

SAM CARTER

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RESEARCH

AREAS OF SPECIALISATION:

Philosophy of Language, Epistemology, Logic

AREAS OF COMPETENCE:

Cognitive Science, Marx

EDUCATION

PHD: Rutgers University-New Brunswick

Thesis Title: 'Unifying If.'

Co-advisors: Jeff King & Thony Gillies.

2015-Present

BPHIL: University of Oxford

Thesis Title: 'Generically Knowing.'

Advisor: Timothy Williamson

2013-2015

MA (HONS): University of Edinburgh

2009-2013

PUBLICATIONS

Forthcoming A Suppositional Theory of Conditionals.
Mind

The Dynamics of Loose Talk.
Noûs

Vagueness & Discourse Dynamics.
in *Linguistics Meets Philosophy* (Cambridge University Press)

2019 Higher Order Ignorance inside the Margins.
Philosophical Studies

PROCEEDINGS

2017 'Now' with Subordinate Clauses. (Co-authored with Daniel Altshuler)
Proceedings of SALT 27: 358-376.

Loose Talk, Negation and Commutativity: A Hybrid Dynamic/Static Theory.
Sinn und Bedeutung: 21: 267-281.

2016 Probability Judgements about Indicative Conditionals.
Logic Journal of the IGPL, 24: 600-611.

TALKS

2019	A Suppositional Theory of Conditionals	Central APA'19 <i>Denver</i> : 27.02.2019.
2018	A Suppositional Theory of Conditionals	NASSLI'18 <i>CMU</i> : 27.06.2018.
2017	Might Donkey Counterfactuals (<i>with</i> Simon Goldstein)	ESSLI'17 <i>IRIT</i> : 19.07.2017.
	Higher-Order Ignorance inside the Margins	The Joint Session <i>University of Edinburgh</i> : 15.07.2017.
	Higher-Order Ignorance inside the Margins	The Ockham Society. <i>University of Oxford</i> : 07.06.2017.
	'Now' in Subordinate Clause Constructions (<i>with</i> Daniel Altshuler)	Subordinate Clauses <i>UCL</i> : 24.05.2017.
	'Now' in Subordinate Clause Constructions (<i>with</i> Daniel Altshuler)	The Semantics of Embedded Sentences <i>NYU</i> : 17.05.2017.
	'Now' in Subordinate Clause Constructions (<i>with</i> Daniel Altshuler)	SALT 27 <i>University of Maryland</i> : 12.05.2017.
	Higher-Order Ignorance inside the Margins	Yale Graduate Conference <i>Yale</i> : 31.03.2017.
	'Now' in Subordinate Clause Constructions (<i>with</i> Daniel Altshuler)	41st Penn Linguistics Conference <i>UPenn</i> : 25.03.2017.
	A Suppositional Theory of Conditionals	NY Philosophy of Language Workshop <i>NYU</i> : 06.03.2017.
	'Now' & Subordinate Clauses (<i>with</i> Daniel Altshuler)	Topics in Semantics <i>UMass-Amherst</i> : 06.02.2017.
2016	Disjunction & Distributivity (<i>with</i> Simon Goldstein)	Conditionals at the Crossroads <i>Universität Konstanz</i> : 11.11.2016.
	Solving Frege's Puzzle	GRUE <i>UMass-Amherst</i> : 26.10.2016.
	Probabilistic Reasoning with Conditionals	Brown Bag <i>Hampshire College</i> : 26.10.2016.
	Vagueness without Sorites Susceptibility	Bochum-Rutgers Workshop German Embassy, NY. 14.10.2016.
	The Dynamics of Loose Talk	Sinn und Bedeutung 21 <i>University of Edinburgh</i> : 6.08.2016.

	The Dynamics of Loose Talk	NASSLLI'16 <i>Rutgers</i> : 14.07.2016.
	Vagueness without Sorites Susceptibility	The Ockham Society <i>University of Oxford</i> : 25.05.2016.
	Vagueness without Sorites Susceptibility	5th Rutgers-Lund Conference <i>Lund University</i> : 19.05.2016.
	Cognitive Maps & Fragmentation	2nd Fragmentation Workshop <i>Karl-Franz University</i> : 6.05.2016.
	Vagueness without Sorites Susceptibility	Syracuse Graduate Conference <i>Syracuse University</i> : 15.04.2016.
2015	Mental Models in Probabilistic Judgment	MBR'15 <i>Sestri Levante</i> : 26.06.2015.
	Probabilistic Judgment about Conditionals	Causal and Probabilistic Reasoning <i>MCMP, Munich</i> : 19.06.2015.
	Knowledge, Action and Retrograde Explanation	The Ockham Society <i>University of Oxford</i> : 26.02.2015.
2014	Normality, Justification and Cognitive Virtue	BPPA Workshop on Epistemic Values <i>University of Edinburgh</i> : 11.06.2014.
	Knowledge and Belief: A Tale of Entailment?	Graduate Epistemology Conference <i>University of Miami</i> : 10.01.2014.

TEACHING

2019	Human Nature & Human Diversity	Spring	(† = primary instructor)
2018	Marx & Marxism [†]	Fall	
	Intro to Logic	Spring	
2017	Intro to Philosophy	Fall	

AWARDS

- Mellon Summer Fellowship, 2016.
- Gilbert Ryle Prize, University of Oxford, 2015.
- Bruce of Grangehill Prize, 2013.
- James Hutchinson Stirling Prize (×2), 2011.
- James Seth Memorial Prize (×2), 2010.

SERVICE

Referee for: *Noûs, Linguistics & Philosophy, Mind, Ergo, Erkenntnis,*
SEP, SALT, *Sinn und Bedeutung, GLOW.*

Organiser for Rutgers Philosophy of Language Reading Group *2016-present*
Co-Organiser Rutgers Graduate Talks *2017*
Rutgers Prospective Visit Co-Coordinator *2016, 2017, 2018*
Organising Committee NASSLLI *2016*
Rutgers Climate Committee *2015-2016*

Thesis Abstract

Conditionals are familiar tools, playing an important role in both reasoning and communication.

- (1) If the butler did it, he used the candlestick.
- (2) If the butler had done it, he'd have used the candlestick.

According to orthodoxy, conditionals can be divided into two categories: indicatives, like (1), and subjunctives, like (2). My thesis sets out to answer two questions:

- (i.) How are (1) and (2) alike? and,
- (ii.) How are (1) and (2) different?

In the first chapter, I argue that structural analogies between the behaviour of 'if'-clauses and supposition suggest an elegant answer to the former: conditionals, whether indicative or subjunctive, provide us with a way of investigating the status of the consequent under the supposition of the antecedent.

'If'-clauses, like supposition, function to change a body of information. Drawing on a range of different linguistic data, I show that there are striking parallels in the way they do so. For example, both have similar effects on the acceptability of certain inference patterns, on the licensing of counterfactual uses of subjunctives and on the felicity of epistemic contradictions.

Update semantics and AGM offer two very different theories of information change. To model the effect of supposition in discourse, we need a framework which combines the resources of both. After developing such a framework in the second chapter of my thesis, I show how it can be extended to provide a formal theory of conditionals which treats indicatives and subjunctives alike.

The third chapter focuses on explaining why, given this common core, indicatives and subjunctives often behave so differently. I suggest that the two diverge, not in their at-issue meaning, but rather in the constraints they impose on the contexts at which they are licensed. Unlike the latter, the former require their antecedent to be possible. Appealing to a popular pragmatic principle, according to which speakers should prefer expressions with stronger presuppositions, we can predict that using a subjunctive will frequently implicate that its antecedent is ruled out in context. When combined with the theory developed in the first half of the thesis, it turns out this can explain why (2) seems to communicate something about the world, while (1) makes a claim about the speaker's information.

Finally, I return to the double life of conditionals as implements for both reasoning and communication. I argue that, rather than forming a distinctive form of speech act, we should treat instructions to suppose as simply a subclass of imperatives, which convey a command to perform a particular kind of cognitive act: supposing.