



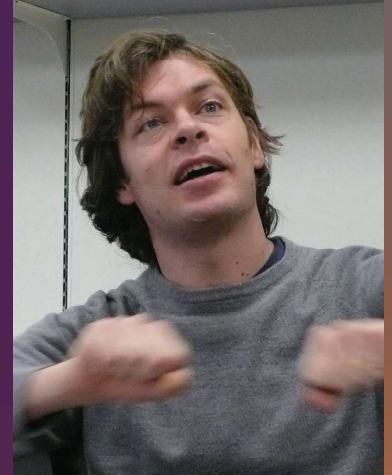
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ANNUAL SEMINAR IN METAPHYSICS AND EPISTEMOLOGY

Higher-Order Quantification & Natural Language Property-Talk

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ABSTRACT: I will defend the view that the usage of words like ‘property’ in natural languages is correctly understood in higher-order terms. For example, the English sentence ‘Socrates has some property’ literally means exactly the same as the higher-order sentence $\exists X.X(\text{Socrates})$. This view implies that many natural-language expressions are highly type-ambiguous. I respond to an influential objection to such ambiguity by giving an account of sentences like ‘Athens and the property of being Athenian were both mentioned by Socrates’ in which a single word-occurrence seems to need to have several differently-typed interpretations simultaneously. This account is most naturally stated using an extended form of higher-order language that allows for sum-types. These may initially seem metaphysically suspect, but are in fact harmless, since given very weak logical assumptions, any theory stated using sum-types can be translated into a theory stated without them.

DATE AND TIME

Melbourne: 3 August, 9:00–11:00

New York: 2 August, 19:00–21:00

Seminar held over Zoom. Register at <https://tinyurl.com/DASME23>

To join our Seminar email list or for other questions, please email dianoia.events@acu.edu.au