

Modal Oecumenism

BY MEGHAN SULLIVAN

1. Introduction

We want a theory of metaphysical modality to answer at least two sets of questions:

- (1) **The Foundational Questions:** What modal status do particular claims have (assuming there is such a thing as modal status)? And why do claims have the modal status that they do? For example, is it necessary that water is H₂O? Why is it necessary that three is prime but merely contingent that three is my favorite number?

and

- (2) **The Structural Questions:** What logical or semantic relations hold between modal claims (assuming there are such general relationships)? And how fine-grained are modal distinctions? For example, if a claim is possibly true, is it necessarily possibly true? Can modal claims distinguish between merely possible individuals?

Attempts to answer these questions have led many contemporary metaphysicians to surprising and strange ontological beliefs. David Lewis thinks the best combined answer to the foundational and structural questions requires a pluriverse of concrete worlds.¹ Timothy Williamson thinks that the Barcan formulas are logical truths and that every object necessarily exists.² Even the characteristically levelheaded Alvin Plantinga thinks the best unified answer to the two questions will require surprising belief in a host of uninstantiated individual essences – one for every merely possible object.³

If Brian Leftow's right, these modal theories are not just controversial, they are downright heretical . . . in the traditional sense of the term. These theories – and seemingly every other popular modal metaphysics of recent decades – require postulating objects, properties, worlds or propositions that float free of God: concrete worlds (for Lewis), non-concrete necessary existents (for Williamson) and sets of propositions and individual essences (for Plantinga). Because of these ontological requirements, they threaten a core tenet of the major Abrahamic religions, namely that God is the ultimate source of everything. In *God and Necessity*, Leftow develops this worry about ultimacy and responds by developing an alternative theory of modality.⁴ In Leftow's

1 Lewis (1986).

2 Williamson (2013).

3 Plantinga (1974).

4 Leftow (2012).

theory, God's power and will play a central role in answering the foundational and structural questions.

But I don't think the prospects for theistically-friendly modal metaphysics are as restrictive as Leftow would lead us to believe. In this essay, I will argue that theists can reconcile divine ultimacy with a variety of 'secular' theories of metaphysical modality. I will advocate a stance I call *modal oecumenism* – there is no in-principle conflict between orthodox Christian theism and the ontologies of leading secular modal metaphysics. I limit myself to Christian theism since that is the main form of theism considered in the book, and because I am less confident that the theological points I advocate apply to Jewish or Islamic theology. I think there are substantial methodological advantages to modal oecumenism, and I think Leftow's restrictive conception of divine ultimacy is insufficiently motivated.

My argument will proceed in four parts. In Section 2, I will outline the Leftonian argument for the conflict between divine ultimacy and secular modal metaphysics. In Section 3, I will briefly survey his preferred theory of modality and consider whether his theory gives a satisfactory answer to the foundational and structural questions. As we will see, the verdict is mixed. In Section 4, I will argue that Leftow's argument for the conflict between secular modal metaphysics and divine ultimacy is unsound, because it relies on an overly restrictive interpretation of divine ultimacy. I will propose an alternative understanding of divine ultimacy based on a broader and less controversial theory of metaphysical dependence. Finally in Section 5, I will argue that the ecumenical approach I advocate has three advantages over Leftow's approach: it gives theists improved prospects for answering the foundational and structural questions, it gives theists broader options for answering the problem of evil and it reflects an appropriate epistemic humility.

2. *Divine ultimacy and modal ontology*

Let's define a *secular* theory of modality as any theory of modality which denies that God must make a creating-ex-nihilo contribution to whatever ontology is needed to answer the foundational and structural questions. Prominent recent examples include Lewisian modal realism, Williamsonian necessitism and the actualist views made popular by Plantinga and Kripke.⁵ At first blush, secular modal theories should seem no more troubling to believers than secular chemical theories or secular economic theories. They aren't straightforwardly incompatible with Christian theism; they just do not assign facts about God a salient explanatory role.

But Leftow thinks the problem for modality is acute. Leftow contends that theists are committed to a certain understanding of divine ultimacy that he

5 Kripke (1980).

calls ‘God is the Source of All’. This theological doctrine is reflected in two principles:

GSA: For all x , if x is not God, a part, aspect or attribute of God or an event, God makes the creating-ex-nihilo sort of contribution to x ’s existence as long as x exists.⁶

and,

GAO: God creates and conserves all abstract objects outside Him.⁷

With some additional assumptions, which Leftow introduces, we can show GSA and GAO are inconsistent with secular modal theories. Here is my reconstruction of his reasoning.

First, Leftow makes a seemingly benign assumption about modal truths:

(1) Some strongly necessary truths are not about God and are not negative existentials.⁸

‘Strongly necessary’ just means metaphysically necessary in this context. (1) can be defended with examples. Water is H_2O . This seems to be a strongly necessary truth. But it is neither (obviously) about God nor a negative existential.

Next, Leftow assumes a weak truth-maker principle:

(2) It is always the case that if a truth is necessary and not a negative existential, then it has an ontology.⁹

In other words, for a claim which is not a negative existential to be true, there must be some entity that serves as its truth explainer.¹⁰ It is somewhat unclear why this is ‘always’ true and not instead a necessary truth. The likely reason is that Leftow is worried about a regress: if we rely on explicitly modal premises in our argument about modal foundations, then those premises will stand in need of explanation. Leftow discusses similar regress worries later in the book and notes that they seem to afflict secular reductive modal theories just as much as they afflict his own.¹¹ Let’s set aside the regress worry for present purposes.

The final assumption is theological:

(3) If a necessary truth not about God has an ontology, all of its ontology lies outside of God.¹²

6 Leftow (2012: 20).

7 Leftow (2012: 64).

8 Leftow (2012: 23).

9 Leftow (2012: 23).

10 He discusses his conception of truthmaking in more detail on page 49.

11 See Leftow (2012: 131).

12 Leftow (2012: 25).

The reasoning is that if a claim is true, necessary, and not about God, then something other than God must be responsible for making it true.¹³ With these assumptions in place, the trouble for secular theories follows. From (1) through (3), we can infer:

(4) Some ontology lies outside of God.

If GSA and GAO are true, then

(5) God must make the creating-ex-nihilo contribution to this ontology.

But secular modal theories deny that God must make such a contribution. So no secular modal theory is true.

Let's call this the *incompatibility argument*. GSA and GAO plus some auxiliary assumptions about truthmaking entail that many popular modal theories are unavailable to theists. Note that this argument bears a close resemblance to arguments traditionally given against theistic Platonism. If there are properties, sets or propositions that are not about God, then some ontology lies outside of God. And so secular Platonism is incompatible with God being the source of all. Some philosophers take considerations like this to require that theists be nominalists.¹⁴ Others take arguments like this to motivate restricting the 'all' quantifier on claims like 'God is the source of all'.¹⁵

Leftow uses the incompatibility argument to motivate his central project in *God and Necessity* – namely, offering a distinctively theistic theory of metaphysical modality. He develops a modal theory such that every strongly necessary truth that is not a negative existential arises from God's powers and intentions.¹⁶ Is Leftow's project well motivated? There are many places where we might object to the incompatibility argument. We might doubt the weak truthmaking principle that supports (2).¹⁷ We might deny (3) on the grounds that 'lying outside God' is objectionably unclear. We might even deny (1) by denying the coherence of strong metaphysical necessity.¹⁸ But I think the most interesting and controversial assumptions in the incompatibility argument are GSA and GAO, and theists interested in the leading secular modal theories should focus their attention here. Before turning to disputes about these principles, we should consider the modal theory Leftow

13 Leftow (2012: 25).

14 See for example Craig (2011).

15 See for example van Inwagen (2009).

16 In the book, Leftow also has a lot to say about competing theistic theories of modality, but I will largely set aside those issues for the present essay.

17 See for example Merricks (2007).

18 Confession: in some frames of mind, I think this is the appropriate stance. See Chapter 12 of Sider (2011) for a recent discussion of deflationist approaches to modality.

offers as a competitor to the secular theories. It will shed some light on the costs and benefits of GSA and GAO as litmus tests for theistically acceptable modal theories.

3. Leftow's power-voluntarism account of modality

How does Leftow answer the foundational and structural questions from the introduction? Let's take each question in turn.

Here, briefly, is how Leftow accounts for the modal status of secular truths. Prior to anything having modal status, God exists and has a divine nature. In virtue of his divine nature, God has it 'in Him' to create and to endow himself with more specific powers, where the 'in Him' operator is supposed to describe a feature of God that doesn't presuppose interesting modal facts. God thinks up determinate states of affairs. God forms preferences regarding those state of affairs. God then gives himself the power prevent certain states of affairs, forms the disposition to prevent them and does prevent them (thus securing the impossibilities). The complement of the impossible states of affairs is the necessities. God also gives himself the power to permit other states of affairs (the possibilities). God then exercises his powers according to his will and nature.¹⁹ And so God's powers and will explain why any seemingly secular truth has the modal status it does. It is necessary that water is H₂O because God has given himself the power and disposition to prevent any other state of affairs. Hubert Humphrey could have won the 1968 Presidential election because God has given himself the power to make Humphrey win (though He did not exercise it).

Leftow's answer to the foundational questions leaves some important issues unresolved. Does God form preferences over sub-maximal states of affairs or entire possible worlds (maximal, consistent states of affairs)? If it is the former, then the problem of evil seems particularly intractable – God can prefer a state of affairs with free creatures and a state of affairs with sinless creatures and so create a world with both. If it is the latter – if God's preferences range over entire worlds – then what determines whether a certain collection of states of affairs is a possible world? Consistency is, after all, a modal notion. Moreover what should we make of this pre-modal power 'in God' to create and to endow himself with powers? Leftow argues at length against theories that ground all of modality in God's nature, but his final theory seems close to a kind of deity theory.²⁰

What about the second set of questions for a modal theory – the structural questions? Leftow gives a sketch of how he will answer the structural questions in the later chapters of the book. He endorses existing modal logics, but

19 Leftow (2012: 262–264).

20 See Leftow (2012: 252–254).

he explains that the ‘possible worlds’ often used in these logics are to be understood as God’s world powers.²¹ The axioms of his modal logic are S5, and Leftow offers a theory of how accessibility relations arise from God’s divine powers.²² He describes a modified Kripke semantics for his modal operators, with an extra function that assigns mental events E that represent God’s singular concepts of possible beings.²³

As with the foundational questions, Leftow’s answer to the structural question also leaves some perennial issues unresolved. For instance, how do we account for singular propositions about merely possible individuals? I do not actually have any sisters. But it seems it is possible that I have a sister; call her ‘Maria’. It also seems possible that I have a different sister; call her ‘Nancy’. Have I described distinct, genuine possibilities? This is one of the central debates in modal semantics.

On Leftow’s view, the first step in accounting for these possibilities (if such possibilities there be) requires God to think of the state of affairs where Maria and Nancy exist. But how can God think of such a state of affairs if there are no such individuals to think about? And in virtue of what are these possibilities distinct? Leftow assumes that God forms singular concepts of possible individuals.²⁴ How does God form these concepts? Leftow says that God is able to stipulate the haecceities of individuals before creation.²⁵ This divine stipulation also accounts for the identity or distinctness of possible individuals. Leftow gives the analogy of an author stipulating the identity of a character as a potential model for how these concepts are formed. Still we are unclear what the content of these stipulations are. They cannot be of the form ‘Let M and N be distinct’, since this would presuppose that God has singular concepts of M and N. The problem of singular propositions just reemerges at an earlier level on Leftow’s account.

Perhaps the biggest challenge for any answer to the structural question is accounting for the Barcan formulas in modal logic – formulas that are derivable in many systems of quantified modal logic that seem to entail the necessary existence of every object. It isn’t clear that Leftow has a coherent modal logic capable of blocking the Barcan formulas. At best he proposes that the theist repurpose whatever we determine to be the best actualist quantified modal logic. The problem is that it is an extraordinarily vexing question what the best actualist modal logic is. Indeed, doubts about the coherence of *any* actualist modal logic partially motivate prominent secular

21 Leftow (2012: 445)

22 Leftow (2012: 453).

23 Leftow (2012: 452).

24 Leftow (2012: 452).

25 Leftow (2012: 420–434).

theories like modal realism and necessitism. The ‘weird’ ontologies of these theories are partially responses to the greatest problem in modal logic.

‘But so what?’, you might ask. A little unclarity about the logic and semantics and some lingering questions about modal status might still be well worth the cost of avoiding heresy. Which brings us back to the main question of this essay: is Leftow right that we cannot square secular modal theories with Christian theism?

4. *Ultimacy as metaphysical dependence*

I don’t think theists should feel pressured into a divine powers theory like Leftow’s. Leftow has an overly narrow conception of divine ultimacy, but a broader, independently motivated conception of ultimacy would be compatible with a broad array of secular modal metaphysics.

Recall that Leftow’s motivation for the power-voluntarism theory crucially assumes:

GSA: For all x , if x is not God, a part, aspect or attribute of God or an event, God makes the creating-ex-nihilo sort of contribution to x ’s existence as long as x exists.

and:

GAO: God creates and conserves all abstract objects lying outside Him.

The ‘God is the source of all’ principles seem true when applied to the domain of entities that can rightly be said to be creations (perhaps the concrete universe and everything in it, or the whole of spatiotemporal reality, or classes that depend on their members). But no part of Christian theism (or Christian ontology) *requires* us to think of properties, sets, propositions or possible worlds (whatever they are) as creations. Leftow’s argument for GAO is a version of a perfect being argument:

If God deserves thanks, praise and obedience for making the brave, He would deserve more for making not just the brave but also the property in virtue of which they are brave... . Again, if it displays God’s power to make concrete things, it would display it even more to make abstract ones (the more is made, the more is displayed), and must display it to make all of them...²⁶

Perfect being arguments like this pervade *God and Necessity*, and they feature importantly in Leftow’s criticism of alternative theistic views

²⁶ Leftow (2012: 64).

of modality.²⁷ Leftow describes the perfect being theologian's method this way:

One sort of 'perfect being' argument would follow this format. Nothing could be a better G (or better in G) than God in fact is. God can be F. God would be a better G (or better in G) were He F than were He not F, precisely because of being F, rather than due to something being F would bring with it. Suppose now for reductio that God is not F. Then God is not as good a G as He could be. So if God is not F, it is false that nothing could be a better G than God in fact is. But this is true. So *prima facie* God is F. If being F is incompatible with some divine attribute initially given from Scripture, this *prima facie* claim is overruled. If being F is compatible with all scriptural 'givens' and with all other outputs of this 'first stage' procedure, then *ultima facie* and *simpliciter* God is F... What (perfect-being theologians) say can often be fleshed out or transposed into arguments of this sort... These arguments' epistemic credentials are as good (or bad) as those of Scripture in conjunction with some of our value intuitions.²⁸

The relevant modal judgments in this form of perfect being argument appear to be conceivability judgments – we conceive of a scenario such that God has or lacks some property, and then we form a judgment about God's greatness with respect to G in that scenario. Would God be a better Creator if he was also the creator-ex-nihilo of abstracta, properties, propositions and possible worlds? Leftow thinks so. And since this does not conflict with Scriptural givens or with other divine attributes deduced through this method, God must be the creator of all entities, including any ontology that is required by strongly necessary truths.

What should we make of such conceivability judgments? I trust conceivability intuitions most when they pertain to logical or semantic relationships. I also tend to trust them when they pertain to counterfactual questions of everyday life. What would the world be like if I filled my car's gas tank with nitroglycerin rather than gasoline? (Explosive!) Or if the US goes to war with Syria? (Violent!) Or if infants could talk? (Quieter!). But I confess that when asked to conceive of a state of affairs where God is creating abstracta, sets, properties, propositions or possible worlds, I draw a blank. For one, it is not clear what it would be to create such entities. For another, it is hard to even conceive of what these entities are – conceivability isn't much of a guide to

27 Note that Leftow's use of GSA, GAO and the perfect being arguments is largely to criticize alternative theories. At the end of the book, he endorses a form of theistic nominalism: though it would be remarkable for God to make abstract objects, there are no abstract objects (strictly speaking).

28 Leftow (2012: 10). For criticism of Leftow's perfect being methodology, see Speaks (Forthcoming).

highly speculative metaphysics. If I cannot form a conception of such a state, then I cannot judge the state's relative value. For this reason, I find the perfect-being argument for Leftow's completely open-ended GSA and GAO unconvincing.

Of course, even with these limits of conceivability, theists can still theorize about God's ultimacy. We might say, regardless of what we can imagine, God is the ultimate source of everything. That's just part of God's nature – a fundamental commitment of theism. I agree with Leftow that theists should think God is the ultimate *source* of everything. But I do not think this requires believing in GSA, GAO or in the soundness of the incompatibility argument. I will sketch an alternative understanding of God's ultimacy, and then ask whether anything of God's perfection is lost in the revised theory.

The starting point is the belief that God is the fundamental being on which everything metaphysically *depends*. What is metaphysical dependence?²⁹ We can start to explain the relation with examples: wholes depend upon their parts, sets depend upon their members and general facts depend upon particular facts. What unifies different dependence relations (according to defenders of the approach) is a certain kind of explanatory priority.³⁰ But dependence is distinct from causation: the members of a set don't cause the set to exist, at least not on our typical understanding of causation. We seem to rely on non-causal dependence relations in a variety of metaphysical explanations.

Such a relation can help theists to offer a theory of divine ultimacy. To develop such a theory, the theist should specify some conditions on metaphysical dependence. Taking our cues from the (substantial) literature on this topic, we can begin with the following conditions:

- (1) Dependence is a partial ordering relation.
- (2) Dependence holds between entities, including entities of different ontological categories. For example, a singleton set depends on its member. A trope depends on the particular that instantiates it.
- (3) Dependence can be singular or plural: it hold one–one, one–many or many–many. The singleton and trope examples are each one–one, but we might also think that a composite object depends on all of the particles that compose it (one–many) and several distinct composite objects depend on groups of particles (many–many).
- (4) Dependence is transitive: for any entities A, B and C, if A depends on B and B depends on C, then A depends on C.
- (5) Dependence is asymmetric: if A depends on B, then B does not depend on A.

29 Sometimes the favored term is 'grounding'.

30 See Bennett (2011).

- (6) Dependence is well founded: there is no infinitely descending chain of dependence.

Theists can leave other questions open. We may think there a single fundamental relation of metaphysical dependence (*dependence monism*)³¹, or we may think there are multiple fundamental relations of dependence (*dependence pluralism*).³² We may think the dependence relation is sometimes reflexive (perhaps if God depends on Himself) or always irreflexive (if God depends on nothing). (This would require rethinking asymmetry).

Using the dependence relation suggested, we can state a divine ultimacy principle, which I will call:

Ultimate Dependence: For all x , if x is not God, x metaphysically depends on God.

I propose ultimate dependence as an alternative to GSA and GAO. It has the same general format but relaxes the requirement that God make a creating-ex-nihilo contribution to the existence of sets, propositions or possible worlds. It is also much simpler, since metaphysical dependence is flexible enough to allow for God's attributes to depend on God's being.

An immediate theological objection springs to mind, but can be dealt with easily. Scripture assigns God not just the role of ultimate source of being – it says he is the creator of everything. One of God's most important titles is *Creator*. Ultimate dependence is silent on whether every entity is created by God. So, you might think, we need our theory of divine ultimacy to be more narrow, in order to reflect God's ultimate causal role in the world. Happily this is easy enough to achieve once we concede that creator–creation relations are a kind of metaphysical dependence. We only need to add:

Creation Supplement: Every creation dependence chain ends with God.

For an example of a creation chain, you might think God created Adam and Eve, and Adam and Eve in turn created Abel. Abel depends on Adam and Eve, and Adam and Eve depend on God, in that order of explanatory priority. By the Creation Supplement, everything that is a creation was ultimately created by God. The Creation Supplement is nevertheless perfectly consistent with the view that abstracta, sets, propositions, possible worlds and the like are not creations, and therefore do not arise from any divine creative act.

With this understanding of divine ultimacy at hand, we can resist the incompatibility argument by rejecting GSA and GAO, at least in their most expansive interpretations. We further reject Leftow's assumption that 'not created by God' entails 'lying outside God' in some theologically unacceptable way. As long as the ontology needed for a modal metaphysics is

31 For a sample of recent 'grounders' see Fine (2002), Schaffer (2009) and Rosen (2010).

32 Koslicki (Forthcoming), Wilson (2014).

metaphysically dependent upon God in the appropriate way, it is no threat to divine ultimacy. To crudely paraphrase David Armstrong, on this proposal, God is the least discerning and most promiscuous truthmaker.

5. *Modal oecumenism*

Theists who independently believe that there is such a phenomenon as metaphysical dependence should find Leftow's modal theory undermotivated. But this debate over the compatibility between theism and secular modal theories also points the way to even broader issues for how theists ought to approach metaphysical theorizing. I'd like to close by considering these issues, using the modal debate as a case study.

Let's say that there is an 'in-principle conflict' between an ontological theory and theism if and only if the ontological theory contradicts ultimate dependence. Most secular modal ontologies on offer are – unsurprisingly – completely silent on the question of ultimate dependence. So there is no in-principle conflict between these theories and theism. Call this stance *modal oecumenism*. According to the oecumenist, Williamson's bare, merely possible, non-concrete existents can depend upon God, but remain uncreated. There is no reason, in principle, to think Lewis's pluriverse could not depend on God in some way without being his creations. And Plantinga's primitive essences and propositions are no threat to his piety.

Modal oecumenism is more of a sociological posit than a theory – the best secular modal ontologies all currently on offer are all compatible with divine ultimacy. This is, of course, subject to change with new developments in the metaphysics of modality. The modal oecumenist also does not deny that there may be significant implementation problems for theists who take up one or another secular modal theory. For example, modal realists would have to explain how God is necessary and do so presumably without appeal to counterpart theory (on pain of denying monotheism). Necessitists would have to explain how the necessary existence of ordinary objects differs from the necessary existence enjoyed by God alone (on pain of collapsing a seemingly important divine attribute). What's crucial is that these problems do not arise *just because* modal realism and necessitism postulate uncreated entities.

I think there are at least three substantial benefits to modal oecumenism as a stance, and in particular, the kind of oecumenism that is based on a metaphysical dependence understanding of ultimacy.

The first advantage is methodological. As I indicated in Section 3, I think Leftow's theory gives underdeveloped and unsatisfying answers to the core questions facing theories of modality. Theists interested in answering the foundational and structural questions would do better to look at far more developed secular theories. Oecumenism reflects a very sensible approach to theistic metaphysics more generally: aim to reconcile theism with the most developed and best confirmed theories on offer – regardless of their

source – and accept in-principle conflicts only as a last resort. The metaphysical dependence relation is independently well motivated, and is able to reconcile theism with a broad array of modal ontologies, including the ontologies of what currently seem to be our best modal theories. Its ability to reconcile theism with our best secular theories gives us a strong (but defensible) reason to prefer the dependence conception of ultimacy over a causal one.

The second advantage is theological. The appeal of oecumenism is not merely that theists should want to be ‘on the right side of history’ when it comes to which modal theory we choose (though we should!). Some non-Leftonian modal theories also give us improved resources for answering pressing theological questions. Probably the most important example of this comes in attempts to develop the free will defence to the problem of evil. Free will defences crucially assume that God is omnipotent and all-good, but nevertheless there is no possible world where every creature is free and sinless.³³ In defending this assumption, it is common to appeal to modal limits before creation. But voluntarist theories cannot avail themselves of this kind of defence of evil. Leftow, in particular, faces the dilemma outlined in Section 3: either God has it ‘in Him’ to prefer and create a world of free, sinless creatures or God’s preferences are limited by admissible ways of combining states of affairs. If the former is true, the problem of evil is acute since we have no explanation for why God did not create the free and sinless world. If the latter is true, then Leftow’s answer to the foundational questions is incomplete. Modal oecumenists need not have such problems, since modal facts may very well depend on God without being preferred or chosen by him. So not only are the oecumenists more likely to end up with a better modal theory but they also have more options for answering the principal objection to theism. We should welcome these options.

The third advantage is epistemic. As I indicated earlier, I think there are limits to perfect-being theology, especially the sort that requires forming judgments about unfamiliar and conceptually difficult states of affairs. Much about God *is* amenable to conceivability arguments – we can make judgments about God’s love, the nature and importance of his actions in human history, and our moral relationship to him. And it can be spiritually healthy to try to imagine God before creation, to dwell on his nature and attributes. But when it comes to theorizing about God before creation or about his attributes that are not clearly revealed in scripture, then I think we should also approach our work with a high level of epistemic humility. Some might complain that the dependence relation I invoke in modal oecumenism is too open-ended or unspecified. I actually think these are benefits. Metaphysical dependence’s underspecification accurately reflects how little we are able to confidently assert about this aspect of God’s nature. We

33 See for example Plantinga (1977).

should prefer this to the staggeringly precise explanation of God's precreative thoughts and actions which Leftow's modal theory requires.³⁴

University of Notre Dame
Notre Dame, IN 46566, USA
sullivan.meghan@gmail.com

References

- Bennett, K. 2011. Construction area: no hard hat required. *Philosophical Studies* 154: 79–104.
- Craig, W.L. 2011. Nominalism and divine aseity. In *Oxford Studies in Philosophy of Religion*, vol. 4, eds. L. Jonathan and Kvanvig, 44–66. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Fine, K. 2002. The question of realism. In *Individuals, Essence, and Identity: Themes in Analytic Philosophy*, eds. C. B. Andrea, C. Massamiliano, and P. Giaretta, 3–41. Dordrecht: Kluwer.
- Koslicki, K. Forthcoming. The coarse-grainedness of grounding. In *Oxford Studies in Metaphysics*, eds. W. Zimmerman and K. Bennett. 306–349. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kripke, S. 1980. *Naming and Necessity*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Leftow, B. 2012. *God and Necessity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Lewis, D. 1986. *On the Plurality of Worlds*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Merricks, T. 2007. *Truth and Ontology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Plantinga, A. 1974. *Naming and Necessity*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Plantinga, A. 1977. *God, Freedom, and Evil*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company.
- Rosen, G. 2010. Metaphysical dependence: grounding and reduction. In *Modality: Metaphysics, Logic, and Epistemology*, eds. A. Hoffman and B. Hale, 109–36. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Schaffer, J. 2009. On what grounds what. In *Metametaphysics: New Essays on the Foundations of Ontology*, eds. D.J. Chalmers, D. Manley, and R. Wasserman, 347–83. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Sider, T. 2011. *Writing the Book of the World*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Speaks, J. Forthcoming. The method of perfect being theology. *Faith and Philosophy*.
- van Inwagen, P. 2009. God and other uncreated things. In *Metaphysics and God: Essays in Honor of Eleonore Stump*, ed. K. Timpe, 3–20. New York: Routledge.
- Wilson, J. 2014. No Work for a Theory of Grounding. *Inquiry* 57: 1–45.
- Williamson, T. 2013. *Modal Logic as Metaphysics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

34 Many thanks to Brian Leftow, Sam Newlands, Jeff Speaks, David Vander Laan, audiences at the 2014 Pacific APA and the Notre Dame Center for Philosophy of Religion, and especially the participants in the 2014 Alternative Theories of Modality seminar at Notre Dame. All provided helpful comments.