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# MODAL METAPHYSICS

## Issues on the (Im)Possible III

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ABSTRACTS

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“It was impossible for him to get bored. He just didn't have the imagination.”

Terry Pratchett

Dear delegate,

MODAL METAPHYSICS: Issues on the (Im)Possible Conference III is, again, organized by the Institute of Philosophy of Slovak Academy of Sciences.

The idea behind the conference is to put together experts working on the problems of modality and provide thus an actual summary of the field. It is our pleasure to host contributors from all around the world and create thus an excellent, philosophically appealing and professional environment in Slovakia.

The conference receives a substantial support of the Institute of Philosophy of Slovak Academy of Sciences. Namely, our gratitude belongs to the director of the Institute as well as to all who directly or indirectly contributed to the conference: academic and program committee, administrative staff of Slovak Academy of Sciences and last but not least to all speakers. Without them the conference would not be actual.

We are also glad that Organon F has published special issues dedicated to the topic of the conference. All the issues are accessible at <http://www.klemens.sav.sk/fiusav/organon/>.

Martin Vacek  
Bratislava, September 15, 2015



**DANIEL NOLAN**

(AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY, Australia)

*Conditionals and Curry*

Curry's paradox for "if.. then.." concerns the paradoxical features of sentences of the form "If this very sentence is true, then  $2+2=5$ ". Standard inference principles lead us to the conclusion that such conditionals have true consequents: so, for example,  $2+2=5$  after all. There has been a lot of technical work done on formal options for blocking Curry paradoxes while only compromising a little on the various central principles of logic and meaning that are under threat. Once we have a sense of the technical options, though, a philosophical choice remains. When dealing with puzzles in the logic of conditionals, a natural place to turn is independently motivated semantic theories of the behaviour of "if... then...". This paper argues that an independently motivated treatment of conditionals provides a philosophically satisfactory explanation of the status of Curry sentences. (Or to be less coy, the closest-worlds approach to counterpossible conditionals I prefer offers a philosophically satisfying reason to deny conditional proof and so block the paradoxical Curry reasoning, to give the verdict that standard Curry conditionals are false, along with related "contraction conditionals".

**MARK JAGO**

(UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM, United Kingdom)

*Three Roads to the Impossible*

I discuss three kinds of impossible content: the structured approach, the impossible worlds approach, and the state space approach. On the face of it, each approach seems very different to the others, with applications in different areas. But, once the approaches have been developed to avoid the objections they face, they start to look a lot more like one another. The question arises: are the three views notational variants of one another? Can one translate freely between the three approaches? In this talk, I'll discuss and develop each of the three views on offer. I'll indicate the options open to a defender of one of the views, and discuss why one might prefer one to the others. And I'll discuss whether there are three genuinely distinct views on offer, or whether they should be thought of as variants on a theme.

## CONTRIBUTED PAPERS

**Brian Ball**  
(Oxford University, United Kingdom)

*Modality and Metaontology*

Could anything have existed which does not in fact exist? Could anything that does exist have failed to do so? Timothy Williamson (2002, 2013) has advocated negative answers to these fundamental questions in modal metaphysics. More specifically, he defends necessitism, according to which necessarily everything is necessarily (identical with) something: '[i]n a slogan', he says, 'ontology is necessary' (2013: 2); and he rejects contingentism, the negation of this thesis, according to which 'ontology is contingent' (2013:2). In characterizing the ontological debate as he does, Williamson assumes a certain view of the nature of being, or existence; in particular, he embraces Quine's (1948) metaontological view that to be is to be identical with something. This view has its roots, ultimately, in Frege's Thesis- the claim that '[a]ffirmation of existence is . . . nothing but denial of the number zero' (Frege, 1884/1980: part III, section 53, page 65). This position is, of course, far from heterodox: as Gabriel Uzquiano says, '[m]uch of contemporary ontology builds on the assumption that existence is to be understood in terms of quantification' (2014: section 4); and Peter Van Inwagen even says that 'these words [of Frege's about existence] express my thought exactly' (2009: 483). In this paper I raise some doubts about this received metaontology. I concentrate largely on a contingentist proposal due to Andrew Bacon (2013). I argue that if Bacon's contingentism is correct, then Frege's Thesis is false: existence is not a matter of numbering more than zero. I then point to some differences between number claims and existence claims; the upshot is that existence is a property, while numbers are not (even higher-order) properties. Finally, I conclude by suggesting briefly that although Frege's Thesis can be saved by moving to a necessitist framework, it is no longer clear that we should want to align existence with number, or quantification.

Bacon (2013). 'Quantificational Logic and Empty Names', *Philosophers' Imprint*, 13 (24): 1-21.

Frege (1884/1980). *The Foundations of Arithmetic*, trans. J.L. Austin, Oxford: Blackwell.

Quine (1948). 'On What There Is', *The Review of Metaphysics*, 2 (5): 21-38.

Uzquiano (2014). 'Quantifiers and Quantification', *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Fall 2014 Edition, Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2014/entries/quantification/>.

Van Inwagen (2009). 'Being, Existence, and Ontological Commitment', in Chalmers, Manley, and Wasserman (eds.), *Metametaphysics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 472-506.

Williamson (2002). 'Necessary Existents', in O'Hear, (ed.), *Logic, Thought and Language*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002, pp. 233-251 –  
(2013). *Modal Logic as Metaphysics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

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**Jonathan Livingstone-Banks**

*Essence and Possibility*

It is a common assumption that if one can provide an explanation for the necessity of all of the true necessary propositions then, through the interdefinability of necessity and possibility, one can provide a full account of the basic modal notions. Essentialist theories of modality make the same assumption, and

focus their efforts only on explaining necessity. Here I argue that this approach struggles to account for possibility. I then suggest how an essentialist theory of modality might do so.

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**Jonathan Bulhof**  
(McNeese State University, USA)

*The "Problem" of Alien Properties*

David Lewis, infamous for his 'Modal Realism,' gave some powerful critiques of alternatives to the view that modal claims are true in virtue of worlds that exist like this one. Although the alternatives have deep roots in the history of Modern Philosophy, Lewis preferred to call them 'ersatz' views: a view that was a substitute for the real thing, Modal Realism, but not as good. Possible worlds "on the cheap." One of the arguments Lewis makes is that they cannot ground the very real possibility of 'alien properties,' that is, properties that do not exist in the world, or predicates in our language, nor are analyzable as possible recombinations of parts of the actual world or language, but nonetheless really are possible. A number of philosophers have taken up the challenge. They agree that alien properties are possible, and that any acceptable account of modality must account for them. Thus, for example, D.M. Armstrong, Joseph Melia, and Allen Gehring all support Lewis' argument that alien properties really are possible. I will argue that accepting the real possibility of alien properties requires an argument, and that the arguments offered are not sufficient. First, I will present Lewis' original argument, then the follow ups, and then I will show these arguments do not provide good reason to accept the conclusion.

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**Darragh Byrne**  
(University of Birmingham, United Kingdom)

**Naomi Thompson**  
(University of Hamburg, Germany)

*Is the World Really Hyperintensional?*

In recent years, hyperintensional notions have become ever more prominent in metaphysics, and this raises the question whether we ought to think of hyperintensionality as somehow a feature of the mind-independent world, or instead merely as something that emerges from features of our way of thinking about or representing it. Should we be realists or antirealists about hyperintensionality? The question is difficult to make precise, and so to help us tie things down a little we shall organize our discussion in part as a critique of a recent paper by Daniel Nolan (2014) in which he raises the issue that interests us, and defends a version of realism about hyperintensionality. After explaining the issue in §1, we present in §2 a (Fregean) conception of representation in terms of which we propose to defend our anti-realist position. In §§3-4 we employ this to explain away some apparent cases of worldly hyperintensionality.

Nolan, D. (2014) 'Hyperintensional Metaphysics', *Philosophical Studies* 171: 149-160.

**Sam Cowling**  
(Denison University, USA)

*Conceivability Arguments for Haecceitism*

Possibilities can be distinguished in several ways. One useful distinction separates qualitative possibilities from non-qualitative possibilities. Non-qualitative possibilities like the possibility that Napoleon is bipedal depend upon specific individuals. In contrast, qualitative possibilities like the possibility that something—anything at all—is red do not depend upon specific individuals. So, while non-qualitative possibilities require the instantiation of haecceities like Socrateity and non-qualitative properties like being next to Obama, qualitative possibilities involve only qualitative properties like electronhood or roundness. A second distinction separates maximal possibilities from non-maximal possibilities. While maximal possibilities are total ways the world could be, nonmaximal possibilities like the possibility that some dogs are brown are non-total ways things could be. Maximal possibilities include qualitative and non-qualitative possibilities. For example, the actualized maximal possibility includes the qualitative possibility that someone smokes as well as the non-qualitative possibility that Obama smokes. Actuality therefore differs from various non-actual maximal possibilities where no one smokes, where Obama does not smoke, or where Obama fails to exist altogether. Having distinguished these kinds of possibilities, we can formulate the following thesis: Possibility Haecceitism: Some maximal possibilities differ only with respect to the non-qualitative possibilities they include. If possibility haecceitism is true, there are ways the world could be that include the same qualitative possibilities but different non-qualitative possibilities. Let us call the difference between maximal possibilities of this kind a haecceitistic difference. So, while possibility anti-haecceitists deny maximal possibilities ever differ haecceitistically, possibility haecceitists maintain that some maximal possibilities differ in precisely this way. To get a better sense of haecceitistic differences, consider a scenario according to which you and Obama swap all of your actual qualitative properties and relations (e.g., where Obama reads this paper while you are the President). If this scenario is a genuine maximal possibility, it differs only haecceitistically from actuality, since it includes the very same qualitatively possibilities as the actualized maximal possibility. In what follows, I examine a family of arguments for possibility haecceitism. These arguments are all conceivability arguments for haecceitism: they aim to establish haecceitism by exploiting the apparent link between what is conceivable and what is possible. In examining these arguments, my project is twofold: (i) to provide a general taxonomy of conceivability arguments for haecceitism; (ii) to assess the strength of conceivability arguments for haecceitism and the prospects for anti-haecceitist responses. In doing so, I place an important constraint on anti-haecceitists: I assume that they are committed to a substantive evidential connection between conceivability and possibility. I therefore focus on those anti-haecceitists who attempt to defuse conceivability arguments for haecceitism while preserving a robust link between conceivability and possibility. For anti-haecceitists of this sort, a response to conceivability arguments for haecceitism must therefore explain away the conceivability evidence without violating their anti-haecceitist scruples. As I will argue, no such antihaecceitist response is successful, so these anti-haecceitists are faced with a dilemma: sever the tie between conceivability and possibility or opt for haecceitism.

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**Michael De**  
(University of Konstanz, Germany)

*Five-dimensionalism*

Call five-dimensionalism the view that ordinary things are transworld sums, i.e. individuals having modal parts in many worlds. The view is an analog of perdurantist worm theory, according to which things are transtemporal sums. David Lewis famously rejects five-dimensionalism in favor of counterpart theory. I argue that Lewis's objections do not constitute a compelling argument against the view and, moreover, that five-dimensionalism provides an elegant solution to three separate problems concerning intrinsicity, (one interpretation of) the Humphrey objection to modal realism, and the problem of coincidence.

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**Louis deRosset**  
(University of Vermont, USA)

*Modal Logic for Contingentist Metaphysics*

Consider two questions. Is everything necessarily such that it is identical to something? And, might there have been something which is actually identical to nothing? The view Timothy Williamson calls necessitism answers no to both of these questions. Necessitists hold that, necessarily, everything is such that, necessarily, something is identical to it. More briefly, necessitism is the view that, necessarily, everything is necessarily something. In [Williamson, 2013], Williamson poses a number of challenges to contingentism, the negation of necessitism. One such challenge is an argument that necessitists can more wholeheartedly embrace possible worlds semantics than can contingentists. If this charge is correct, then necessitists, but not contingentists, can unproblematically exploit the technical successes of possible worlds semantics. I will argue, however, that the charge is incorrect: contingentists can embrace possible worlds semantics as wholeheartedly as necessitists.

Williamson (2013). *Modal Logic as Metaphysics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

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**Nikk Effingham**  
(University of Birmingham, UK)

*Heterodox Ludovicianism*

This paper criticises Lewis's contextualist solution to the Grandfather Paradox on the grounds that Lewis does not take seriously the modality of impossibility. I then develop a variant contextualist response to the Paradox that looks more profitable.

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**Karen Green**  
(University of Melbourne, Australia)

*Natural Language and Ontological Illusions*

It is here that the tendency of language by its use of the definite article to stamp as an object what is a function and hence a non-object, proves itself to be the source of inaccurate and misleading expressions and also of errors of thought. Probably most of the impurities that contaminate the logical source of knowledge have their origins in this.

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**Amy Karofsky**  
(Hofstra University, USA)

*The Impossibility of Otherwisedness*

I am an *absolute necessitarian*; I believe that absolutely nothing about the world could have been otherwise in any way what so ever. In this paper, I provide an argument against *contingentarianism*. I show that because there cannot be an adequate *metaphysical explanation* of *otherwisedness*, otherwisedness is impossible, and so nothing can be genuinely contingent.

In what follows, I will use the term *entity* in its broadest sense to mean what is, at some time or other, *actually*: existing, instantiated, happening, obtaining, in fact the case, or true. So, included among entities are actual: objects, properties, relations, events, laws, facts, propositions, and, in general, anything that *is*. An entity will be considered to be *contingent* if it could have been otherwise in any way what so ever and *necessary* if it could not have been otherwise in any way what so ever.

Because a contingent entity is such that it could have been otherwise, it would seem that there must be a *metaphysical explanation* of its *otherwisedness* (Shalkowski 1994, Hale 2002). Such an explanation would be an account of what it is that *grounds* the genuine possibility that the entity could have been otherwise and would show *why* it is that the entity really could have been different from what it is (for analyses of *grounding* see: Schaffer 2009, Rosen 2010, Clark and Liggins 2012; also see: Ellis 2000, Lange 2008, 2013, Hale 2002, Dasgupta 2014). Consider, for example, my coffee cup that is sitting three inches from my computer. Most would maintain that the location of my cup is contingent since my cup could have been, say, two inches from my computer instead of three. A metaphysical explanation of my cup's possible other-location would provide the *reason why* my cup could have been otherwise by describing *in virtue of what* it is genuinely possible that my cup could have been two inches, rather than three, from my computer. A metaphysical explanation might depict in what the cup's otherwisedness is *grounded* or *rooted* by pointing to the entity or entities that are ontologically prior to my cup's possible two-inch distance from my computer and upon which its otherwisedness depends. Sometimes a metaphysical explanation will work as an epistemological explanation. Thus, a metaphysical explanation of the cup's otherwisedness might work to show how it is that we *know* that the cup could have been otherwise or provide the *justification* for that knowledge claim.

In the first part of the paper, I briefly examine various ways that one might respond to the question: What grounds the genuine possibility that my cup could have been two inches from my computer? In the second part of the paper, I provide a general argument showing that because there cannot be a metaphysical explanation of otherwisedness, otherwisedness is impossible.

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**Theodore D. Locke**  
(University of Miami, USA)

*Grounding and Impossible Worlds*

Impossibilities have often been treated as if they can all be thrown in one semantic junk pile, but this will not do. What to do with impossibilities, in general, is a problem that needs to be addressed by any account of modality, content, cognitive significance, etc. Recently, on other philosophical fronts, a lot of attention has been given to the notion of *grounding*, i.e. *because* claims or *in virtue of* claims. In this paper, I will argue that accounts of grounding also need to say something about counterpossible contexts. I am going to argue that we can non-trivially talk about grounding relations that obtain in impossible worlds. I will do this mainly by presenting a number of examples. These examples have prima facie plausibility given a working notion of grounding and certain varieties of modality. However, I will also need to address an objection to the effect that claims of merely possible, let alone impossible, grounding relations is incoherent. First, I will briefly discuss some preliminaries involving grounding. Then I will discuss varieties of impossibilities. For the main course, I will present a number of examples of potential grounding relations that obtain in impossible worlds. After that I will look at a potential objection and argue that it makes an assumption that we have good reason to reject.

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**Luke Malik**

*Textbook Kripkeanism and Its Problems*

Textbook Kripkeanism (TK) is an interpretation of Saul Kripke. There are supposed to be prominent adherents of TK, including Frank Jackson and David Chalmers. There are also supposed to be significant problems with TK. One problem is related to the possibility of using TK to span the gap between what is conceptually conceivable to what is metaphysically conceivable. TK is thought to over-generate conclusions in this respect. Another problem is the way in which obfuscations are identified by the

Textbook Kripkeans. Adherents of TK are accused of using the imagination as a ‘telescope’ in this respect, a view Kripke went out of his way to reject. Yet another problem is that Kripke, himself, we are often told, is not a Textbook Kripkean. The previous problem suggests as much. This essay spells out what TK is. It, then, argues that none of the problems cited above are problems for TK since (a) TK does not entail overgeneration; (b) TK is quite consistent with Kripke’s comments on the use of the imagination; and (c) Kripke is a Textbook Kripkean.

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**Peter Marton**  
(Clark University, USA)

*Knowing Possibilities and the Possibility of Knowing (A Further Challenge for the Anti-Realist)*

Knowing that some state of affair -- expressed by a proposition,  $p$  -- is possible ( $K_s \diamond p$ ) and the possibility that one,  $s$ , knows that state of affair or the proposition that expresses it ( $\diamond K_s p$ ) have, quite obviously, different meanings. This paper focuses only on their logical relationship -- whether they are substitutionally equivalent or at least whether one does entail the other. I will argue here for the following three claims: First, that the basic verificationist principles of antirealism, in conjunction with some other, intuitively reasonable principles, do entail the substitutional equivalence of these two concepts. Second, that this outcome contradicts our pretheoretical expectations, as counterexamples to this result can be manufactured. I will also argue here that the substitutional equivalence has some further, highly counter-intuitive implications. And finally, that while the standard strategies to avoid the well-known paradoxes about the antirealist position (as e.g. the Church - Fitch paradox) fail to resolve this new challenge, the introduction of a truth operator, an approach I argued for in an earlier paper, avoids this new challenge as well.

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**Jonathan Nassim**  
(University of London, United Kingdom)

*The Cost of Primitives and the Argument for Modal Realism*

Primitives play an important role in David Lewis's philosophical method. A central example is his famous cost-benefit argument for Modal Realism. Here he appeals to the theoretical costs of primitives and the theoretical benefits of worlds to support the truth of Modal Realism. In this talk I aim to make sense of these costs by considering what Lewis takes primitives to be. I find in Lewis two conceptions of primitives: the expressive and the representative, and argue that there are problems with both conceptions. The former appears unable to explain why primitives have any effect on the cost of a theory; the latter appears to explain these costs, but with the consequence that the distinction between ideology and ontology is undermined. On either conception I argue, Lewis's cost-benefit argument for MR appears to be unpromising.

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**Cristina Nencha**  
(Northwest Philosophy Consortium, Italy)

*Essentialism and David Lewis*

David Lewis has been generally regarded as an anti-essentialist theorist. The main reason, I think, is that he cannot provide a mind-independent account of the essential properties of individuals, because of his counterpart theory. My aim here is to demonstrate that the suggestion according to which Lewis is an anti-essentialist is mistaken. In order to justify my thesis, I will propose two different interpretations of Lewis's counterpart theory and I will illustrate that, according to both readings, there are reasons for which Lewis could be considered an essentialist. In fact, according to one interpretation, Lewis can offer, at least, a kind of minimal essentialism; according to the second reading, Lewis's theory is not less essentialist than those theories generally regarded as essentialist theories.

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**Igor Sedlár**  
(Comenius University, Slovakia)

*Impossible Worlds in Epistemic Logic*

It is well-known that the standard logical representation of knowledge as truth in every epistemically accessible world leads to the logical omniscience problem, the fact that 'knowledge' is represented rather unrealistically as being closed under consequence (Fagin, Halpern, Moses, & Vardi, 1995, Chapter 9). A popular way to avoid the problem and to produce epistemic logics for agents with limited resources or cognitive capabilities is to keep the standard logical representation of knowledge while employing impossible worlds (Fagin, Halpern, & Vardi, 1995; Lakemeyer, 1986, 1987, 1996; Lakemeyer & Levesque, 2000; Levesque, 1984; Rantala, 1982; Rescher & Brandom, 1980; Wansing, 1990). If  $\psi$  is a classical consequence of  $\phi$ , then there is no possible world where  $\phi$  holds but  $\psi$  fails. In other words, it is impossible for  $\phi$  to be true while  $\psi$  is false. Hence, there is an impossible world where  $\phi$  is true and  $\psi$  is false. If such an impossible world is epistemically accessible for an agent, then the agent fails to know that  $\psi$ , even if she happens to know that  $\phi$ . A popular choice of impossible worlds for epistemic applications are worlds associated with the relevant logic FDE ('First Degree Entailment', see Anderson and Belnap (1975, Chapter 3) and also Belnap (1977a, 1977b); Dunn (1976)). In these worlds, formulas can be assigned any subset of the set of truth-values {True, False}. As a result, many classically valid inference schemas are not valid in FDE. For example, any instance of disjunctive syllogism  $\phi \vee \psi, \neg\phi \vdash \psi$  fails in any world  $x$  where  $\phi$  is both true and false, but  $\psi$  is only false. If  $\phi$  is true, then  $\phi \vee \psi$  is true. If  $\phi$  is false, then  $\neg\phi$  is true. Hence, in such an  $x$  both assumptions are at least true, but the conclusion is only false. If such an  $x$  is epistemically accessible for an agent, then her knowledge may fail to be closed under disjunctive syllogism. Closure under many other classically valid inference rules is avoided in a similar fashion. The crucial feature is the possibility of some  $\phi$  being both true and false in a(n impossible) world. Let us call worlds where some  $\phi$  is both true and false plainly inconsistent. Jago (2014) has recently argued that any approach based on the epistemic accessibility of plainly inconsistent worlds is defective as such worlds cannot be epistemically accessible for any rational agent. This article points out that, nevertheless, plainly inconsistent worlds are a useful component of formal models of resource-bounded epistemic attitudes. Worlds are construed in evidential terms and plainly inconsistent worlds are seen as inconsistent (yet not trivial) bodies of evidence. An epistemic logic capturing implicit belief together with support by available evidence is outlined. Models for the logic are Kripke frames

extended with a relational FDE-style valuation and a unary function representing the available evidence. Importantly, it is assumed that a world is accessible from a complete and consistent world only if the former is also complete and consistent. The article is set out as follows. Section 2 outlines Jago's objection against the approaches based on epistemically accessible plainly inconsistent worlds. Section 3 offers an evidential interpretation of worlds and construes plainly inconsistent worlds as inconsistent bodies of evidence. It is also suggested that formal models of inconsistent and yet non-trivial evidence are indispensable if we attempt to model epistemic attitudes such as belief based on evidence. Section 4 outlines a simple epistemic logic based on these considerations.

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**Andriy Vasylchenko**

(National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, Ukraine)

*Identity and Existence in Intentionally Possible Worlds*

Graham Priest in his book *Towards Non-Being* developed his logic and semantics of intentionality as formal representation and special analytic tools of modal noneism, which is a variety of Neo- Meinongianism. Priest's semantics treats objects as possible contents of intentional states. In this paper I explore subjectivist implications of such approach for the notions of identity and existence. I argue that the semantics of intentionality allows for much more ontological relativism and subjectivism than its Neo- Meinongian adherents usually assume.

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**Zsófia Zvolenszky**

(Eötvös University, Hungary)

*Inadvertently Created Fictional Characters Are Innocuous*

According to artifactualism about fictional characters (fictional artifactualism for short), King Leontes in Shakespeare's *Winter's Tale* is an abstract artifact created by Shakespeare's activities. My goal is to reflect on the phenomenon of inadvertent creation and argue that—a certain objection to the contrary—it doesn't undermine fictional artifactualism. I will take as my starting point a recent challenge to this view by Jeffrey Goodman (2014)—which I will call the inadvertent creation challenge—that is originally posed for those who hold that fictional characters and mythical objects alike are abstract artifacts (call the latter mythical artifactualists). The crux of the challenge is this: if we think that astronomers like Le Verrier, in mistakenly hypothesizing the planet Vulcan, inadvertently created an abstract artifact, then the “inadvertent creation” element turns out to be inescapable yet theoretically unattractive. Based on considerations about actually existing concrete objects being featured in fictional works (as Napoleon is in Tolstoy's *War and Peace* and, plausibly, the island of Sicily is in *Winter's Tale*), I argued elsewhere that regardless of where one stands on mythical objects, admitting fictional characters as abstract artifacts is enough to give rise to the inadvertent creation challenge; yet this very set of considerations serves to undermine the challenge, indicating that inadvertent creation is not nearly as worrisome after all as Goodman is suggesting. The following scenarios about authors' being in error while creating works of fiction help highlight the plausibility of the claim that the inadvertent creation phenomenon is one that confronts the fictional artifactualist. First, imagine the following (contrary to fact) Scenario T: while writing *War and Peace*, Tolstoy was under the mistaken impression that the protagonist, Prince Bolkonsky, like Napoleon (also featured in the novel), was a real person. Introducing the name 'Andrei Bolkonsky', Tolstoy intended to refer to a historical figure he thought existed quite independently of his novel. For fictional artifactualists, what follows from the fact that (in Scenario T) Tolstoy was wrong and his name 'Bolkonsky' doesn't refer to any real person? Quite independently of what these theorists say about mythical objects, it is overwhelmingly plausible to think that in Scenario T, Tolstoy created Bolkonsky as an abstract artifact, and did so inadvertently. And the reason why he did so is because of the non-cooperation of the world to provide the relevant entity. Further, as a result of Tolstoy's writing the novel, the range of actual fictional characters plausibly came to include Bolkonsky also. Second, consider what in fact may well be what actually transpired when Shakespeare wrote *Winter's Tale*, call this Scenario S: while writing *Winter's Tale*, Shakespeare was under the mistaken impression that Bohemia is “a desert country near the sea”, which Shakespeare introduces with these very words; it's supposed to be a country to

which one can sail from Sicilia (as Polixenes, the king of Bohemia did in the play). There are no further identifying references to what Bohemia is like. In fact, the geographical region of Bohemia is part of today's Czech Republic, is entirely landlocked and desert-free. Introducing the name 'Bohemia', Shakespeare (plausibly) intended to refer to a real geographical location he thought existed quite independently of his play. For fictional artifactualists, what follows from the fact that (in Scenario S) Shakespeare was wrong and his name 'Bohemia' doesn't refer to any real geographical location? Quite independently of what these theorists say about mythical objects, it is overwhelmingly plausible to think that in Scenario S, Shakespeare created Bohemia as an abstract artifact, and did so inadvertently. And the reason why he did so is because of the non-cooperation of the world to provide the relevant entity. Also, as a result of Shakespeare writing the play, the range of actual fictional objects plausibly came to include Bohemia also (a Bohemia distinct from the actual region). But should we really be reassured upon finding that—according to fictional artifactualism—authors' error can readily result in inadvertent creation phenomena like those in scenarios T and S? "We don't need no inadvertent creation", someone might object at this point, suggesting that the goal of avoiding inadvertent creation undermines mythical artifactualism as well as its fictional counterpart. I will, accordingly, call this line the "We don't need no inadvertent creation" objection (No-IC objection for short). After some background (Section 2) his paper is devoted to showing why the No-IC objection is no objection at all to fictional artifactualism (or its mythical counterpart) (Section 3).

Goodman, Jeffrey. 2014. "Creatures of Fiction, Objects of Myth." *Analysis* 74 (1): 35–40.

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**Andy Yu**

(Oxford University, United Kingdom)

*The Indefinite Extensibility of Proposition*

In this talk, I motivate a modal account of the indefinite extensibility of proposition on the basis of an iterative conception of proposition. As an application, I suggest that the account provides a satisfying solution to the Russell-Myhill paradox. The account is in the spirit of recently-developed modal accounts of the indefinite extensibility of set motivated on the basis of the iterative conception of set.

# Program

WEDNESDAY (September 16, 2015)

10:00 – 10:15

Opening Remarks (Martin Vacek)

5.th Floor

4th. Floor

10:15 – 11:15

Andy Yu: "The Indefinite Extensibility of Proposition"    Andriy Vasylychenko: "Identity and Existence in Intentionally Possible Worlds"

11:15 – 12:15

L u n c h

12:15 – 13:15

Sam Cowling: "Conceivability Arguments for Haecceitism"

Peter Marton: "Knowing Possibilities and the Possibility of Knowing (A Further Challenge for the Anti-Realist)"

Commentator: Jonathan Livingstone-Banks

Commentator: Igor Sedlár

Coffee Break

13:30 – 15:00

## **DANIEL NOLAN: Conditionals and Curry**

Coffee Break

15:15 – 16:15

Karen Green: "Natural Language and Ontological Illusions"

Igor Sedlár: "Impossible Worlds in Epistemic Logic"

Commentator(s): Darragh Byrne/Naomi Thompson

Commentator: Peter Marton

Coffee Break

16:30 – 17:30

Louis deRosset: "Modal Logic for Contingentist  
Metaphysics"

Darragh Byrne, Naomi Thompson: "Is the World  
Really Hyperintensional?"

Commentator: Martin Vacek

Commentator: Luke Malik

Coffee Break

17:40 – 18:40

Michael De: "Five-dimensionalism"

Brian Ball: "Modality and Metaontology"

Commentator: Theodore Locke

Commentator: Amy Karofsky

19:30 - 21:00

Dinner

THURSDAY (September 17, 2015)

9:00 – 9:15

Morning Coffee

**5.th Floor**

**4th. Floor**

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9:15 – 10:15

Nikk Effingham: "Heterodox Ludovicianism"

Jonathan Nassim: "Problems with Primitives: David Lewis's Justification of Modal Realism as a Test Case"

Commentator: Louis deRosset

Commentator: Cristina Nenchu

10:15 – 11:15

Theodore D. Locke: "Grounding and Impossible Worlds"

Luke Malik: "Textbook Kripkeanism and Its Problems"

Commentator: Brian Ball

Commentator: Karen Green

11:15 – 12:15

Lunch

12:15 – 13:15

Amy Karofsky: "The Impossibility of Otherwiseness"

Zsófia Zvolenszky: "Inadvertently Created Fictional Characters Are Innocuous"

Commentator: Sam Cowling

Commentator: Jonathan Nassim

Coffee Break

13:30 – 15:00

**MARK JAGO: Three Roads to the Impossible**

Coffee Break

15:15 – 16:15

Jonathan Livingstone-Banks "Essence and Possibility"

Johannes Bulhof; "The "Problem" of Alien Properties"

Coffee Break

16:30 – 17:30

Cristina Nenchu:  
"Essentialism and David  
Lewis"

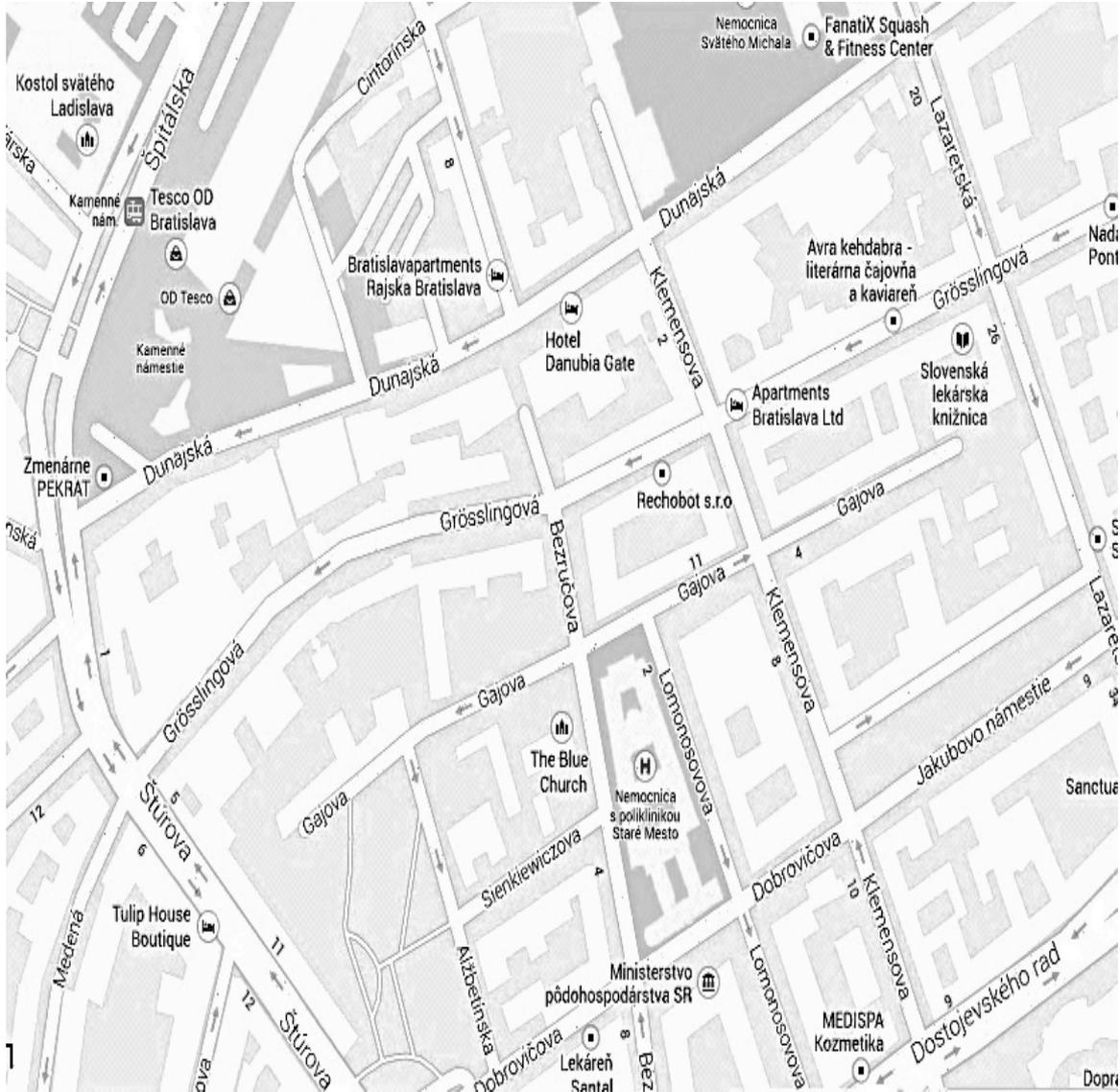
Commentator: Andriy Vasylchenko

17:30 – 17:45

Closing Remarks (Martin Vacek)

## Venue

Klemensova 19, 811 09, Bratislava, Slovakia



## Notes

















