

# Grue Bag Conference

January 31, 2015

Second Bi-Annual

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## Morning

**Green Session: Laurel Hall 106**

**10:00** [Alycia LaGuardia-LoBianco](#)

“Coping with Illusion: Suffering, Self-Deception, and Adaptive Preferences”

**11:00** [Madiha Hamdi](#)

“GL Responds to Quine”

**Blue Session: Laurel Hall 109**

**10:00** [Andrew Parisi](#)

“Sellars, Second-order Quantification, and Ontological Commitment”

**11:00** [Dana Miranda](#)

“Wretched Spaces: Reading Arendt’s Colony Through Fanon”

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## Pizza!

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## Midday

**Green Session: Laurel Hall 106**

**1:00** [Morgan Thomas](#)

“An Argument for Modal Realism”

**2:00** [Junyeol Kim](#)

“Modal Realism and the Unification of a Possible World”

**Blue Session: Laurel Hall 109**

**1:00** [Nate Sheff](#)

“What Groups Might Be: A Response to Ritchie”

**2:00** [Andrew Tedder](#)

“The Ternary Relation and Restricting Inconsistent Belief”

## Abstracts

### **Madiha Hamdi**

*GL Responds to Quine*

Area: Logic

W.V.O. Quine once claimed that modal logic was conceived in sin. However, one brand of modal logic challenges this notion. Namely, GL (after Gödel/ Löb) is used to explore the provability predicate in PA. Quine levied a number of arguments against modal logic, which at bottom rest on a rejection of metaphysical essentialism. In this paper I hope to investigate the relevance of these claims with respect to the modal logic GL, the modal logic of provability. In particular, I wish to explore whether, due to the extensional nature of PA, Quine's objections against modal logic fail when applied to GL.

### **Junyeol Kim**

*Modal Realism and the Unification of a Possible World*

Area: Philosophy of Language

Modal realists should not be committed to primitivism of the worldmate relation—the relation that unifies things in a possible world. Thus modal realists have tried to provide the analysis of the worldmate relation. However, these attempts are not successful. In this paper, I argue that modal realists do not have to provide the full analysis of the worldmate relation in order to enable their project to take off and that it is perfectly fine to admit that we do not know what the worldmate relation is for now. Then, I will propose that our understanding of the worldmate relation improves as our knowledge of the actual world, especially our knowledge of causation, is expanded.

### **Alycia LaGuardia-LoBianco**

*Coping with Illusion: Suffering, Self-Deception, and Adaptive Preferences*

Area: Value Theory

In this paper, I discuss self-deception as a coping mechanism in cases of personal suffering. When an individual is unable to change a painful or tragic situation a psychologically effective way to cope with this pain is to deceive it away. One may distort the perception or evaluation of her situation until she convinces herself that she is not in a painful or abusive situation, or that that pain or abuse is tolerable. Drawing on Juha Räikkä's argument that adaptive preference formation is a form of self-deception, I then argue that adaptive preference formation can be an effective way to cope with suffering, and that this has surprising implications for our obligations: refraining from removing another's adaptive preference may sometimes be morally preferable to exposure to the truth.

## **Dana Miranda**

*Wretched Spaces: Reading Arendt's Colony Through Fanon*

Area: Political Philosophy

From colonization to imperialism, to her metaphors of the *oikos* and *polis* to describe the private and public realm respectively, to depictions of mass society as an all-consuming blob of freedom, space is shown to be a dominant component of Hannah Arendt's thinking. Arendt's treatment of political space as separate from geography, zones, and territory within a 'space of appearance', as seen through colonial America, create an altogether one-sided picture of public realms. Within these compartmentalization there remains liminal spaces, filled with liminal people that remain to be seen. Thus, non-Western people and spaces hardly seems to fit into Arendt's political cartography as her blindness or geographical blinders to the problems of colonialism from the perspective of the colonized is utterly overlooked. In fact, if the term postcolonial could be applied to Arendt it would most appropriately fit into the decolonization of settler colonies or the state of affairs of former empires. It is through Frantz Fanon that we can realize that it is no longer territory that only encumbers a proper conception of a 'space of appearance' but also delimited spaces that have hampered the participation and appearance of individuals within a public realm. These colonial failures, in which the possibility of encounter is not intensified and grown exponentially but restricted or forgotten, are what I call 'wretched spaces'. Thus, Manichaeism is the fulcrum on which to gain greater insight into the problem of colonized spaces. I believe solutions derived from the union of the Fanonian and Arendtian project can create solutions to the problems and limits of public realm theory as currently constituted.

## **Andrew Parisi**

*Sellars, Second-order Quantification, and Ontological Commitment*

Area: Logic

This paper explores Sellars's responses to the claim that the use of second-order quantifiers incur commitment to abstract entities. It focuses on what he writes in [Sellars, 1960] and [Sellars, 1996]. These arguments, however, do not positively establish that second-order quantification does not commit one to abstract entities. An argument that fits with what Sellars argues there and elsewhere [Sellars, 1963] is offered to establish this conclusion. Finally, the account of quantification that is required by Sellars is filled in using ideas developed by Crispin Wright [Wright, 1999], and formal tools developed by Shaughan Lavine [Lavine, 2000].

## **Nate Sheff**

*What Groups Might Be: A Response to Ritchie*

Area: Social Epistemology

Ritchie (2013) asks what groups are, providing desiderata for a proper theory of group ontology, and finds that the major theories on offer fail to meet them. She then proposes her own account of groups as realizations of structures. Ritchie might very well be right – but we need to specify what she is right about, for there are several questions about group ontology we might ask. To draw out the different questions we might ask, I compare them to a parallel pair of different questions in the personal identity literature, pointed out by Eric Olson. I conclude that, even if her answer to one question is right (in virtue of what do some things make a group?), the other question (what is the metaphysical nature of groups?) remains unsettled.

## **Andrew Tedder**

*The Ternary Relation and Restricting Inconsistent Belief*

Area: Logic

Possibly the standout feature of Routley-Meyer semantics is the introduction and sensible functioning of impossible and incomplete worlds in the interpretation of conditional statements. This feature seems highly exploitable for the purposes of analyzing the rational requirements on inconsistent beliefs (supposing that inconsistent belief is rationally allowable in the first place). This talk seeks to do just this: reading the moving parts of the semantic framework as relating to belief-states, and using these to set out reasonable requirements on inconsistent believers (one of which, I take it, is to not be a trivial believer). On this basis I sketch a logic for inconsistent belief (hint: it's some kind of intuitionistic depth relevant logic)

## **Morgan Thomas**

*An Argument for Modal Realism*

Area: Philosophy of Language

I argue that on any plausible, evident view other than modal realism, there will be a very large number of contingent facts which have no explanation. I argue that modal realism offers an explanation for all of these contingent facts: namely, that they are indexical facts which are true because they are constitutive features of the actual world. Therefore, modal realism explains things other views cannot, and this argues that we should accept modal realism.