New York Institute of Philosophy
Workshop on Metaphysics in Higher-Order Languages
May 20–21, 2017
Department of Philosophy, New York University

Topic
This workshop will be concerned with questions of metaphysics which can be posed in higher order languages. Higher order languages allow for variables having different syntactic categories — for example, variables that are predicates, and variables that are formulae (open sentence) — and for quantifiers that can bind such variables. Sentences of such languages are sometimes treated as shorthand for sentences about abstract objects, such as propositions and properties. The workshop will explore views which reject such equivalences, or at least, take sentences of higher order languages as precise, intelligible, and metaphysically interesting as they stand. This approach has deep historical roots: it is arguably the view of Frege's Begriffsschrift, and was influentially promoted by A.N. Prior. It has also recently enjoyed a resurgence; for example, Timothy Williamson makes extensive use of higher order logic in his book "Modal Logic as Metaphysics".

Participants
Michael Caie (University of Pittsburgh)
Catharine Diehl (Humbold Universität zu Berlin)
Tom Donaldson (Stanford University)
Peter Fritz (University of Oslo)
Jeremy Goodman (University of Southern California)
Harold Hodes (Cornell University)
Paul Hovda (Reed College)
Kevin Klement (University of Massachusetts, Amherst)
Harvey Lederman (University of Pittsburgh)
Bryan Pickel (University of Edinburgh)
Agustín Rayo (Massachusetts Institute of Technology)
Katherine Ritchie (City College of New York)
Jeffrey Sanford Russell (University of Southern California)
Rohan Sud (Bates College)

Organizers
Cian Dorr (New York University)
Iliana Gioulatou (New York University) (Contact: ig921@nyu.edu)
Schedule

Saturday, May 20th

9:30 – 10:00  
Breakfast

10:00 – 11:35  
Peter Fritz
‘Predication and Existence’
Comments: Catherine Dietz

11:35  
Coffee

11:50 – 1:25  
Bryan Pickel
‘Life at a Lower Order’
Comments: Jeremy Goodman

1:25  
Lunch

3:00 – 4:35  
Kevin Klement
‘Russell on Ontological Fundamentality and Existence’
Comments: Katherine Ritchie
Break

4:50 -6:25  
Michael Caie and Harvey Lederman
‘Classical Opacity’
Comments: Agustín Rayo

7:00  
Conference dinner

Sunday, May 21st

11:00 – 12:35  
Harold Hodes
‘Computation, Deductions, and Models for Certain Ramified Type-Assignment Systems’
Comments: Cian Dorr

12:35  
Lunch

2:00 – 3:35  
Jeff Russell
‘Vague Existence’
Comments: Paul Hovda

3:35  
Break

3:50 – 5:25  
Rohan Sud
‘Ontological Deflationism, Vague Existence, and Metaphysical Vagueness’
Comments: Tom Donaldson