositional commitments. On both accounts, truth strictly speaking is not a criterion for understanding. In this paper, I argue that both these accounts misinterpret the role that idealizations play in explanation. I argue for a factive view of understanding, while maintaining that idealizations are a desideratum for scientific explanations. I argue that the propositional commitments that make up understanding derived from idealized explanations are not the false idealized statements. Idealizations are representations of true propositions about difference making and the causal mechanisms behind why something occurred. It is these propositions about difference making and causation that are central to understanding. Therefore, I conclude that the use of idealizations in science does not undermine a factive account of understanding.

Moral Error Theory and the Law of Excluded Middle (I-F, Wednesday, 6:00 p.m.)

Christopher Tomaszewski, University of Connecticut

Moral error theorists, such as John Mackie and Richard Joyce, have traditionally held that no moral propositions are true. However, such a simplistic formulation of moral error theory faces a considerable difficulty in its denial of the classical logical law of excluded middle. Herein, I examine this difficulty and several variations on this core claim of moral error theory designed to avoid the difficulty, along with other defences against the rebuke that it violates the law of excluded middle. I argue that none of the options currently on the table for understanding the claim of systemic error attributed to moral propositions by error theorists are capable of avoiding a violation of the law of excluded middle while

simultaneously steering clear of other hazards ultimately faced by the theory (including collapsing the descriptive-moral distinction and denying basic axioms of modal logic), and so moral error theorists must either accept that at least some genuinely moral propositions are true, or else resort to alternative logics.

Computational Individualism and Functional Significance (IV-M, Friday, 9:00 a.m.)

Chris Tucker, College of William and Mary

Computational individualism is the claim that the computations a system performs are individuated internally to the system. Neither a system's environment nor its role in some larger system can affect its computational structure. To deny computational individualism is to endorse computational externalism. Oron Shagrir and Gualtiero Piccinini argue that computational individualism lacks the resources to identify the computational structure of the system. Shagrir argues that the relevant resources are provided by content and Piccinini by externally individuated functional properties. Either way, we end up with computational externalism. But they're wrong: individualism can identify the computational structure by relying on internally individuated functional properties. While the issues I discuss here relate most directly to the philosophy of computation, they have applications to the philosophy of mind and cognitive psychology.

Epistemic Possibility and Its Abominable Conjunction (VII-K, Saturday, 2:30 p.m.)

Chris Tweedt, Baylor University

According to the standard view of epistemic possibility endorsed by Jason Stanley (2005) and John Hawthorne (2004) and (2012), a proposition is epistemically possible for a subject just in case what the subject knows doesn't obviously entail that proposition's negation. In this paper, I'll argue that fallibilism and the standard view of epistemic possibility entail a conjunction that I'll call "the abominable conjunction," then I'll spend the rest of the paper showing that the conjunction is, in fact, abominable. The upshot is that proponents of the standard view of epistemic possibility are committed to either the abominable conjunction or infallibilism.

Distinguishing Willing from Desiring in Locke (VI-M, Saturday, 9:00 a.m.)

Julie Walsh, Université du Québec à Montréal

What kind of power is volition for Locke? Three options seem possible: (1) a passive power that is engaged according to our most pressing desire or uneasiness, (2) a power that is for the most part passive, but sometimes active when it is engaged by a self-determining act of the agent herself, or (3) both (1) and (2), thus calling Locke's consistency into question. There is no agreement in the literature about which of these views to ascribe to Locke. In this paper, I will add support to (1) by focusing on an aspect of Locke's discussion of power in *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Book II, chapter xxi, that as far as I can tell has not been discussed in the literature—section 30—where Locke explicitly distinguishes between willing and desiring.

Just Reasons to Refuse Just Reparations (III-J, Thursday, 2:20 p.m.)

Jeffrey Watson, Arizona State University

Discussions of reparative justice often focus the content of the reparations themselves: what is just compensation for a past harm, and what model best explains why the compensation is justified? However, little attention has been given to the possibility of a reparation which is perfectly just, and yet which a victim might refuse for moral reasons. I consider such cases within the context of political projects of reparation during transitions between regimes. I argue that the manner in which a reparation is given, and whether it expresses a change in the beliefs and desires of the institution offering it, can likewise be a matter of justice.

Paraphrase Atheism (V-M, Friday, 1:30 p.m.)

Shane Wilkins, Fordham University

Nihilists cannot square their position with common sense simply by paraphrasing away apparent ontological commitments in ordinary language. I argue for this claim by analogy. Paraphrase atheism says there is no God, but tries to square the truth of atheism with ordinary religious sentences by paraphrasing away apparent ontological commitments. Obviously, paraphrase does not reconcile atheism with ordinary language about God. I offer an explanation of this result: paraphrase fails when there is an important connection between a speaker's background beliefs and her utterance. This is the case with ordinary sentences about composite material objects. Therefore, paraphrase nihilism fails.

Advice for Noncognitivists (III-C, Thursday, 2:20 p.m.)

Malte Willer, University of Chicago

Metaethical noncognitivists have trouble arriving at a respectable semantic theory for moral language. The goal of this paper is make substantial progress toward demonstrating that these problems may be overcome. Replacing the predominant expressivist semantic agenda in metaethics with a dynamic perspective on meaning and communication allows noncognitivists to provide a satisfying analysis of negation and other constructions that have been argued to be problematic for metaethical noncognitivism, including disjunctions. The resulting proposal preserves some of the key insights from recent work on the semantics of expressivism while highlighting the widely neglected early noncognitivists' sympathies to a dynamic perspective on meaning and communication that stresses the role of moral language as a means for coordinating, rather than simply expressing, moral attitudes.

Spinoza and the Definition of an Immanent Cause (V-H, Friday, 1:30 p.m.)

Stephen Zylstra, University of Toronto

Spinoza sometimes defines an immanent cause as one that is acted on by itself [*patitur a se ipso*]. On this definition, Spinoza's thesis that God is the immanent cause of all things (*Ethics* Ip18) entails that God suffers [*patitur*] all things. However, in *Ethics* Ip15s, Spinoza considers an objection that says that if God is extended (as Spinoza holds), God would be capable of being acted on. His reply is usually interpreted as granting that God is incapable of being acted on. In this paper, I argue against this interpretation of his reply. Relying on a parallel passage in the *Short Treatise*, I show that Spinoza only denies that God can be acted on by another. He implicitly allows that if extended substance is acted on, it is acted on by itself. Hence, his reply does not rule out that God can be an immanent cause in this sense.