

METAPHYSICS

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Substances and Their Powers

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Concerning the metaphysics of causation, philosophers have taken causation to be a relation that is either reducible to some more basic or non-causal in character (e.g. regularities of sequences or counterfactual dependence between events, facts or conditions), or an irreducible, primitive relation where the cause 'produces', 'generates' or 'brings about' its effect. For the sake of this paper, the first kind of relation I take as causal relevance or dependence while the second kind I take as causal production. In this paper, I argue that agent causalist position on the nature of human agency and free will relies on the idea that causal relation between an agent *qua* substance and its action (or an event that leads to action) is of a primitive and productive kind. Proponents of the theory of agent-causation, such as O'Connor (2000, 2009), O'Connor and Jacobs (2013), Lowe (2008) and Mayr (2011), find the support for such a position by accepting the realism about causal powers, or so they claim.

In a recent article, Ann Whittle (2016) tries to defend the claim that substances are causes by showing that substances are causes 'in virtue of' possessing causal powers, and where 'in virtue of' relation should be understood as some kind of relation of a non-causal dependence or grounding. According to Whittle and O'Connor causal powers somehow 'enable' their possessors to be causally productive while themselves being merely causally relevant. With the causal relevance/causal production distinction in mind, I discuss this relation of 'enabling', and argue that the metaphysics of causal powers cannot provide a framework in which substance causation, and *ipso facto* agent causation, is a viable option.

Some Thoughts on Metaethics and Metametaethics

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In this paper, I argue for a view of moral properties that leads to a deflationary view of various normative and metaethical questions--but not to a deflationary view of applied ethical questions. The core of the view is, roughly, as follows: (i) if there are any wrong-like properties at all, then there's a vast plurality of such properties; e.g., there's a property of *Kant-wrongness*, and *Mill-wrongness*, and *Moore-wrongness*, and so on; and (ii) which of these properties counts as *wrongness* (i.e., *real moral wrongness*)—if any of them do—is determined by facts about us, in particular, by facts about our usage and intentions and practices concerning moral words like 'wrong', or by facts about what we *have in mind* when we use these words.

It Has Turned Out That I Was Right

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In the ordinary language there are expressions like “I has turned out that I was right!” or “Time has shown that I was right!” or “Further course of events has shown that I was right!” etc. That is, I decided, estimated or asserted something in t_1 , and then later, in t_2 , it turned out that I was right in t_1 . This means that when I was making a decision (estimation or assertion) in t_1 I was neither right nor wrong and that my decision (estimation or assertion) from t_1 became right in t_2 . But how is that possible? How can rightness travel back in time? On the one hand, it seems that all the properties that decision (estimation or assertion) has it must have at the moment when it occurs. On the other hand, it seems that decision (estimation or assertion) becomes right later, when the event that it was about occurs. In principle, there are three options. Decisions (estimations or assertions) can be right at:

- 1) at t_1 - a moment when they were made
- 2) at t_2 - a moment when the events they were about occurred
- 3) atemporally

In this talk I will defend option 2) - the view that they become right when the corresponding events occur. Further analysis shows that 2) is not a surprising outcome. It is simply not true that decisions (estimations or assertion) must have all of their properties at a moment that they occur. Things and events can acquire their relational properties later. Since being right and being true are relational properties, things and events can acquire them later, hundreds or thousands of years after they occur. Marko Marulić was born in 1450 and he wrote *Judita* in 1501. So, in 1501 became true that the author of *Judita* was born in 1450. Until 1501 it was not true because before 1501 he did not write *Judita*. And this is the sense in which rightness and other properties can “travel back in time.” Of course, this analysis holds for a number of cases in philosophy: future contingents, moral luck, estimation of a good life, etc.

Harm of Death and Metaphysics of Time

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In this paper I analyze role of metaphysical theories of time, eternalism and presentism, in a contemporary discussion of the badness of death. At the beginning I briefly expose contemporary metaphysical discussion of death badness, and two main theories, deprivation theory which defends attitude that death is bad for the person who dies, and Epicureanism which defends attitude that death is nothing for the dead person. According to Epicureanism in the case of death, there is no subject who can be harmed, because death is a final annihilation, and that claim is point where philosophers introduce metaphysical theories of time. If we accept presentism, then it seems that Epicurus is right because only what exists is present and it's content, and dead person are not in the present. But, presentism can be upgraded by notion of possible beings that are real but does not exist; in that case all possible beings *are*, even if they do not exist. In that case we have subject for death badness. If we accept eternalism, we claim that equally exist past, present and future time and its content, and it seems that in that case we have subject of death badness. In the final chapter I expose theoretical combination between metaphysics of death and metaphysics of time and consequences of these positions to our ordinary value claims on death.

What is Locke's Primary/Secondary Quality Distinction Really About?

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How does Locke choose his primary qualities? What does he think is the status of colours, smell, sounds, etc.? And what is the point of the examples (with manna, porphyry, and lukewarm water) in the later part of his chapter on the subject? For the last 80 years, the smart money has been upon Boyle and the experimental science of the Royal Society as a guide to answering these questions. I shall instead be examining the Cartesian tradition, and seeing how it makes better sense of what Locke says: and drawing out the real philosophical argumentation of these sections. People have tended to read Locke here as British and empiricist; I shall present him instead as Continental and (on these subjects) rationalist. People have tended to blame Locke's close successors (like Berkeley and Reid) for misunderstanding him; I shall instead conclude that Locke's 18th-century readers mostly made much better sense of him than his 20th-century (and perhaps even more recent) readers have done. Locke comes out, on this view, as interesting, but perhaps disappointingly unoriginal on this topic: so a story will have to be given of why he bothers to give it much space at all.

Deflating Self-authorship: Luck, Selfhood, Justice and the Lack of Ultimate Responsibility

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It has been argued that one is ultimately responsible for an action if that action stems from his own will which has, at some point, been formed by the person herself. The basic argument tries to show that no one can constitute his own nature and thus no one is ever going to be ultimately responsible for his actions (Strawson 1994). Various attempts, in line with the compatibilistic approach in the free will debate, have been suggested in order to replace the notion of ultimate responsibility with less demanding ones (Frankfurt 1988, Fischer and Ravizza 1998, Wolf 1990 for example). These have been criticized on the grounds that they are unable to provide a sufficiently robust notion of the self that will grant that action is up-to-the-agent and thus, that the action flowing from such a self will not be a product of an agent's will but rather an occurrence arising from circumstances over which the agent has no control. Having the desires or beliefs one has is something one cannot control and consequently is a matter of luck. Ultimately, praising or blaming someone therefore represents an unjust act even though there are some cases involving anti-social behavior that require such a compatibilistic approach to justice (Smilansky 2000). Others, by using an event-causal libertarian account have tried to argue that such a request can be met (Kane 1996).

By dismantling Kane's argumentation I'll try to show where the real problem for the event-causal libertarian and the compatibilist lies. Through an analysis of the notions of luck and selfhood that play a pivotal role in the argumentation evolving around the concept of ultimate responsibility I'll try to show what is wrong with the latter concept.

The Self, Consciousness, and Mental Qualities

Sam Coleman
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I'm going to talk about a metaphysical model of the self/person. There's an increasingly popular 'experiential approach' that identifies the self with what's in conscious experience, and the self over time with the stream of consciousness (Foster, Dainton, Strawson, taking their lead from things Locke says, and Descartes). But this approach faces a difficulty in accounting for the existence of the self given periods of unconsciousness such as dreamless sleep. I argue that though these theories can plausibly make sense of the same self existing either side of such a gap in consciousness, they cannot accommodate the real existence of the self during these unconscious periods - at best they can explain ascriptions of self at such times. What their failure shows is that whatever it is that exists consciously to constitute the self had better also be capable of unconscious existence. I propose a conception of the self as constituted by a set of intrinsically unconscious mental qualities, and explore the strengths and applications of this theory as compared with the experiential approach.

Concepts and Properties

Marian David
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The paper raises what I call the “concept-property connection question”. Assuming you distinguish between concepts (predicates), on the one hand, and properties, on the other (like Armstrong, Putnam, Lewis, Devitt, and many others). Assume you hold that the concept-property correlation is not one-one; in particular, you hold that there are properties without concepts and concepts without properties. Say you hold concerning the predicate “F” that there is the concept *F*, but no property being-F. Say you hold at the same time that something falls under the concept *F*. Obviously, nothing exemplifies the property being-F. Question: Are there Fs? Examples: Some hold that there is the concept *jade*, but no property being-jade. Some hold that there is the concept truth, but no property, being-true. Some hold that there is the concept *pain*, but no property being-pain. Question to them: Is there jade? Are there truths? Is anyone in pain?

On the Metaphysics of Implicit Bias

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The notion of “implicit bias” aims to capture implicit mental states that influence our behavior and attitudes when social categories (such as gender or race) are in play. In analyzing implicit bias, the key-issue to begin with is to clarify its metaphysical nature. We can roughly discern two competing views on the issue: on the *associative* view, implicit bias is best characterized in terms of *associations* or in terms of what Gendler calls “aliefs”. On the alternative *propositional view* implicit bias is best analyzed as beliefs or belief-like attitudes. The goal of my talk is to offer a novel account of implicit bias that accommodates both its phenomenal aspect and its propositional aspect. In the literature so far, these two aspects have been accounted for only separately. The proposed model reconciles these aspects by pointing towards a propositional content, though represented in a special, phenomenal, way.

I proceed as follows: First, I develop an account of implicit bias as belief-like states that involve a special usage of phenomenal concepts. I call these states “qualiefs” for three reasons: qualiefs draw upon (qualitative) experiences of what an object seems like to attribute a property to this very object, they share some of the distinctive features of proper beliefs, and they also share some characteristics of “aliefs”. Next, I argue that the qualief-model is explanatorily powerful. It accounts for the biases’ implicitness, automaticity and insensitivity to evidence. Furthermore, it elucidates why in conflict-cases subjects are unaware that their implicit bias is in tension with their explicit anti-discriminatory beliefs. I conclude that the qualief model explains the metaphysical nature of implicit bias best.

What Acquaintance Teaches

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Michael Tye
University of Texas

In her black and white room, Mary doesn't know what it is like to see red. Only after undergoing an experience as of something red and hence acquainting herself with red can Mary learn what it is like. But learning what it is like to see red requires more than simply becoming acquainted with it. To be acquainted with something is to know it, but such knowledge, as we argue, is object-knowledge rather than propositional-knowledge. To know what it is like one must know an appropriate propositional answer to the question 'what is it like?'. Despite this mismatch between object-knowledge and knowing an answer, we believe that acquaintance is crucial to Mary's epistemic progress.

When Mary leaves her black and white room, her new knowledge tempts one to think that she must come to know a candidate answer (a coarse-grained fact) that she didn't know in her room. Since Mary already knows all the physical facts in her room, any additional facts she might learn appear to threaten physicalism. In reply, many physicalists have been attracted to the phenomenal concept strategy according to which Mary can come to have new knowledge and hence know a new answer to the question 'what is it like to see red?' by entertaining a coarse-grained fact under a concept she didn't possess in her room – Mary learns a new fine-grained fact. We believe both of these accounts of Mary's epistemic progress are mistaken. As we argue, Mary could know every fact (coarse-grained and fine-grained) that might serve as an answer to the question 'what is it like to see red?' and still not know what it is like. The physical world leaves no leftover coarse-grained facts for Mary to learn and because concepts are sharable, easy to possess, and easy to introduce, there are possible situations in which Mary, while in her black and white room, has every concept that might make a fine-grained difference. In short, even when Mary is granted a great deal of factual knowledge and vast conceptual resources, she may still not know an appropriate answer to the question 'what is it like to see red?'. But in any such situation, Mary lacks acquaintance with red and on this basis we argue that in order to know what it is like, in order for Mary to know an appropriate answer, Mary's propositional knowledge must be appropriately related to her acquaintance with red.

Quantifier Variance, Naturalness And The Closeness Of Possible Worlds

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Eli Hirsch has claimed that most ontological disputes are merely verbal, since, typically, the conflicting parties recognize the same contents as true, albeit expressed in different languages. According to Hirsch, each of these languages has its own concept of existence as a semantic value of the existential quantifier. Theodore Sider, on the other hand, has argued that there is only one natural meaning of the existential quantifier that carves the contents at their joints. Hirsch acknowledges the ontologically privileged status of natural properties, but denies that there is a single natural meaning of the existential quantifier. Both he and Sider tie naturalness to similarity: the natural quantifier should account for similarity between existential facts. I will argue that whether there is a sole natural meaning of the existential quantifier ultimately depends on the facts about the closeness of possible worlds.

Sensitivity, Safety, and Impossible Worlds

Guido Melchior
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Modal knowledge accounts face the problem that any belief in a necessary truth is trivially (or vacuously) sensitive and safe. Consequently, any believed necessary truth is trivially known. In this paper, I will examine this problem. First, I will sketch the general problem for counterpossibles. Second, I will show how the problem affects modal knowledge accounts and which solutions are available. I will suggest that the best solution is to embrace impossible worlds since this interpretation, although philosophically non-orthodox, is in line with our practice of evaluating counterpossibles. Such an account delivers a more differentiated picture for sensitivity according to which some beliefs in a necessary truth are sensitive and therefore known and some are not. However, it is dubitable whether such an account provides analogous results for safety. I conclude that when it comes to necessary truths sensitivity accounts are in a better position than safety theories.

B-theory of Time and Truthmakers

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Starting with the debate between the so called “A-theory” and “B-theory” of time, I will depict the truthmaking theory for the new B-theory of time. A-theory takes time to be *tensed*, that is, events and objects have temporal properties of first being future, then present and/or consequently past. Furthermore, the future, present and past are real features of the world, making events and objects come into existence from future times, into the present moment (or interval), and drift into the past. In other words, time flows and things change through time. On the other hand, the B-theory of time takes events and objects to be scattered through time in relation with one and another, as one being *later than*, *simultaneous with* and/or *earlier than* the other. There are no temporal properties of events and objects, only relations between them, which are objective and never changing. In other words, time does not flow, i.e. the flow of time being only an illusion and not real feature of the world. The old “B-theory” of time had a project of semantical reduction of A-sentences to B-sentences, and after failure of that project the “new B-theory” was developed. Within the new theory of time there is a question of truthmaking, *what makes one statement true at one time and false at some other?* What are the truthmakers, or truth conditions, that make a statement about the world, e.g., “It’s raining outside” true? Armstrong’s *states of affairs* (or facts) are taken to be the truthmakers and Mellor gives an account of providing the truthmakers in B-series for A-sentences, thus proving that correct view of time is the B-theory.

Deliberation, Action and Freedom

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In the first part of this article, I expose what does it mean for an agent to deliberate about some future action. Since deliberation is a mental event, or series of mental events, it is therefore a kind of action also. I show then, that under the supposition that determinism is the case, then deliberation, in its usual sense, does not exist. But, this is not acceptable. Deliberation, to be a real source of free action, itself has to be free, or form of a free (mental) action. Steps in human deliberating must not be inevitable products of laws of nature and a certain (initial) state of the universe. In the second part of the article I offer a theistic argument for libertarian freedom of the will and freedom of the action. Most people has a very strong feeling that until time t they can do A or that they can refrain, until t , from doing A , and that they can deliberate intentionally about what to do, weighing reasons for and against doing A . Concerning God, God is a perfect being. God does not, therefore lie and He is not a deceiver. God created human beings who have strong intuition that they can do A or not- A at t , and since God is not a deceiver, that intuition must be truthful. So, human beings posses free will in libertarian sense and they can deliberate genuinely freely. In the third part I show briefly, how my view fits with st Anslem's and most recent neuroscience findings.

Two Arguments Against Two Arguments Against Internalism, and Two Arguments for Internalism

David Pitt
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I argue that Burge's and Putnam-inspired arguments for externalism about mental content fail, and present two arguments in favor of internalism about mental content. Burge's argument fails because its central principle, that, all things being equal, one should take intuitively natural ascriptions of propositional attitudes to be literally true is false, and in any case doesn't apply in the cases he discusses. Putnam-style arguments fail because they ignore the possibility of content (including non-indexical content) determines extension relative to context. The arguments for internalism rest on the twin facts that cognitive hallucination is possible and cognitive illusion is impossible.

A Case for an Intransitive Causation

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In the long-lasting debate on the nature of causation as one of the fundamental metaphysical phenomena, there existed a – albeit often implicit – consensus about its properties. Causation is mostly considered irreflexive (or at least not generally reflexive), asymmetrical (which makes it generally irreflexive), and transitive (which along with irreflexivity yields asymmetry). The presentation renders an account inspired by the metaphysical considerations of the founder of intuitionism, L. E. J. Brouwer, which as yet did not attract much attention among philosophers. In his paper from 1948, Brouwer opts for a non-transitive and non-necessary causation, given the fact that "all causal sequences are affected with inaccuracies". From the 80s onwards, there have been independent philosophical critiques of transitivity of causation, for example by Hall (2000) and Hitchcock (2001). In addition, Weingartner (2016), for example, considers five different kinds of causal relations, only two of which are transitive. However, he does not explicitly state the temporal aspect of causation (i.e. he does not use object-language temporal operators); the fact that cause is not prior to the effect follows for him via irreflexivity. Brouwer, on the other hand, bases his conception of "causal attention" on the more primitive notion of "temporal attention". Following his approach, we take temporal succession to be an integral part of causal relation, by proposing a system with a (non-transitive) causal, as well as well as a temporal operator, based on a particular formal theory of change introduced by Świątorzecka (2008). The chief aim of the talk is to explore the expressive and deductive power of a theory of "Brouwerian causation" and to see with which metaphysical principles and intuitions it accords.

Combinatorialism: A Clash of Modal Logic and Metaphysics?

Henry Taylor
University of Birmingham

There is much to recommend modal combinatorialism: the view that all of our modal claims have truth makers in states of affairs in the actual world. But many have claimed that modal combinatorialism is inconsistent with our (supposedly) best modal logic, which is S5. However, a proof of this claim has not been constructed, and there has been very little discussion of what the combinatorialist should do about this. In this paper, i will outline combinatorialism, and construct a proof that shows how it is inconsistent with S5. I then suggest a modification to combinatorialism, and show how this avoids the problem. This solution involves a kind of 'metaphysical wealth redistribution'. Far from being an ad hoc modification to combinatorialism, i show that this is perfectly in the spirit of the view. I also take the opportunity to reflect on the interaction of logic and metaphysics.

In Defense of the Qualitative View of Particulars

Márta Ujvári

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In this talk I argue that explanation in the metaphysical sense recently in the focus of discussions can lend support to the qualitative view of particulars. According to this view “why” questions concerning particulars can be answered by reference to their specific and the individual natures. It is shown, further, that the putative harmful consequences of the Leibniz Principle (PII) for the qualitative view can be avoided provided specific and individual essences are not construed in the style of the naïve bundle theory with settheoretical identity-conditions. Adopting either the more sophisticated two-tier BT or, alternatively, the neo-Aristotelian position of taking essences as natures can help to evade this main charge against the qualitative view. The role of the converse of (PII), i.e. the Identity principle is also considered in the context of identity through worlds/times. Since the principle is inapplicable in these contexts, it seems to be a source of trouble for the qualitative view of particulars. The current practice in analytic circle is to treat (PII) as a metaphysical principle while treating its converse as an impeccable logical principle. However, an a pari treatment in metaphysical applications is more sensible; the suggestion is that by relocating the objections from the qualitative view to the converse of (PII) qua a metaphysical principle can help to dissolve further troubles concerning the qualitative view.

Supervenience, Realization, and Aesthetics

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It's a tempting thought that aesthetic knowledge is non-inferential, and it is a thought that tempts me. I don't infer that a sunset is beautiful. I don't infer that Caravaggio's *Crucifixion of Saint Peter* is dramatic and moving. But here is one of many challenges to this tempting thought. Although it is plausible to think that all of what matters to my aesthetic understanding of the sunset is there before me, it seems implausible that the same is true for Caravaggio's *Crucifixion of Saint Peter*. The aesthetic – certainly the artistic – features of a work supervene widely on the work. A work has the aesthetic features it has partly due to its art-historical context, the intentions of the artist, and so forth, and none of that is immediately available to me when I view Caravaggio's masterpiece. And so the aesthetic properties of a work supervene upon more the non-aesthetic properties available to me. In this paper I show that a proper understanding of how the aesthetic properties of a work are realized by its non-aesthetic properties might respond to this challenge.

Causation: Making a Difference or Bringing About?

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There are a number of (apparently) competing theories of causation in the literature. One main category of such accounts are the "difference making" accounts, according to which some event y causes an event x if y 's occurrence makes a difference to the occurrence of x . This is often spelled out in counterfactual terms: y causes x just in case x would not have happened if y had not occurred.

Alternatives to difference making include those accounts according to which the best way to understand causation is to look at what our best scientific theories say. Transference accounts, according to which causation (in our world) consists of the exchange of certain conserved quantities are examples of this sort of account. We can call accounts of this sort "contribution accounts", since according to them events count as causes insofar as they make a (physical) contribution to the bringing about of the effect. At first glance, it might seem as if the difference making and contribution accounts compete. Ney (2009) has argued that they are not really competitors, but rather answer different questions. However, she also argues that contribution should be regarded as more fundamental, in that difference making should be grounded in contribution. In this paper, I provide some additional reasons for thinking that difference making should be grounded in contribution. In particular, I argue that at least the counterfactual version of the difference making account provides a plausible account of causation only if we assume that the truth of the relevant counterfactuals is grounded in the relevant facts about contribution. In other words, the order of explanation is that the relevant counterfactuals are true because the (contributory) causal relations are as they are, not that the causal relations are what they are because the relevant counterfactuals are true. Nonetheless, there are legitimate "difference making questions" so the difference account does indeed play an important role in our causal reasoning. I close by considering (briefly) what some of the implications of this view are for questions about mental causation.