

Storytelling

22. - 23. February

[Department of Philosophy, University of Bergen \(Sydnesplassen 12-13\)](#)

Seminar Room, Ground Floor

Programme

Friday 22. February

09:45 – 10:00 Opening

10:00 – 11:15 Fiction as Thought Experiments
Greg Currie (University of York)

11:30 – 12:45 Protagonist Projection, Character Focus, and Mixed Quotation
Andreas Stokke (Uppsala University)

12:45 – 13:45 Lunch: [Godt Brød, Christie Café](#)

13:45 – 15:00 The *Stories* We Tell Each Other Together
David Austin (University of York)

15:15 – 16:30 Two Problems for Constitutive Norms
Jessica Keiser (University of Leeds)

18:00 Dinner: [Villani Pizzeria | Trattoria](#)

Saturday 23. February

10:00 – 11:15 Narrative Points of View
Paal Antonsen (University of Bergen)

11:30 – 12:45 The Contexts of Fictional Truth
Craig Bourne and Emily Caddick Bourne (University of Hertfordshire)

12:45 – 13:45 Lunch: [Godt Brød, Christie Café](#)

13:45 – 15:00 Fictional Narrators and Normative Fiction-Making
Manuel García-Carpintero (University of Barcelona)

Abstracts

Fictions as Thought Experiments

Gregory Currie

A number of philosophers have argued that we can understand the epistemic function of fiction by seeing works of fiction as thought experiments not unlike those we find in philosophy and the sciences. I argue that, while works of fictions--notably critically admired novels plays and films--may be construed as thought experiments, their ability to deliver epistemically significant results is substantially below that of the thought experiments we find in philosophy and the sciences.

Protagonist Projection, Character Focus, and Mixed Quotation

Andreas Stokke

This paper compares two kinds perspective-shifting language. The first is so-called "Protagonist Projection." (Holton, 1997, Stokke, 2013) The second phenomenon is sometimes known as "Character Focus." I argue that both Protagonist Projection and Character Focus should be analyzed as forms of mixed quotation. Drawing on the work of Potts (2007) and Maier (2014, 2015), mixed quotation is seen as interacting with two-dimensions of interpretation, one corresponding to the use-component of mixed quotation cases, the other corresponding to the mention-component of such cases. I propose that the mention-component of mixed quotation can be interpreted modally. As a result, Protagonist Projection and Character Focus can be seen to have the same semantics, while they differ pragmatically. In particular, while Protagonist Projection cases pragmatically convey attributions of beliefs, Character Focus cases do not.

The *Stories* We Tell Each Other Together

David Austin

It is standardly thought that lying must involve an intent to deceive. However, recent work on lying apparently shows that there are cases of lying that do not involve an intent to deceive. Such cases have come to be known as 'bare-faced lies' (or 'bald-faced lies', US). In a recent (2018) paper, entitled *The Lies We Tell Each Other Together*, Eliot Michaelson uses the notion of bare-faced lying to capture what he takes to be an underappreciated kind of lying: lies that are built up collectively rather than by any single individual. He argues that such cases cast doubt on whether the distinctive wrong of lying is best explained in terms of the damage that lying can do to our system of truthful communication. In this talk, I argue that such cases are not best thought of as lies but as stories (or fictions): stories that are built up collectively rather than by any single individual. Not only does this picture safeguard the claim that the distinctive wrong

of lying is best explained in terms of the damage that lying does to our system of truthful communication, it enables us to explore the distinctive wrong (or right) of creating and engaging in such stories.

Two Problems for Constitutive Norms

Jessica Keiser

It is widely assumed that assertion is epistemically normative, in the sense that there is a particular epistemic state that an asserter must bear to the content of her assertion in order for it to be appropriate. There are two broad approaches to thinking about assertoric normativity. The first takes the epistemic norm of assertion to be constitutive of that act, in contrast to a more traditional approach which takes it to be derivative of more general norms. This paper poses two problems for the first approach: (1) It fails to provide a metaphysics; beyond the claim that its epistemic norm is somehow constitutive, there is no promising way to fill out the story which will deliver necessary and sufficient conditions for performing an act of assertion. (2) It cannot adequately deal with apparent contextual variation in the epistemic normativity of assertion; this is brought out by moving away from contexts of information exchange and considering assertions made in the context of telling personal stories for the purpose of constructing collaborative social networks. I show that the traditional approach provides the resources to overcome each of these problems.

Narrative Points of View

Paal Antonsen

This paper is about the second person point of view in fiction. In particular, I will discuss three features that I take to be characteristic of these sorts of narratives. First, while other narratives sometimes address the reader, these narratives employ the pronoun “you” to refer to a character (usually the protagonist) in the story. Second, the story is told *from* the point of view of this character, but *by* some other narrator. And finally, stories told from this point of view invites the consumer to entertain self-involving imaginings.

The Contexts of Fictional Truth

Craig Bourne and Emily Bourne

We argue that some fictional truths are subject to revision. We provide a framework which explains how later decisions, such as casting choices in adaptations, can affect the content of an original story by changing the context in which we are to evaluate what is made fictionally true by a particular set of, say, words and images.

Fictional Narrators and Normative Fiction-Making

Manuel García-Carpintero

Following Kania (2005), I take fictional narrators to have two features, fictionality and agency. In this paper, and invoking the constitutive norms speech act account of fictionality I (2013, forthcoming-a, forthcoming-b, forthcoming-c) have previously argued for, I want to elaborate in my own terms on two distinctions suggested by Wilson (2011), so as to defend a ubiquity-of-sorts view for fictional narrators in verbal and moving-image fictions. Wilson (2011, 125; 115 fn.10) distinguishes what is fictional in the story from what is fictional in the work, and I (forthcoming-a) similarly distinguish between, respectively, constitutive and (merely) ancillary invited imaginings. Thus, imagining that we are told what unreliable or “heterodiegetic” narrators tell us is needed to understand a fiction, but it is merely ancillary and not constitutive of the fictional world; such imaginings are fictional in the work, but not in the story. Second, I’ll trace in my own terms Wilson’s (2011, 112) distinction between minimal and recounting fictional narrators: the former are simulated or portrayed by fiction-makers, the way Alward (2009, 2010) suggests, while the latter are fictional characters that “reveal” us the fictional world. In these terms, I’ll defend Wilson’s (2011) stance in his polemic with Kania (2005), while supporting Kania’s (2007) in his own debate with Alward.