

Ontology of Fiction

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Description

The course is on *fictional realism*, the view that there are fictional characters. In particular, it is on *abstract creationism*, the variety of fictional realism according to which fictional characters are actually existing abstract objects. The course will be structured about Lectures I-III and VI of Saul Kripke's *Reference and Existence* and Chapters 6-8 of Anthony Everett's *The Nonexistent*.

Topics to be covered will include some of the following: arguments for and against the existence of fictional characters; arguments for and against the creation of fictional characters; the distinction between *instantiating a property* and *instantiating a property according to a fiction*; the differences, if any, between fictional and mythical objects; negative existentials; the identity and distinctness of fictional characters; and (relatedly) the number of fictional characters.

Main readings

Kripke, Saul A. 2013. *Reference and Existence: The John Locke Lectures*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Everett, Anthony. 2013. *The Nonexistent*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Additional readings

Braun, David. 2005. "Empty Names, Fictional Names, Mythical Names." *Noûs* 39.4 (Dec.): 596-631.
Brock, Stuart. 2010. "The Creationist Fiction: The Case against Creationism about Fictional Characters." *Philosophical Review* 119.3 (July): 337-364.
Cameron, Ross P. 2012. "How to Be a Nominalist and a Fictional Realist." In *Art and Abstract Objects*. Ed. Christy Mag Uidhir. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 179-196.
Everett, Anthony. 2005. "Against Fictional Realism." *Journal of Philosophy* 102.12 (Dec.): 624-649.
Goodman, Jeffrey. 2014. "Creatures of Fiction, Objects of Myth." *Analysis* 74.1 (Jan.): 35-40.
Howell, Robert. 2011a. "Fictional Realism and its Discontents." In *Truth in Fiction*. Ed. Franck Lihoreau. Philosophical Analysis. Frankfurt: Ontos. 153-202.
—. 2011b. "Literary Fictions, Real and Unreal." In *Fictions and Models: New Essays*. Ed. John Woods. Basic Philosophical Concepts. Munich: Philosophia. 27-107.
Kripke, Saul A. 2011. "Vacuous Names and Fictional Entities." 1973. In *Philosophical Troubles: Collected Papers, Volume 1*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 52-74.
Murday, Brendan. forthcoming. "Fictional Realism and Indeterminate Identity." *Journal of Philosophical Research*.
Nolan, Daniel and Alexander Sandgren. 2014. "Cardinality and Creationism." *Analysis* 74.4 (Oct.): 615-622.

- Salmon, Nathan. 1998. "Nonexistence." *Noûs* 32.3 (Sept.): 277-319. Reprinted in *Metaphysics, Mathematics, and Meaning: Philosophical Papers I*. Oxford: Clarendon, 2005. 50-90.
- Schnieder, Benjamin. 2010. "Bad Examples?" *American Philosophical Quarterly* 47.3 (July): 279-286.
- and Tatjana von Solodkoff. 2009. "In Defence of Fictional Realism." *Philosophical Quarterly* 59.234 (Jan.): 138-149.
- Thomasson, Amie L. 1999. *Fiction and Metaphysics*. Cambridge Studies in Philosophy. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- . 2011. "Fiction, Existence and Indeterminacy." In *Fictions and Models: New Essays*. Ed. John Woods. Basic Philosophical Concepts. Munich: Philosophia. 109-148.
- van Inwagen, Peter. 1977. "Creatures of Fiction." *American Philosophical Quarterly* 14.4 (Oct.): 299-308. Reprinted in *Ontology, Identity, and Modality: Essays in Metaphysics*. Cambridge Studies in Philosophy. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 37-57.
- . 2003. "Existence, Ontological Commitment, and Fictional Entities." In *The Oxford Handbook of Metaphysics*. Ed. Michael J. Loux and Dean W. Zimmerman. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 131-157.
- von Solodkoff, Tatjana. 2014. "Fictional Realism and Negative Existentials." In *Empty Representations: Reference and Non-Existence*. Ed. Manuel García-Carpintero and Genoveva Martí. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 333-352.