

Theory and History of Ontology

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Living Ontologists - Bibliographical Guide: T - Z

These pages will give some essential bibliographical information about some of the most important living ontologists; only a few titles will be cited for every author.

- Amie Lynn Thomasson
- William Vallicella
- Achille Varzi
- David Weissman
- Jan Westerhoff
- David Wiggins
- **Boguslaw Wolniewicz**
- Stephen Yablo
- Edward Zalta

Amie L. Thomasson

1. Thomasson, Amie L. 1996. "Fiction, Modality and Dependent Abstracta." *Philosophical Studies* no. 84:295-320.
2. ———. 1999. *Fiction and Metaphysics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
3. ———. 2007. *Ordinary Objects*. New York: Oxford University Press.

William Vallicella

1. Vallicella, William. 1983. "A Critique of the Quantificational Account of Existence." *Thomist* no. 47:242-267.
2. ———. 2002. *A Paradigm Theory of Existence. Onto-Theology Vindicated*. Dordrecht: Kluwer.

Achille C. Varzi

1. Varzi, Achille. 1991. "Truth, Falsehood and Beyond." In *Topics in Philosophy and Artificial Intelligence*, edited by Albertazzi, Liliana and Poli, Roberto, 39-50. Bozen: Istituto Mitteleuropeo di Cultura.

Papers from the International Summer Schools in Bozen - 1989-1990.

"1. Introduction

Always in the background and sometimes in the foreground of any semantic approach to cognitive reasoning is a straight, twofold assumption on the admissible state representations:

[1] Every sentence must be *either true or false*

[2] No sentence can be *both true and false*.

Arguably, such a standard course is intuitively well-grounded, and the resulting accounts have generally proved to be not only simple, but formally powerful as well. As things are, however, some concern arises in connection with their range of application. For on the one hand, it appears that any but the most artificial set-ups may violate [1], while on the other hand, any but the most simplistic situations are liable to violate [2]. In fact, even if we assume that the *purpose* of a language's sentences is to be always true or false, there is no a priori reason to suppose that the underlying conditions will be always *completely* fulfilled (for instance, ordinary language sentences may involve expressions whose intended reference is only partially defined, or vaguely defined, or not defined at all). And since there is no general syntactic criterion for incompleteness, there is no general way that incompletenesses can be ruled out without ruling out a variety of unproblematic cases as well. Conversely, even if we assume that the *intention* of a language's sentences is never to be true and false, there is in fact no a priori guarantee that the underlying conditions can be always *consistently* fulfilled (for example, ordinary language sentences may, in unfavourable circumstances, turn out to be self-referential, thus leading to such well-known troubles as the liar paradox). And again, since there is no general decision procedure for inconsistency, there is no general and effective way that inconsistencies can be ruled out without rendering a great deal of perfectly unproblematic reasoning impossible.

For these reasons, a more general semantic framework, where representational gaps and/or gluts are admitted *bona fide*, is arguably desirable. Of course the task is by no means straightforward. Dropping [1] and [2] from the foundations of semantics is a true "revolution", and it might be difficult to keep it under logical control. Nevertheless it can be done. My purpose here is to outline a concrete proposal in this direction."

2. ———. 1997. "Inconsistency without Contradiction." *Notre Dame Journal of Formal Logic* no. 38:621-639.
3. Varzi, Achille, and Casati, Roberto. 1995. *Holes and Other Superficialities*. Cambridge: MIT University Press.
4. ———. 1999. *Parts and Places. Structures in Spatial Representation*. Cambridge: The MIT Press.

David Weissman

1. Weissman, David. 2000. *A Social Ontology*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Jan Westerhoff

1. Westerhoff, Jan. 2002. "Defining "Ontological Category"." *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* no. 102:287-293.

Abstract: "Although a considerable degree of precision has been introduced both into the formulation and the discussion of ontological theories by the use of formal methods there is still a remarkable indefiniteness about foundational issues. In particular it is not clear *what* an ontological category is and

why we regard something as an ontological category. This is amazing given that the notion of ontological category is in fact the most basic of the whole of ontology: it is what this discipline is about."

2. ———. 2004. "The Construction of Ontological Categories." *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* no. 82:595-620.
3. ———. 2005. *Ontological Categories. Their Nature and Significance*. New York: Oxford University Press.

David Wiggins

1. Wiggins, David. 2001. *Sameness and Substance Renewed*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Revised edition of: *Sameness and substance*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1980

Stephen Yablo

1. Yablo, Stephen. 1998. "Does Ontology Rest on a Mistake? (First Part)." *Supplement to the Proceedings of The Aristotelian Society* no. 72:229-262.

Abstract: "The usual charge against Carnap's internal/external distinction is one of 'guilt by association with analytic/synthetic'. But it can be freed of this association, to become the distinction between statements made within make-believe games and those made outside them-or, rather, a special case of it with some claim to be called the metaphorical/literal distinction. Not even Quine considers figurative speech committal, so this turns the tables somewhat. To determine our ontological commitments, we have to ferret out all traces of non-literality in our assertions; if there is no sensible project of doing that, there is no sensible project of Quinean ontology."

2. ———. 2000. "A Paradox of Existence." In *Empty Names, Fiction, and the Puzzles of Non-Existence*, edited by Everett, Anthony and Hofweber, Thomas, 275-312. Stanford: CSLI Publications.
3. ———. 2002. "Abstract Objects. A Case Study." In *Individuals, Essence, and Identity. Themes of Analytic Metaphysics*, edited by Bottani, Andrea, Carrara, Massimiliano and Giaretta, Pierdaniele, 189-206. Dordrecht: Kluwer.

Edward N. Zalta

1. Zalta, Edward N. 1980. *An Introduction to a Theory of Abstract Objects*, University of Massachusetts.
Available at UMI Dissertation Express. Order number: 8110393.
2. ———. 1983. *Abstract Objects. An Introduction to Axiomatic Metaphysics*. Dordrecht: Reidel.
3. ———. 1986. "Lambert, Mally and the Principle of Independence." *Grazer Philosophische Studien* no. 25/26:447-460.

"In a recent book [*Meinong and the Principle of Independence*, Cambridge 1983], K. Lambert argues that philosophers should adopt Mally's Principle of Independence (the principle that an object can have

properties even though it lacks being of any kind) by abandoning a constraint on true predications, namely, that all of the singular terms in a true predication denote objects which have being. The constraint may be abandoned either by supposing there is a true predication in which one of the terms denotes a beingless object (Meinong) or by supposing there is a true predication in which one of the terms denotes nothing at all (free logic). However, Lambert's conclusions can be undermined by showing that the data he produces in support of his position can be explained by either of two recent theories of abstract and nonexistent objects, both of which are couched in languages which conform to the traditional constraint."

4. ———. 1988. *Intentional Logic and the Metaphysics of Intentionality*. Cambridge: The MIT Press.
5. ———. 1988. "A Comparison of Two Intensional Logics." *Linguistics and Philosophy* no. 11:59-89.
6. ———. 1992. "On Mally's Alleged Heresy: A Reply." *History and Philosophy of Logic* no. 13:59-68.
7. ———. 1993. "Twenty-Five Basic Theorems in Situation and World Theory." *Journal of Philosophical Logic* no. 22:385-428.
8. ———. 1995. "Two (Related) World Views." *Noûs* no. 29:189-211.
9. ———. 1997. "A Classically-Based Theory of Impossible Worlds." *Notre Dame Journal of Formal Logic* no. 38:640-660.
10. ———. 1998. "Mally's Determinates and Husserl's Noemata." In *Ernst Mally - Versuch Einer Neubewertung*, edited by Hieke, Alexander, 9-28. Sankt Augustin: Academia Verlag.
11. ———. 2002. "A Common Ground and Some Surprising Connections." *Southern Journal of Philosophy*, no. 40:1-25.

"This paper serves as a field guide to certain passages in the literature which bear upon the foundational theory of objects I have developed over the years. The foundational theory assimilates ideas from key philosophers in both the analytical and phenomenological traditions. The ideas of Plato, Leibniz, Frege, Russell, Gödel and even Kripke become connected through those of Brentano, Meinong, Husserl, and Mally. The foundational theory thereby serves as a common ground where analytic and phenomenological concerns meet. It is couched in a precise logic and systematizes a well-known phenomenological kind of entity, one which has played an important role in analytic philosophy."

12. Zalta, Edward N., and Linsky, Bernard. 1995. "Naturalized Platonism Versus Platonized Naturalism." *Journal of Philosophy* no. 92:525-555.
13. Zalta, Edward N., and Linsky, Leonard. 1996. "In Defense of the Contingently Nonconcrete." *Philosophical Studies* no. 84:283-294.
14. Zalta, Edward N., and McMichael, Alan. 1980. "An Alternative Theory of Nonexistent Objects." *Journal of Philosophical Logic* no. 9:297-313.