Neo-Carnapian Quietism:

A global framework

Suki Finn

PhD

University of York

Philosophy

June 2015

ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the highly contested ontological question of what exists, and aims to deflate ontological debates in a quietist fashion, whilst providing an original, positive account of how to proceed by drawing upon ideas from Fictionalism, Meinongianism, and Dialetheism.

I follow Rudolf Carnap with respect to the metaontological question of how ontology should be understood and practised, by developing a critique of the traditional realist/antirealist positions and reframing the ontological debate accordingly. Carnap argues that it is not meaningful to question reality in an external sense in order to assess what *really* exists, rather it is only meaningful to talk in an internal sense within a framework about what exists according to the framework rules. I use the concept of fictions in place of Carnap's frameworks to argue that we ought to treat much seemingly ontologically committing language as consisting in nothing more than a useful heuristic and as being simply fictional. This reframes ontological debates as being based around the practical advantages of utilizing a way of speaking about existence in a pragmatic fictionalist manner. The aim of my thesis is thus to resurrect Carnap's metaontology in the form of a unique and global fictionalism, that is divorced from the antirealism usually associated with fictionalism and based on quietism instead. My Neo-Carnapian position is influenced by the Meinongian view of non-existent objects, as I take ontological commitment as distinct from quantificational commitment in order to allow for our quantificational use of language to be ontologically neutral and metaphysically quiet. I further argue that the quietist position results in dialetheism as it finds itself in contradictory realms – in drawing a limit to meaningful metaphysics, it ends up going beyond such limits. My thesis therefore concludes that in redirecting metaphysics towards quietism, metametaphysics is redirected towards dialetheism, in the form of a position I call 'Neo-Carnapian Quietism'.

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I dedicate this PhD thesis to my grandparents:

John Lobetta – for all of your continued love and words of wisdom;

Greta Finn, David Finn, and Golda Lobetta – whom I miss very much.

This thesis is a product of the excellent supervision I received at the University of York from Mary Leng and Keith Allen, who I cannot thank enough. They have both been so supportive throughout my time at York and I am extremely grateful to have been able to work with them. As my supervisors they have gone far above and beyond the call of duty, and I could not have wished for better. I want to thank them for all of the stimulating and interesting discussions, the thoughtful and thorough feedback on drafts, and for their patience, kindness and encouragement.

I also had the great honor of being able to work with Graham Priest at the City University of New York Graduate Centre as a Visiting Research Scholar in the Fall semester of 2014. Graham is an absolute inspiration. I thank him for taking the time to look through each of my chapters, which were all improved significantly from his insight and clarity. My time in New York was very special, and I thank Graham for inviting me.

I would like to thank the faculty at York, in particular Tom Stoneham, Barry Lee, Chris Jay, Paul Noordhof, Louise Richardson, Mike Beaney, and Greg Currie, for all of their helpful comments and feedback. And I would like to thank my fellow postgraduates at York, in particular Ema Sullivan-Bissett and Helen Bradley (the mighty SHE), Dave Price, Blaine Kenneally, Dom Shaw, Dan Molto, Conny Rhode, and Kimi Long Chen, for their friendship and philosophical excellence. I thank Jody Azzouni and Amie Thomasson who have discussed ideas with me from which my work has benefited considerably. I especially thank Dave Ingram

and Stephen Ingram for their careful comments on drafts of my thesis and for being so reassuring. It is a privilege to philosophise with you all.

DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is a presentation of original work and that I am the sole author. This work has not previously been presented for an award at this, or any other, University. All sources are acknowledged in the bibliography and due credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

"Metaontology is the new black"

Cameron (2008) p1

INTRODUCTION

Ontology is the study of existence; metaontology is the study of ontology. And as Cameron notes above, metaontology is, or at least was, highly fashionable. I follow that fashion in this thesis on metaontology, yet in a supposedly unfashionable (although I prefer to say 'unique and interesting') way, by basing my metaontological position on Carnap's quietism whilst incorporating elements of Meinongianism, Fictionalism, and Dialetheism. Despite the importance of Carnap's contribution in metaontology, it is standardly assumed that his critique of ontology failed, following Quine's criticism concerning his dependence on the analytic/synthetic distinction. Quine is considered to be the reviver of ontology, arguing against Carnap who states that ontology cannot be done. Quine and Carnap are thus seen as rivals, and their dispute has largely influenced and provided groundwork for the practice of modern ontology. But recently the traditional evaluation of their dispute and the viability of ontological debates have come into question, contributing to the thriving meta-philosophical discussion of 'metametaphysics'.

Historically, Quine is thought to have prevailed from his debate with Carnap, and Quinean metaontology has since permeated philosophy, leaving Carnap behind. And so, in defending a Carnapian metaontology, my thesis goes against this historical grain. Carnap's quietist position has been largely ignored, and generally taken as defeated as a result of Quine's penetrating critique, though recent attention to Carnap[1] has suggested that there may be something in his position worth reviving. I will show that Carnap's challenge to ontology ought not be dismissed and forgotten, and that Carnapian positions are still alive and well. My thesis therefore aims to resurrect Carnap's metaontology in the form of Neo-Carnapian Quietism, against the more fashionable Quinean current.

[1] See Chalmers, Manley, and Wasserman (eds.) (2009) *Metametaphysics* in particular.

In this Introduction chapter I will provide a simplistic outline of metametaphysics with regard to how it connects to metaphysics, ontology, and metaontology. I will set the stage for this thesis by putting forward Carnap's and Quine's metaontological positions, detailing how they clarify the philosophers' contribution to the field of ontology. This provides the required context for this thesis which defends Carnapian, and attacks Quinean, metaontology. After my basic outline of their positions in this Introduction, I provide a summary of the four chapters to come, on (1) Quiet Relativism, (2) Meinongianism, (3) Fictionalism, and (4) Dialetheism, reviewing their compatibility in the Conclusion.

I. What is Metametaphysics?

In this thesis I will be concentrating on the ontological question of what there is – the question that physicists take for granted, the question that metaphysicians try to answer, the question that metametaphysicians are questioning. I put forward a Neo-Carnapian approach to ontological questions, and employ Meinongian and fictionalist aspects to answering such questions. When this Neo-Carnapian position is applied to the realist/antirealist debates in ontology (over whether an entity exists), metaphysics is forced to take a new direction in its study of existence.

Metaphysics is a branch of philosophy. Metaphysics studies what reality is really like, and since there are many aspects of reality that can be studied there are therefore many sub-disciplines of metaphysics. For example: mereology (which studies the part-whole relation); modality (which studies possibility and necessity); the philosophy of time (which studies tense and time's flow); and most importantly, ontology (which studies what things there are in reality). The excellent book *Ontology and Metaontology* (Berto and Plebani 2015) discusses this relationship

between metaphysics and ontology, and helpfully explains that the word 'metaphysics' is used to encompass the whole of reality which comes from the Greek 'ta meta ta physika', which literally means 'what comes after physics'.[2] Physics is commonly taken as the scientific study of reality. Physicists look at the natural, material, or empirical world and the things that exist within it, analysing them and describing them. Metaphysics is often said to be the philosophical study of the foundations of reality and so is concerned with the fundamentals of physics, and in this sense goes beyond, and not just comes after, physics.

Berto and Plebani further clarify that the 'meta-' prefix is used here as in foundational semantics, to mean a higher-level (second-order) study of the thing that comes after the 'meta-'. So 'meta-x' is the reflective study of 'x'.[3] Metametaphysics can thus be seen as a higher-level study of metaphysics, reflecting on what is going on in metaphysics, which in turn may reflect on physics as a study of reality. Metametaphysicians reflect on the questions that metaphysicians are asking, and question those questions' meaning.[4] So whereas physicists may ask 'what are the laws governing the existent things?' the metaphysicians may ask 'but what are the existent things?' and the metametaphysics further may ask 'but what does it even mean to exist?'.[5] Our metametaphysics may inform our metaphysics which in turn may inform our physics, as an understanding of what existence is may help to determine what things exist for the physicists to study. So, to summarize, metaphysics is concerned with the foundations of reality, whereas metametaphysics is concerned with the foundations of metaphysics. And likewise, ontology is the theory of existence, and metaontology is the theory of ontology. I now discuss what ontology is and whether it is a job for us philosophers.

---

[2] Berto and Plebani (2015) p4
[3] Berto and Plebani (2015) p2
[4] I do not mean that all metametaphysics is sceptical about metaphysics, just reflective.
[5] This way of understanding the relationship between physics, metaphysics, and metametaphysics becomes confused when we consider naturalist metaphysics where the divide is less clear. For now, a simplistic overview of the connections will suffice.

II. Ontology: A philosopher's job?

Ontology asks the question 'what exists?' and philosophers (specifically metaphysicians) have taken it upon themselves to answer this question. But is it really the philosopher's job to answer what exists? This is the sort of question that metametaphysicians are asking, like Carnap[6], who is a 'quietist' with regard to metaphysics (in particular to ontology) in that he believes that philosophers keep *quiet* on the subject.

The question 'what exists?' can be considered as either a single, general question, where answers consist of a list of the existent things, or as the plurality of particular existence questions, such as 'do numbers exist?', which can be answered 'yes' or 'no'. Those who answer 'yes' for a certain entity are a realist about that entity; those who answer 'no' are an antirealist. Quineans answer the general question 'what exists?' with 'everything', whereas Meinongians answer 'not everything', and nihilists answer 'nothing'.[7] Ontological debates are then framed around constructing lists of existent and non-existent things in answer to the general question, giving rise to realist and antirealist positions about certain types of thing in answer to particular existence questions.

Many areas of philosophical debate are framed along this realist/antirealist divide and so are underpinned by ontological considerations. The whole edifice of these debates relies on the idea that it makes sense to ask ontological questions, with realist and antirealist positions being motivated by answers to such particular existence questions. These answers in turn place metaphysicians into allist (those who believe in the existence of all of the controversial

---

[6] In this thesis I talk only of Carnap from 'Empiricism, Semantics and Ontology' (1950).
[7] See Quine (1948) and Meinong (1960).

entities) or noneist (those who do not believe in the existence of any of the controversial entities) camps.[8] Many metaphysicians will fall in between the allist and noneist camps by being realist only about some things (or by disagreeing as to what is to count as a 'thing'). Yet even when there is agreement over what we mean by the words 'thing' and 'existence', there may be disagreement as to what constitutes ontology by disagreeing over how to *do* ontology, and what ontology is the study *of*. The methodology for doing ontology is specified in metaontology – the second-order questioning of how the first-order ontological question is understood and answered. The metaontological issue I am considering here is: can philosophers answer ontological questions, and can they contribute to what physicists seem to have already concluded?

The metametaphysician studies the ways in which the philosopher can contribute to ontological questions, and an aim of metametaphysics is to clarify the metaphysicians' work. The metametaphysician identifies three ways in which the philosopher could contribute to ontology: (i) Clarifying what existence questions mean; (ii) Outlining how to answer existence questions; (iii) Actually answering existence questions.[9] If the philosopher is able to do all three of these things then they can make a full contribution to ontology. Metaphysicians traditionally have indeed aimed to make full contributions by answering existence questions and putting forward realist and antirealist positions for all kinds of entities, but metametaphysicians have more recently been putting pressure on whether these full contributions are legitimate. If the pressure of the metametaphysician shows the philosopher to be unable to do any of the above three things then the philosopher makes zero contribution to the question of existence, and ontology will be deemed un-philosophical. But, if the philosopher can do some, but not all, of the above three

---

[8] I use these terms as in Lewis (1990). In chapter 2 I use 'noneism' as in Priest (2005).
[9] This description of the philosophers' contribution split into 3 categories is inspired by work that I did at the University of Nottingham during my Masters course from 2010-2011 in the Metaphysics module. I thank the University of Nottingham for this.

things then they can make an intermediate contribution. Those who believe that philosophers cannot make a full contribution will be called 'quietists', since in general their account will be quiet with regard to answering questions of metaphysical ontology. In this thesis I will concentrate on *Carnap's metaontology*, which is an example of a quietist approach to ontology, and so is negative with regard to the contribution a philosopher can make to ontology. I will compare this with *Quine's metaontology*, which is an attempted realist approach to ontology, and so is more positive with regard to the contribution a philosopher can make. And the main aim of my thesis is to put forward *my own metaontology*, in the form of a position I call 'Neo-Carnapian Quietism'.

III. Carnap's Metaontology.

Carnap, in his paper 'Empiricism, Semantics, and Ontology' (1950), aims to defend ordinary language usage without ontological commitment, in order to be able to speak of things whilst being quiet about their existence in the metaphysical sense. He illuminates the question of existence as being a question that can only make sense relative to what he calls 'linguistic frameworks'. Linguistic frameworks are structures for language that lay down rules for the meaning and usage of terms within that specific domain of discourse. There are different linguistic frameworks for different domains – the 'thing framework', 'number framework', 'property framework', and so on. Carnap claims that in order to talk about entities of a certain kind we first construct and adopt a framework for that particular entity before we can question the existence of entities within that framework. I will now describe Carnap's theory with regard to how it suggests the ways in which a philosophical contribution to ontology can be made, by (i) clarifying what existence questions mean; (ii) outlining how to answer existence questions; and (iii) answering existence questions, in sections III.i-III.iii.

III.i. Clarifying the question.

Carnap clarifies a distinction between two kinds of existence questions that are generated by a linguistic framework for a particular entity:

> Internal existence questions (hereon IQ): "questions of the existence of certain entities… within the framework."[10]

> External existence questions (hereon EQ): "questions concerning the existence or reality of the system of entities as a whole."[11]

The IQ is therefore asking about how things are according to the framework in use, whereas the EQ is asking about the framework in use as a whole. Another way of articulating the distinction is between what the framework entails internally and whether what the framework entails corresponds with an external reality. We can comprehend this distinction between the IQ and EQ by recognizing how the two could manifest in conversation. It seems that in every day life if one were to ask questions like 'is there a microwave in your kitchen?' or 'is there something wrong with putting a kitten in your microwave?' we would respond to such questions as if they were IQ's, based on the assumption that there do *exist* microwaves and kittens for us to be talking about. We would then give internal answers like 'yes, I purchased a microwave yesterday' and 'no, as long as you don't turn the microwave on'. Alternatively, it is perhaps only in the philosophy room that these questions would be raised as EQ's regarding whether there *really are* physical objects (like microwaves and kittens) or moral facts (like the wrongness of kitten torture) as a whole, existing independently and non-relatively to our linguistic frameworks. According to Carnap, only the philosopher would take those questions as EQ's and answer them

---

[10] Carnap (1950) p21. 'Certain' doesn't mean 'token', and 'system' doesn't mean 'type'. The difference is in interpretation of the question, as framework relative/independent.
[11] Carnap (1950) p21. Carnap later reforms the EQ as being pragmatic, see section III.ii.

with something like 'no, since there are no such things as microwaves and wrongness'. Given Carnap's clarification of existence questions as being divided into IQ's and EQ's, the philosophical debate is clearly more concerned with the EQ – the external metaphysical questioning of what things *really exist*. Carnap deems the EQ to be the philosophical question, in particular the question philosophers try to ask when inquiring into the metaphysical status of a thing. The IQ's are deemed as merely relative to frameworks, which only tell us what a framework's rules *say* there is, rather than what there *really* is (as is done by the EQ).

Other than being relative, IQ's are also trivial when it comes to general existence questions, further showing that it is not the IQ that is of importance to philosophers when doing ontology. Internally to the thing-framework we can ask whether there are microwaves and kittens, and whether it is wrong to put one inside of the other, but we cannot non-trivially ask whether there are *things* in general as a whole, since the framework in question is the framework for things and so it trivially states that there are things for the framework itself to govern. Relative and internal to the framework that governs a particular entity X, the rules will trivially entail that there are Xs, and so the IQ is not enough to deliver interesting metaphysical results. The ontological questions that philosophers are asking are thus not internal, as to answer (trivially) that there are Xs internal and relative to the X-framework is not sufficient for being a realist about X in a metaphysical sense. The extra commitment necessary for realism is to acknowledge the external, absolute, framework-independent existence of X, regardless of what the framework that governs X says there is relative to it. It is thus the EQ that is of ontological importance, as it is the philosophers' different answers towards EQ's that divide them into realists and antirealists.[12]

---

[12] These positions may also be held *within* a framework, discussed in chapter 2 section I. I will show that things can be said to exist (or not exist) according to the frameworks rules by instantiating (or not) the existence predicate. As such there can be internal realists and antirealists about certain entities but these positions are *not metaphysical*.

The EQ questions things from a vantage point external to frameworks – it is framework transcendent. To ask the EQ 'are there Xs?' is to ask, outside of the framework, whether X exists. According to Carnap, the EQ *cannot be answered* when understood like this as a metaphysical question about objective existence. Carnap argues that the EQ so construed is misguided and confused, a mere pseudo-question, as we cannot talk about X outside of the framework, as the framework is precisely where the term 'X' gets its meaning. As such, any external use of X is rendered meaningless and any external questioning of X is stripped of a criterion for determining an answer. Since the framework for the system of X provides the rules for meaning and usage of the term X, to speak meaningfully of X outside of the X-framework is simply impossible. To question the external existence of the system of entities as a whole is meaningless, as existence is derived from within the framework. The concept of existence applies only within a framework, so to apply it externally is void of meaning. The EQ is thus asked and answered externally and independently of frameworks and meaning.

It is this metaphysical reading of the EQ that Carnap dismisses as a pseudo-question to reject ontology (yet he reforms this EQ as pragmatic, see section III.ii). Given this rejection of the metaphysical EQ, then there is no further existence question for philosophers to answer other than those internal to frameworks which can be asked by any language user. The EQ does not seem to be asked by any old language user, but rather solely by philosophers, and for Carnap it has no answer. Since it is the philosophers that entertain the EQ when doing metaphysics, Carnap deems such metaphysical ontological debate as meaningless. This type of position that ultimately stays quiet on the metaphysical absolute facts of ontology is called 'quietism', and Carnap is called a 'quietist' – he is *quiet* with regard to metaphysics, as to be *loud* is simply meaningless. In contributing to way (i), Carnap thus clarifies existence questions as being either meaningful IQ's or meaningless metaphysical EQ's.

III.ii. Outlining how to answer the question.

Now that we have seen how Carnap contributes to (i) in clarifying the meaningful existence questions as being internal, we now need to see how he contributes to (ii) in how they are outlined as being answered. As described above, internal questions are *relative* questions, and so they are outlined as answered *relative to framework rules.* So existence becomes framework-relative. An existence question such as 'are there numbers?' will have no absolute answer when taken as an EQ, as the only meaningful way of asking the question will be when it is taken as an IQ relative to frameworks. Independent of the framework, there will not be an answer to the question. Therefore, EQ's are meaningless and ontological questions become relativized as IQ's. As Hylton[13] describes:

> Carnap holds that if we attempt to ask the question absolutely rather than relative to a particular language, then we are crossing the bounds of sense: There simply is no absolute question to be asked. The result of this is that the ontological question vanishes, along with other metaphysical questions. The ontological question was precisely the absolute question, and Carnap denies it any meaning.

The IQ's are meaningful since they ask about how things are relative to the relevant framework utilizing that frameworks rules to give meaning to the terms. The IQ is divided into the ones that are answered trivially (i.e. are analytic as a trivial consequence of the framework itself), and others that are empirical, or analytic but not trivial, by being logical consequences of the framework rules. If we have adopted a framework for the system of an entity X, then the IQ 'are there Xs?' asks whether X exists internally to the X-framework and hence is of the former category (trivial and analytic): the framework for the system of X obviously

---

[13] Found in Gibson (ed.) (2004) *The Cambridge Companion to Quine* p130

includes such an X, so X trivially 'exists' within and according to the framework for X. More specific IQ's however are not so trivial and fall into the latter category: they would be answered analytically or empirically within the framework of X by the rules governed by the framework. Whether the question is answered by analytic or empirical means depends on the framework and the exact question at issue. For example, using a framework of 'animals', the IQ 'are there black swans?' would be answered empirically. Whereas a mathematical question, on the other hand, like 'is there a prime between 2 and 4?' is answered from within a number framework analytically using the mathematical rules to deduce an answer. Hence, IQ's are outlined as being answered trivially, empirically, or analytically, relative to the frameworks rules.

So which frameworks are our internal existence questions relative to? For Carnap it is a matter of pragmatic choice, where in order to choose frameworks we ask 'which are the most useful?'. This usefulness[14] is measured by the aims of the discourse itself, where this usefulness for the aims of the discourse cannot be spelled out in terms of truth (even when the aim of the discourse may seem to be truthfulness) since frameworks, for Carnap, do not aim at truth. In Carnap's words, we adopt frameworks that are "fruitful [and] conducive to the aim for which the language is intended."[15] Once a framework is selected as being practical and is thus adopted, the language of the things internal to that framework may be used to describe what there is relative to that framework's rules. It is in this way that Carnap removes the confusion and meaninglessness from the EQ, as he reforms it from a metaphysical

---

[14] But a problem lurks regarding whether usefulness is assessed against a reality we are meant to be being quiet about. What exactly are we basing our pragmatic considerations on here? What is it that is making one framework more useful than another? It seems the basis for judgment, the determiner of usefulness, comes from external to frameworks, to compare frameworks against. Furthermore, what does 'useful' even mean? In order to choose a framework as useful we would need a higher-order framework to refer to in order to provide meaning to the word 'useful', and to compare frameworks internally to. This hierarchy is given in chapter 4 on paradoxes.

[15] Carnap (1950) p29

question into a pragmatic question of whether to adopt the framework or not. So, legitimate EQ's are about which frameworks to adopt and are matters of pragmatism rather than metaphysical reality – they are metaphysically quiet. Adopting a framework means nothing more than accepting a language form as practical, and nothing more ontological or metaphysical should be read into it. Pragmatics are *just* pragmatics.

This pragmatic turn would remove the confusion from ontology if the metaphysical debate became a pragmatic debate over whether to adopt certain frameworks (as opposed to a debate over external facts about a metaphysical reality). This would result in entities X being considered existent if it is practical to have talk of them as existing. The ontological debate would thus be transformed into an evaluation of the pragmatic virtues of accepting a system of entities, rather than an evaluation of the external truth of whether the system of entities metaphysically exists. The EQ 'are there numbers?' hence turns from a metaphysical question about the external existence of numbers into a practical question of whether to adopt the framework for the system of numbers – 'is it useful to adopt the number framework?'. The new direction for ontology is that of quiet pragmatism rather than loud metaphysics in order to be meaningful. This new direction is detailed later in section IV.

For Carnap, the general EQ 'what exists?' is thus answered by deciding which frameworks to accept and the internal answers generated relative to it. He clarifies that we do not decide on a framework that we think may 'reflect' reality. This is because, he argues, the EQ (or any external existence assertion) is non-cognitive: "the external statement, the philosophical statement… is devoid of cognitive content."[16] For that reason, 'are there Xs?' when taken as an EQ is not truth-apt. As a

---

[16] Carnap (1950) p26. I (and Carnap) use 'non-cognitive' here to mean 'not truth-apt'. Yet Kalderon (2005a) reserves 'non-cognitive' to mean an attitude less than belief, and uses 'non-factive' to mean 'not truth-apt'. See chapter 3 footnotes 213 and 222.

metaphysical EQ it is not truth-apt because it is meaningless, and as a pragmatic EQ it is not truth-apt because practical considerations are not evidential for reality. Hence settling on the best frameworks to adopt need not be those that are best matched to an external reality. Due to the non-cognitive nature of the EQ, accepting a framework allows us to talk of what exists within the framework but it does not reflect or impact on any external ontology. Therefore, our internal language usage and our external pragmatic framework choices will be metaphysically quiet and ontologically neutral, hence Carnap is a quietist.[17] Carnap has thus contributed to (i) in clarifying existence questions as being internal (IQ) or external (EQ), and has contributed to (ii) in outlining how to answer such questions via analytic or empirical means for IQ's and via pragmatic framework choice for EQ's.

III.iii. Answering the question.

If philosophers are interested in EQ's, then their contribution to answering 'what exists?' is only intermediate, since according to Carnap philosophers *can* contribute to (i) our understanding of such existence questions by clarifying the questions as external and hence being either meaningless or pragmatic, and to (ii) outlining how to answer existence questions as either impossible or being a pragmatic decision regarding acceptance of a framework, but philosophers *cannot* contribute to (iii) the actual answering of them. This is because it is either impossible to answer the EQ if it is meaningless, or it is the work of the specialists within the field of which the framework refers to if the EQ is pragmatic.

---

[17] Hopefully it is clear to see that Carnap (1950) has established his quietism and the meaninglessness of metaphysics independently of any Verificationist principle, so Verificationism will not be addressed in this thesis other than in chapter 4 sections I.ii and III.i, regarding the Verificationist's self-reference problem. Carnap's IQ's are either empirically or analytically answered, as Verificationist meaningful propositions are empirically or analytically verifiable, however since there are other ways to be meaningful for Carnap (by being answered trivially or pragmatically) then there is no exact parallel between the Verificationist and Carnapian principles of meaningfulness.

It cannot be the philosopher's job to decide which framework is most practical for the mathematicians, for instance, as Leng describes:

> In the case of mathematics, pure mathematicians can be left to answer the internal questions that arise regarding their theories, and natural scientists to answer the practical questions regarding whether to adopt these theories as part of our description of the world. In each case, on Carnap's view; a positive answer to an internal question within a given framework, or a decision to adopt a particular framework, suggests nothing of particular philosophical interest, at least regarding ontology.[18]

Carnap states that for philosophers to choose which framework is best for other disciplines like mathematics for example "is worse than futile; it is positively harmful because it may obstruct scientific progress."[19] As such, Carnap clarifies that it is not the philosophers' job to answer pragmatic EQ's. But worse, if it is conceded that the pragmatic EQ is not the existence question that ontologists are interested in (since they were rather more interested in metaphysics than pragmatics), then the philosopher cannot even meaningfully *ask* the existence question let alone *answer* it. Ontology therefore becomes impossible and doomed as an unphilosophical project from the start. The metametaphysician has then outlined the (lack of) work for the philosopher as amounting to (i) clarifying the ontological existence question and (ii) how to answer it, but not including (iii) actually answering it. What is left, in what I have called 'Neo-Carnapian Ontology' in the next section IV, is to answer the IQ's of what exists within pragmatically chosen frameworks.[20] I will now outline the effects of Neo-Carnapian Ontology for realism and antirealism in the next section (and fictionalism in chapter 3 section III).

---

[18] Leng (2005) p286
[19] Carnap (1950) p35
[20] In chapter 2 section I, I argue that IQ's are answered with a (metaphysically quiet) existence predicate which allows realist/antirealist positions to be formed internally.

IV. Neo-Carnapian Ontology.

So far, Carnap has clarified that the ontological existence question that is of importance to metaphysicians is the external question (the EQ). Given that the EQ is, on Carnap's recommendation, reformulated as a pragmatic question, the ontological debate would thus be transformed into an evaluation of the practical virtues of accepting a system, rather than what it was traditionally – a debate over whether the things the system presupposes really exist. The EQ 'are there Xs?' is now replaced by the question 'is it useful to adopt the X-framework?'. Using Carnap's methodology, it is this that is at the centre of the debate that remains: not the existence of entity X, but the usefulness of an X-framework (and what is said to exist relative to it). As discussed in chapter 3, with the transformation of frameworks into fictions, ontology becomes the study of which fictions are useful to adopt, and these fictions will provide answers to (non-metaphysical) existence questions. What we say exists is what is most useful to say exists (and, as discussed in chapter 2, what falls under the internal predicate for 'exists'). Any further metaphysical question is rendered meaningless. Metaphysical debates of reality are rejected, and the remaining Neo-Carnapian debate is merely pragmatic. I now show how quietism affects metaphysical realism and antirealism.

IV.i. Realism.

Take the existence question 'Is there a prime number between 2 and 4?'. This can be interpreted in two different ways, according to Carnap:

As an internal question (IQ): 'Is 3 a prime number?'

As an external question (EQ): 'Does 3, or any number, *really* exist?'

The Carnapian quietist argues that the EQ is meaningless unless understood pragmatically. The traditional ontologist contrary to Carnap, says the metaphysical reading of the EQ *can* be answered meaningfully and to answer such EQ's positively (with a 'yes') is exactly what it is to be realist about the things in question (and an antirealist otherwise): To not only answer that 3 is a prime number, but to further say that there *really are* numbers like 3, is what it is to be a realist about numbers. It is not enough to claim that according to the number-framework there are numbers (for that is trivial), the extra commitment necessary to be a realist is to acknowledge the existence of numbers externally to the number-framework. It is the answer to the EQ that carries the weight and sets apart the traditional realists from the antirealists about a certain entity. Since the traditional realist is therefore defined by their positive answer to EQ's, I call this position 'E-realism' (E for external).

This traditional realist (E-realist) about an entity X argues that X really exists. They answer the *metaphysical* EQ with 'yes, Xs really exist'. Since they cannot meaningfully ask or answer the EQ in this way, according to Carnap, then all they *can* say is that it is conducive to adopt the framework that governs entity X and answer the reformulated *pragmatic* EQ with 'yes, X-talk is useful'. The realist position then amounts to merely a position that adopts the X-framework (as this is what it is to answer the pragmatic EQ with a 'yes'). However since the people who talk of X include those that deny the existence of X,[21] then all must have accepted and adopted the framework for X to give their talk meaning. Realism therefore loses all sense of what it traditionally stands for (since it encompasses anyone who utilizes the language of X by talking of X internally to the adopted X-framework, in order to speak of X's existence *or* non-existence), and as a consequence is either rendered confused or simply describes any position that adopts the

---

[21] This may prove problematic for true negative existential claims, such as (Christmas spoiler alert…) 'Santa Claus does not exist', discussed in chapter 2 sections I and IV.

framework for whichever thing is in question. Simply to talk of X meaningfully entails being a realist about X since the X-framework is adopted. Such a 'realism' is not the external realism that ontology as a practice was aiming for, and insofar as adopting a framework as being useful is the same thing as to answer the pragmatic EQ positively, this pragmatic EQ cannot be fit for ontology which remains impossible.

Carnap notes in his 'Empiricism, Semantics, and Ontology'[22] paper that Quine construes Carnap as a 'platonic realist'[23], but through personal communication with each other they clarified that this realism was not the realism of Plato's metaphysical doctrine of universals but rather just referred to the fact that Carnap accepts a particular linguistic framework that contains universals (in order to talk of them meaningfully). Since such 'realism' is not that of traditional E-realism as described above, Carnap finds Quine's usage of the word 'realism' here to be misleading.[24] For Carnap, 'realism' is reserved to name the position of those who believe they are doing *metaphysical* ontology, and so the word is rendered meaningless. Carnap's quietist project is thus not to be construed as 'realism'. I will not be using the term 'realist' for Carnap since it is misleading in the way that Carnap points out, but it is worth noting that Quine considers this position to be realist – in so far as one answers the pragmatic EQ with a 'yes' by accepting and adopting a framework for being useful. I pull apart this Quinean usage of 'realism' from the metaphysical usage of 'realism' to avoid confusion, naming them I-realism (for internal-realism) and E-realism respectively (and in chapter 1 I will argue that I-realism is *not* real realism). As Burgess recognizes: "there is hardly any bit of philosophical terminology more diversely used and overused and misused than the R-word."[25] I discuss I-realism in section V but first I will describe Neo-Carnapian antirealism.

---

[22] Carnap (1950) note 5
[23] Quine (1951a) and Quine (1948)
[24] Carnap (1950) note 5. More on this in the next chapter 1 section V.
[25] Burgess (2004) p19

IV.ii. Antirealism.

Antirealists about a certain type of entity may answer the IQ with either a 'yes' or 'no' (depending on the type of antirealist) whilst crucially maintaining that the answer to the relevant EQ is 'no' (claiming that the thing in question *does not really exist*). For example, they may say in answer to the IQ that *there is* a prime number between 2 and 4, whilst answering the EQ that *there really are* no numbers. But Carnap argues that the IQ can only be meaningfully answered once the EQ has been answered with a pragmatic 'yes' of acceptance of the framework in question (in order to utilize the language internal to it meaningfully).

Antirealism would therefore no longer be a viable ontological position according to the Neo-Carnapian. We cannot answer IQ's about an entity X until we have accepted the X-framework to give meaning to our IQ's, and this acceptance of the framework is what Carnap describes as answering the pragmatic EQ with a non-cognitive 'yes' of acceptance. In not accepting the framework for X by answering the EQ 'no' with regard to the non-existence of the entity, the antirealist then has no framework to work within to ask and answer IQ's. Thus, traditional antirealism is impossible and unassertable, because we cannot talk about X or assert X's non-existence meaningfully without being 'realist' in the sense of accepting the X-framework (but this isn't realism for Carnap, described in the previous section). The antirealist therefore cannot talk of X *at all,* not even to deny X's existence, if they are to reject the X-framework.[26]

---

[26] In order to retain meaningful talk of non-existents, I will put forward a predicate for 'exists' that is internal and metaphysically quiet, thus suitable for the Neo-Carnapian. In this way, a framework that includes meaning and usage rules for a particular non-existent entity will have to be adopted by answering the pragmatic EQ with a 'yes', and internal to this framework we can meaningfully assert the non-existence of entities that are so described by their framework to not instantiate the existence predicate E!. We can then *meaningfully* spoil Christmas for the kids by saying 'Santa Claus does not exist', by adopting a framework that includes Santa-talk, where Santa does not instantiate the 'exists' predicate. See chapter 2 sections I and VII for more E!.

This reframing of ontology according to Carnap's quietism therefore destroys the possibility of realism and antirealism (as E-realism and E-antirealism) traditionally metaphysically construed.[27] I will consider Quine's critiques of Carnap's quiet metaontological approach in the next chapter 1, and will show that Quine's critique fails and is self-defeating. I will also compare Quine's more positive metaontology to that which Carnap prescribes, and I will conclude that Quine's approach is actually no more positive than Carnap's, both most accurately being described as 'quietist relativist' positions. I will provide further argument against Quine's metaontology in chapter 2, in order to continue to motivate a Carnapian metaontology. But before that, in the next section of this introduction, I put forward Quine's position as 'I-realism' in comparison to the traditional realism as E-realism. Once I-realism has been clarified, we will then be in a position to attack it in the two coming chapters.

<div align="center">V. Quine's Metaontology.</div>

We have so far experienced two extremes: 'Quietism' as the rejection of metaphysical ontology, and 'E-realism' as a metaphysical ontological position. Yet Quine attempts to find a middle way in-between these two extremes in order to save realism. Those like Quine who fall on this middle path are not quite E-realist (since they reject the metaphysical reading of the EQ) yet they also are not quite quietists (since they believe the rejection of the EQ should *not* lead to being quiet about ontology). This in-between position is held by Quine, who, like Carnap rejects the questioning of things in an external way, however unlike Carnap claims to not then be quietist about ontology because he argues that realism should not be equated with *E*-realism but rather should be

---

[27] Yet one could respond that their model of ontology does in fact allow for antirealism by rejecting a theory involving entity X by refusing to go in for X-talk altogether, whilst talking about this rejection from within another theory. Carnap however does not consider this rejection to have metaphysical significance since it is *merely* pragmatic.

considered as *I*-realism. For Quine, the ontological question 'what exists?' should be understood as an IQ, not an EQ.[28] To be I-realist is to be ontologically committed to the existence of the things to which you answer IQ's positively (within adopted practical scientific frameworks). Quine's I-realism thus aims to save ontology in the face of Carnap's quietism. I will now provide the details of Quine's I-realist position.

Quine in his paper 'On What There Is' (1948) argues that the ontological question 'what exists?' should be understood as a quantificational question, and answered via a quantificational analysis of the ontological commitments of the best overall scientific theory of the world. We should judge a theory to be best, and hence accept its ontology, in a similar way to how we judge (and accept) scientific theories and Carnapian linguistic frameworks – by what is reasonably the most simple that fits our experiences, thus being the most useful to adopt:

> Our acceptance of an ontology is... similar in principle to our acceptance of a scientific theory, say a system of physics: we adopt, at least insofar as we are reasonable, the simplest conceptual scheme into which the disordered fragments of raw experience can be fitted and arranged.[29]

To answer existence questions we first regiment the propositions of the best scientific theory into a first order quantificational language, and we can then extrapolate what exists from within its domain of quantification. So far then Carnap would be in agreement with Quine's method: we pick what is best to adopt, where 'best' is pragmatically qualified, and then answers about existence are derived internally (for Carnap, internal to frameworks, for Quine, internal to theories).

---

[28] The issue of whether Quine rejects the EQ or whether he collapses the IQ/EQ distinction is discussed in chapter 1 section I. It suits Quine's position to think of it as 'internal' and so the name 'I-realism' fits despite his views on the IQ/EQ distinction.
[29] Quine (1961) p16-17

Quine argues that to ask 'do numbers exist?' is to see whether, under the best scientific theory of the world, the domain of quantification has to include numbers internally to it for that theory in use to be true *as a whole*. This is where Quine's holism manifests as a standard for judging the commitments of a theory: we are ontologically committed to what the variables of quantification have to include in their range in order to make the whole theory true such that the theory is verified (or falsified) as a complete unit by our experiences. For Quine, if the best theory says 'there are numbers', then there have to be numbers in the range of the quantifiers for that sentence, which is asked relative to that theory, to be interpreted as true. Those things that have to exist for the best scientific theory to be true will constitute the domain: "Our question was: what objects does a theory require? Our answer is: those objects that have to be values of variables for the theory to be true."[30] Therefore, under a true best theory, everything that is quantified over in the domain (by being bound by quantifiers) exists, hence Quine's slogan (TB) "to be is to be the value of a bound variable."[31] This slogan TB is Quine's criterion for ontological commitment, which is the basis for his metaontology – to answer what we should take to exist we look to the bound variables in our best scientific theory.

Quine, who aims to save ontology from quietism through his I-realism, plans to establish ontological commitments from our language usage. Quine thus puts forward his criterion (TB) for what our ontological commitments are, and manifests them via translation into classical first order predicate calculus. Quine believes that we speak in an ontologically committing way in natural language by the use of (what he sees as quantificational) idioms like 'there exists' and 'there are':

---

[30] Quine (1969) p96

[31] Quine (1948) p36. This quantificational criterion for ontological commitment as defined by Quine's slogan TB is rejected in chapter 2 section III: I say quantificational commitment is not to be conflated with ontological commitment, and thus being a value of a bound variable is not to be conflated with being an existent thing.

There is certainly commitment to entities through discourse; for we are quite capable of saying in so many words that *there are* black swans, that *there is* a mountain more than 8800metres high, and that *there are* primes above 100. Saying these things, we also say by implication that there are physical objects and abstract entities; for all the black swans are physical objects and all the prime numbers above 100 are abstract entities.[32]

We commit ourselves to an ontology containing numbers when we say there are prime numbers larger than a million; we commit ourselves to an ontology containing centaurs when we say there are centaurs; and we commit ourselves to an ontology containing Pegasus when we say Pegasus is.[33]

For Quinean I-realists, then, to assert a quantificational claim is to accept the existence of the thing in question, for to deny the existence of something you have chosen to talk about and be ontologically committed to is to be intellectually dishonest.[34] To talk of a thing places it in the domain and once it is quantified over we ought to accept that it exists in order to be honest. Quine finds any other practice 'deplorable', and claims that regimentation into first order logic is to be the method of demonstrating order and honesty in our ontological commitments:

We find philosophers allowing themselves not only abstract terms but even pretty unmistakable quantifications over abstract objects... and still blandly disavowing, within the paragraph, any claim that there are such objects... In our canonical notation of quantification, then, we find the restoration of law and order.[35]

---

[32] Quine (1976) p128

[33] Quine (1961) p9

[34] Putnam (1979) p347. This shows that Quine's theory is to be interpreted as being normative, regarding what we *ought* to be considered ontologically committed to.

[35] Quine (2013) p223

To be I-realist, therefore, is to be ontologically committed to the existence or reality of the things about which you answer IQ's positively. Quine is careful to stipulate that it is only those uses of quantificational idioms made seriously with regard to our *best scientific theory* that will be the assertions to whose ontology we ought to regard ourselves as ontologically committed to. And he then requires that best scientific theory to be regimented into first order logic in order to reveal its ontological commitments. Science speaks of things and as such those things are members of the domain of quantification, and the Quinean move is to then say that whatever is in this domain will provide our ontology.[36] Quantification is thus the means by which we display ontological commitment, and for Quine, there is nothing more to realism than being committed to such quantificational claims.[37]

For Quine, there is no requirement to acknowledge any metaphysical external existence of entity X to be a realist about X, as if you seriously assert 'there are Xs' in the context of your best scientific theorizing then that is enough, according to the Quinean I-realist, to be ontologically committed to X. (This is in contrast to the Carnapian quietist for whom ontology is an external matter, and thus internal existence assertions will have no ontological significance). For I-realism, simply to state seriously that 3 is a prime number, for instance, is all that there is to realism and to be ontologically committed to numbers. And for I-realists, there is nothing more added to the assertion 'there is a prime number between 2 and 4' by '*and there really are* numbers like 3'.[38]

---

[36] And the Quinean small print states that this ontology *may not* be the correct one if our best scientific theory is not the correct one, hence Quine's fallibilism. So we ought to take it as our ontology since it is the closest we can get but also ought to recognize that it may not be the true ontology. This is discussed in chapter 1 sections I.ii and IV.

[37] I will argue in chapter 2 sections IV-V that realism cannot be defined in Quine's way through quantificational commitment since the quantifiers in both natural and formal languages are ontologically neutral and non-committal. Rather I will put forward an existence predicate in order to demonstrate some form of existential commitment.

[38] I will argue in chapter 1 section II that there will be some quantificational sentences that we assert that we do not wish to be ontologically committed by, which will show that the Quinean I-realist will need to somehow limit their committing assertions.

Quine takes all statements in natural language to be (in principle at least) regimented into a quantified first order logical statement which will manifest its ontological commitments. After specifying which sentences are fit for ontological commitment in natural language (those within our best scientific theorizing), the next step in Quine's strategy for I-realism is to search through the terminological resources in formal language to determine what should carry and manifest ontological commitment. Quine decides that the bearer for ontological commitment is the quantifier $\exists$ in first order logic, after eliminating all other candidates.[39] So, in stating '3 is a prime number' one is *actually* stating $Na \land Pa$ which entails $\exists x(Nx \land Px)$, which for Quine is read '*there exists something that is a number and is prime*'. This is how ontological commitments are derived from language – through regimentation, which is intended to display the underlying logical form of our natural language. We can thus deduce ontology from the regimentation of our best scientific theory, by looking to what is quantified over in the domain. Quine's I-realism thus clarifies existence questions as internal to the best scientific theory, and outlines that we answer them via looking to what is quantified over in the domain of that theory. Quine hence resurrects ontology in part as a philosophical project (and in part a scientific project), by deriving existence from our regimented science. This completes my description of Carnapian and Quinean metaontology.

I now give chapter summaries before attacking Quinean metaontology and I-realism in chapter 1. Then, in chapter 2 I provide the Meinongian aspect, in chapter 3 the Fictionalist aspect, and in chapter 4 the Dialetheist aspect, of the Neo-Carnapian Quietist position that I defend in this thesis. In the Conclusion chapter I will put to rest any remaining worries about the compatibility of these diverse aspects in the position.

---

[39] Quine rejects names as carrying ontological commitment by defining names away using Russell's theory of descriptions, and denies that predicates carry ontological commitment as this would commit us to 'redness' etc. See Quine (1948) for details.

VI. Chapter Summaries.

VI.i. Chapter 1: Quiet Relativism.

This chapter compares Quine's position on ontology to that of Carnap's. My aim is to show that they do not hold rival positions, as is historically assumed, but should both be understood as what I call 'quiet relativists'. I will do this by examining Quine's critique of Carnap which is meant to set them apart. I explore their apparent differences regarding pragmatism and truth, which ultimately derive from Quine's attack on the analytic/synthetic distinction, and as it turns out their similarities outweigh their differences. It is widely held that Quine's place in history with regard to ontology is that he revived it in the face of Carnap's deflation of it. This chapter rewrites this misinterpretation of Quine, clarifying him not as reviving ontology but rather as quiet about ontology, defusing the presumed rivalry with Carnap, and re-establishing quietism as a live position. This chapter helps to set the scene ready to present the Neo-Carnapian position that my thesis develops as a natural progression of the ensuing debate between Carnap, Quine, and Yablo, and to explain and defend Carnap's quietism with the help of Yablo's distinction between the metaphorical/literal in place of the internal/external distinction. I will focus on showing that Quine's arguments against Carnap do not work, and also that such arguments are self-defeating. I will further argue that Quine's position that I have called I-realism contains significant inconsistency in attempting to be a realist position that should lead to its rejection. I conclude that Quine's I-realism is not a form of realism, and should more accurately be understood as a quiet relativism, similar to that of Carnap's position. Such a conclusion is not vital to the core aim of my thesis to develop 'Neo-Carnapian Quietism', but it helps motivate why Carnapian quietist positions need not be rejected at the hands of Quine.

VI.ii. Chapter 2: Quiet Meinongianism.

Now that the context has been provided and the scene has been sufficiently set, we are finally ready to get into the more exciting task of attacking Quine's I-realism by developing the Meinongian aspect of Neo-Carnapian Quietism. This chapter does that by addressing the issue of quantifier commitment in English and first order logic to explore whether quantification is ontologically loaded. I aim to show that instead of the quantifier being the logical regimentation for existence, we can talk about existence with a quiet internal predicate for 'exists' in order to split the domain of things in a Meinongian inspired way. I argue that quantification in English and first order logic can be interpreted as ontologically neutral, by describing how quantifier commitments are not to be conflated with ontological commitments. Quantificational terms in natural language like 'some', and quantifiers in formal language like 'Ǝ', are ontologically neutral, and thus domains need not be restricted to include only existent things. Rather the domain can contain all sorts of things, and those that exist are those in the domain that instantiate the predicate for 'exists'. The main aim of this chapter is therefore to reject the Quinean methodology that states that an ontology can be read off straight from our quantified regimented discourse and to show that languages are ontologically neutral and metaphysically quiet in a Carnapian way, whilst putting forward a unique and preferable account of Meinongianism that is compatible with the quietism of the Neo-Carnapian. Since I show quantification in English and first order logic to be not ontologically loaded in the Quinean way, Quine cannot derive an ontology to be a realist about either directly from a natural language like English or indirectly through formal languages studied by logicians by looking to what is quantified over. I therefore conclude that Quinean I-realism fails and Carnapian quietism prevails in the form of a quietist version of a basic form of Meinongianism from their metaontological debate.

VI.iii. Chapter 3: Quiet Fictionalism.

After spending much of the previous chapters 1 and 2 attacking Quinean metaontology, I will now describe a central part of the Neo-Carnapian Quietist metaontology that I am developing in this thesis: Fictionalism. In this chapter I will address what it is that we talk about if our talk is quiet with regard to metaphysical existence. I will argue that we ought to consider our talk as fictional, as I will contend that our use of language is more helpfully thought of as being constituted by webs of various fictions. The Neo-Carnapian will be a revolutionary fictionalist, born out of hermeneutic quietism. I describe what I mean by 'fictionalism' and how it can be coupled with the quietism of Carnap, to create a quietist fictionalist (and Meinongian) position for the Neo-Carnapian. The main purpose of this chapter is to put forward the Neo-Carnpian position that I defend in my thesis, and to show how it can be formulated as a fictionalist position. I believe that Carnap's quietism can be helpfully reinterpreted as a type of fictionalism, and also that fictionalism is best construed as a type of quietism. The Neo-Carnapian Quietist version of fictionalism is original and differentiated from traditional fictionalism by being divorced from antirealist roots and married to quietism instead. It is also original by taking a global scope rather than being fictionalist about particular types of discourse or entity only. Despite lacking the main aspect of traditional fictionalism as being antirealist, it retains the heart of fictionalism with regard to its pragmatic evaluation of discourses independently of truth. The Neo-Carnapian states that we can judge our ways of talking not by how well they match up to an ontology but by how useful they are. And in line with traditional fictionalist positions, they take a discourse to be useful without saying anything about its truth, since they are quiet on the matter of truth as well as ontology. This Neo-Carnapian position finds significant allies in the works of Thomasson (2015) and Price (2011) whose positions I distinguish from mine at the end of the chapter.

VI.iv. Chapter 4: Quiet Dialetheism.

Having fully described Neo-Carnapian Quietism as being Meinongian and Fictionalist, I now put forward what I consider the most interesting problem for such a Carnapian position to be. In this chapter I discuss the paradox of self-reference and how this arises for global positions such as Carnap's quietism. I will show that applying Carnap's theory to itself results in a dilemma, both horns of which lead to a contradiction. I argue that a plausible way for the Carnapian to respond to such a dilemma is to bite the contradictory bullet in the form of dialetheism, and therefore accept the truth of the paradoxical contradictory sentence formed when the theory refers to itself. The paradox of self-reference occurs for Carnap when we question the status of his own position and ask whether he considers the claims of his theory itself to be understood as internal or external to linguistic frameworks. Either way, we end up in contradiction, derived from analogues of the Liar Paradox and Russell's Paradox – i.e. paradoxes of self-reference. In presenting the self-reference problem for Carnap I follow Priest in his formulation of self-referential paradoxes exhibiting contradictions at the limits of thought. It turns out that Carnap, in attempting to put forward an anti-metaphysical view, ends up in such contradictory realms that are typical of other anti-metaphysical views that draw a limit to thought. I conclude by construing Carnap as an 'implicit' dialetheist and the Neo-Carnapian Quietist as an 'explicit' dialetheist. Dialetheism is inevitable in metametaphysics, as metametaphysical views aim to draw a limit to thought, particularly a limit to metaphysics. This is my *metametameta*physical result – that metametaphysics is dialetheist. I therefore end on a bombshell: in redirecting metaphysics towards quietism, metametaphysics is redirected towards dialetheism. In order to do metametaphysics and be quiet, we need to be dialetheist. Dialetheism, Meinongianism, Fictionalism, and Quietism, may be seen as incompatible – I explain why they are not in the Conclusion chapter.

CHAPTER 1:

QUIET RELATIVISM

The debate between Quine and Carnap revolves around whether ontological questions are meaningful. In the Introduction chapter I outlined Carnap's and Quine's metaontological positions, where Carnap argued that ontology was not a meaningful enterprise and Quine argued that it was. Generally Quine is taken to have won this debate, yet I argue that Quine's critiques against Carnap fail. I thus challenge the general view that Quine defeated Carnap, reviving Carnap's quietism against Quine's attack. This chapter analyses the disagreement between Carnap and Quine in order to resurrect Carnapian quietism, and so the chapter is spent mostly paving the way for my Neo-Carnapian Quietist position to come in chapters 2-4 where the more fun stuff happens in this thesis.

In this chapter I compare Quine's position on ontology with that of Carnap's. My aim is to show that they do not hold rival positions, as is historically assumed, but rather should both be understood as 'quiet relativists'. I do this by examining Quine's critique of Carnap which is meant to set them apart, in sections I.i - I.iii: I explore their apparent differences regarding pragmatism (I.i) and truth (I.ii), which ultimately derive from Quine's attack on the analytic/synthetic distinction (I.iii). It turns out that their similarities outweigh their differences to the extent that Quine is more properly understood as being quiet about ontology, with the only meaningful discussion of existence being relative to theory, similar to Carnap. This chapter clarifies Quine not as the reviver of ontology but rather as quiet about ontology, defusing the presumed rivalry with Carnap, and re-establishing quietism as a live and plausible position. Furthermore, I will argue that Quine's I-realism taken as a form of realism is self-defeating in sections II-III, and is therefore better recast as a form of quietist relativism as demonstrated in sections IV-V.

I. Quine on Carnap.

For Carnap, the only ontology we can do is the pragmatic choosing of frameworks and the answering of internal questions (IQ) relative to it. Ontology is to this extent merely the study of what exists internally to frameworks and which frameworks are most useful to adopt. Quine disagrees that ontology is *merely* that, as he argues that pragmatic methods, like Carnap's choosing of frameworks, do in fact deliver realist results about reality thus aiming to revive ontology. Historically speaking, Carnap and Quine are considered to be rivals, yet in fact they are very similar. They were in close correspondence for many years (as documented by Creath[40]), and Quine states that, despite the differences to be mentioned later on in sections I.i - I.iii, "noone has influenced my philosophical thought more than Carnap."[41] Both Carnap and Quine are logical empiricists, and are anti-metaphysics in favour of being pro-science. They both are motivated by an anti-prior-philosophy attitude, which is due to their shared adoption of theory holism, resulting in Carnap's quietism and Quine's naturalism towards ontology.

Quine, like Carnap, promotes a pragmatically based ontological theory where answers about existence are extrapolated internally. Where the two philosophers differ from each other lies in what this pragmatism means for reality and thus the philosophical status of being 'internal' – for Quine realism can be achieved through internal enquiry, hence his I-realism, whereas for Carnap it cannot, hence his quietism. Despite the similarities noted between Quine's and Carnap's positions, Quine still regards his project as essentially different to that of Carnap's (namely because he derives realism from it rather than quietism). Yet I will argue that I-realism is quiet (and so Quine is quietist) in section V, and

---

[40] Creath (1990)
[41] Quine (1951a) p203

that Quine is more relativist than realist in section IV. Before arguing for this reading of Quine, I will first describe and diffuse his differences with Carnap regarding pragmatism and truth, and defend Carnap against Quine's attacks based on the analytic/synthetic distinction.

I.i. On pragmatism.

For both Carnap and Quine, we can answer existence questions internally from within the best framework or scientific theory, where which is best is to be chosen pragmatically. So, similar to Carnap's approach to frameworks, Quine appeals to pragmatic virtues to decide which scientific theory is best. Unlike Carnap, Quine believes these pragmatic considerations lead us to the truth of the matter. Therefore, for Quine, answers to IQ's will provide answers to existence questions. Hence Quine considers himself a realist (the position I call I-realism). Carnap, conversely, believes choosing frameworks pragmatically will have no ontological significance as your choice will not reflect the truth – there is no truth of the matter external to frameworks for our choice of framework to map on to or correspond to. It is because of this that seeing what there is relative and internal to our chosen linguistic frameworks will not be sufficient for realism according to Carnap (yet it *is* sufficient for Quine), hence Carnap's quietism towards ontology.

According to Carnap, there can be useful frameworks, but not a 'correct' framework. Quine disagrees and is ultimately trying to track down the 'correct' scientific theory by finding which one is 'best'. When pragmatic choice is evidence for truth then the commitments of the best scientific theory or framework will indirectly lead us to the correct ontology, thus Quine's search for the best is indirectly a search for the truth. This revives ontology to the extent that our pragmatic answers to existence

questions are no longer considered as *merely* pragmatic, but rather are evidential for reality (in the only sense it can have).[42] So for Quine there *are* objectively truthful answers to what exists, and we *can* get to these answers via pragmatic methods, thus recovering ontology.[43]

Quine objects to Carnap's quietist theory on the basis that Carnap argues that the pragmatic external question (EQ) is not fit for ontology *simply due* to its being pragmatic. Quine states that being pragmatic does not entail being void of metaphysical implication, as this is how scientific theories are valued, and these scientific theories count as true *despite* their being chosen pragmatically. And so the argument goes, if scientists can get to the truth on pragmatic grounds, then so can we answer EQ's truthfully on pragmatic grounds. However this can be only as strong as a *conditional* argument from Quine against Carnap, because it is precisely whether pragmatic considerations *are* guides to truth or reality that is in question. Thus Quine must not presuppose that they are (in the case of science) as this would just beg the question against Carnap who states that pragmatic considerations are metaphysically neutral and not evidential for truth. So, *if* pragmatic considerations lead to the truth of the matter, then there is no reason for the EQ to be non-cognitive and void of metaphysical implications. Then, *if pragmatics are evidential*, both Carnapian and Quinean methodologies for ontology can be used for answering existence questions truthfully via the pragmatic choice of linguistic frameworks and scientific theories respectively and deducing what exists from internal to them with the IQ.

---

[42] Carnap may agree that this is the only sense in which we can have evidence for reality, but disagrees that this is deserving of the name 'ontology' (Carnap (1950) note 5). This is discussed further in section V to show that the debate between Carnap and Quine is merely terminological, as Quine applies the word 'ontology' where Carnap does not, since Carnap treats ontology as necessarily metaphysical, and Quine does not. Terminological issues return with how Quine uses 'thing' in chapter 2 section VII.

[43] I will argue in the next section I.ii that Quine's position exhibits a tension between his views on pragmatism (where pragmatic considerations are evidential for truth) and his views on immanent truth (where the standards set by the pragmatically chosen theory are the only standards of truth). Quine's supposed search for truth by searching for the best is thus searching for the best which will call itself true. I believe that this just provides more reason to reject the Quinean position as a form of realism.

Quine argues that we can pragmatically choose Carnapian linguistic frameworks as being evidential for reality because the conventions of how we speak according to our frameworks are responsive to empirical evidence so that the frameworks adopted point towards the truth. Quine argues in his 'Two Dogmas of Empiricism' (1951b) that how the world is will confirm or disconfirm how we speak and thus verify or falsify theories and frameworks as a whole, hence conventions (and our best scientific theories and frameworks) are grounded in truth. There is therefore no permanent status of being a convention, or being *purely* pragmatic, as it is all empirically tested by the world. Thus we can read ontologically from within our pragmatically chosen frameworks or theories (and so from our IQ's). If nothing is permanently a convention, then nothing is purely pragmatic, and if nothing is purely pragmatic then our choice of theory or framework is grounded in reality.[44]

This objection to Carnap's dismissal of ontology is therefore founded on Quine's more fundamental attack that nothing is true solely in virtue of its meaning or by convention, as all will have some empirical element to determine their truth. This is known as Quine's attack on Carnap's internal/external distinction by means of guilt by association with the analytic/synthetic distinction,[45] which we will turn to in section I.iii. It turns out that if Quine's attack on the internal/external via the analytic/synthetic cannot be upheld, then neither can his attack from pragmatism, and without this pragmatic distinction between them, Quine and Carnap will be equally quiet and seem very similar indeed.

---

[44] Quine argues that practical reasons *can* be evidential, and so Carnap's pragmatic choosing of frameworks *could* be evidential for their truth. But what Quine needs as an argument against Carnap is that practical reasons are *always* evidential, so that Carnap's practical reasons cannot be claimed to be the *merely* pragmatic (and non-evidential) type. The question then is whether Quine does consider the practical to *always* be evidential, or whether he sometimes allows for the merely practical – this is the topic of sections II and III of this chapter to show I-realism to be self-defeating.

[45] Yablo (1998)

I.ii. On truth.

Before discussing how the collapse of the analytic/synthetic distinction allows for Quine to derive truth from the pragmatic choice of scientific theory, first it is important to recognize Quine's views on truth itself. I plan to show that Quine displays some inconsistency with regard to his views on (a) the truth derived from our best scientific theory, and (b) the ontology derived from our best scientific theory. It seems as though Quine makes a distinction between our theory-independent ontology and theory-derived ontology, whereas he does not make such a distinction between theory-independent truth and theory-derived truth. This can be shown by looking at quotes from Quine that display his opinions on correspondence-like theories of truth (where what is true corresponds to reality) to see how he agrees with the correspondence theorists that there is an independent reality to correspond to. Firstly, the quote below implies that Quine *does* acknowledge an independent reality that our science aims to capture (rather than aims to create):

> Science, though it seeks traits of reality independent of language, can neither get on without language nor aspire to linguistic neutrality. To some degree, nevertheless, the scientist can enhance objectivity and diminish the interference of language by his very choice of language.[46]

It seems here that Quine is arguing that our best scientific theory aims to *reflect* reality, yet the theory needs to be specified in a language and thus will not succeed in achieving anything completely language independent (or external, as Carnap puts it). Therefore the metaphysical claim is that there *is* a language independent reality, and the epistemological claim is that we struggle in articulating it. However in choosing the *best* scientific theory, and then regimenting it into first

---

[46] Quine (1976) p222

order predicate logic, this language will be the closest to an objective description of reality, and will be the closest to the correct theory. Hence Quine's role for regimentation in deriving an ontology. So, in line with the correspondence theorists, Quine agrees that there is some independent reality to correspond to, yet against the correspondence theorists, Quine argues that such independence is impossible to achieve.

We can further see that Quine acknowledges an ontology to correspond to, by his distinguishing it from the ontology derived from a theory. If we understand the IQ/EQ as being the distinction between what there is internally or relative to a theory, and what there really is absolutely or independent of theory, then Quine holds that *this is* a legitimate distinction (although not put in terms of IQ/EQ), as demonstrated here:

> Now to determine what entities a given theory presupposes is one thing, and to determine what entities a theory should be allowed to presuppose, what entities there really are, is another.[47]

Clearly 'what entities a given theory presupposes' are entities derived internally relative to a theory – the answers to IQ's. Likewise, 'what entities there really are' are entities that are external and independent of theories – the answers to EQ's. So Quine here explicitly marks a distinction between those entities arrived at by answering IQ's and EQ's, and allows not only for an IQ/EQ distinction[48] but importantly in this context a distinction between theory-independent reality and theory-derived reality. Thus, again Quine acknowledges an independent reality.

---

[47] Quine (1976) p129

[48] This displays yet another tension in Quine's position, of whether he can maintain his views on pragmatism which are based on a denial of the analytic/synthetic distinction, whilst also holding something like a IQ/EQ distinction which he claims is based on the analytic/synthetic distinction he rejects. If Quine makes a distinction between theory-independent reality and theory-derived reality then he would not do so in terms of the IQ/EQ distinction if he wished to reject that distinction (despite their similarities).

However, here Quine rejects a correspondence theory as meaningless:

> The fundamental-seeming philosophical question, 'How much of our science is merely contributed by language and how much is a genuine reflection of reality?' is perhaps a spurious question… We can improve our conceptual scheme, our philosophy, bit by bit while continuing to depend on it for support; but we cannot detach ourselves from it and compare it objectively with an unconceptualized reality. Hence it is meaningless, I suggest, to inquire into the absolute correctness of a conceptual scheme as a mirror of reality. Our standard for appraising basic changes of conceptual scheme must be, not a realistic standard of correspondence to reality, but a pragmatic standard.[49]

So in this quote it is clear that the choice of 'best' scientific theory is made pragmatically, rather than chosen based on how well the theory 'mirrors' our reality, because such a comparison between reality and the theory is meaningless (which sounds very Carnapian). But again the meaninglessness of this mirroring is due to the epistemological concern[50] of *not being able to reflect it,* rather than the metaphysical concern of there *not being such an independent reality to reflect.* Therefore, it seems that there is a realistic standard to compare our theory to with regard to ontology. We may not be able to meet this standard, but the point is that there is a reality out there independent of our theories to provide the standard. But due to the epistemological concern, Quine states we should use a pragmatic standard instead, and given his views on pragmatism leading to truth we then get a tension.

---

[49] Quine (1961) p78-79

[50] This epistemological concern drives Quine towards his fallibilism which argues that our best theory may not be the correct one as there is some independent truth that we are aiming at (so that we can be wrong). Quine's fallibilism is thus also clearly in tension with his immanent truth. This epistemological concern however could also be seen as more than *just* epistemological, as for Quine reality underdetermines theory and so we always need to add some carving to the world, and therefore there is no unconceptualized reality and we just fit our concepts to our conceptualized world in the best way possible. So it is not just epistemological, but rather also metaphysical.

This tension is between his pragmatism and truth. We saw in section I.i that for Quine pragmatic considerations are evidential – evidence for *truth*. However, truth, for Quine, is immanent, and is derived from the theory itself. There is thus no independent truth for pragmatic choice to be evidential for, as is made clear in the following quotes from Quine:

> It is a confusion to suppose that we can stand aloof and recognise all the alternative ontologies as true in their several ways... It is a confusion of truth with evidential support. Truth is immanent, and there is no higher. We must speak from within a theory, albeit any of various.[51]

> There is no extra-theoretic truth, no higher truth than the truth we are claiming or aspiring to as we continue to tinker with our system of the world from within.[52]

So whatever truth we determine internally, or from within, our best scientific theory, this is the *only truth* that there is to aim for. With regard to ontology, then, to be consistent, Quine would have to say that whatever ontology is determined by our best scientific theory is the only true ontology, yet we saw that Quine acknowledges the existence of an independent reality to compare theories against and for our pragmatic considerations of theory choice to be evidential for. This is clearly in tension with Quine's views on immanent truth, where what a theory presupposes will simply be what is true and there will be no further question of truth to ask. If there is no further question of truth to ask, then there should not be an independent reality to compare the truth of theories against. Furthermore, if truth is immanent, then in what sense are pragmatic considerations evidential, what are they evidence for if not an independent reality? Quine's reason for not comparing theories against this reality was due to the difficulty in doing

---

[51] Quine (1981) p21-22
[52] Quine (1975) p327

so. Perhaps the difficulty is just so great that the truth gained from the independent reality is not worth acknowledging. We can aim for as much language independence and objectivity as we like through choosing the most neutral language to regiment our best theory into, but ultimately what comes out as true according to that theory is described by Quine to be *the only truth* that there is. Therefore Quine's position on truth being immanent seems inconsistent with pragmatism.

The problem here in Quine's view is his insistence that pragmatic considerations are evidential, yet the thing they are evidential for is just whatever the pragmatic theory dictates. So the theory is just evidential for itself! This is not very helpful. For Carnap, reality and truth are relativized to framework choice, and this choice is pragmatic, but the difference with Quine is that Carnap's pragmatic choice does not self-justify the framework as true. For Carnap, all frameworks are equally true as there is nothing independent to compare them to, though some will be more practical than others, and again this practicality is not evidential for anything other than being *more practical*. This is what Quine ultimately disagrees with, since for him pragmatic factors can make some theories more correct than others and the most correct is titled 'best' (yet problematically what is 'correct' is derived from the theory as truth is immanent). The important similarity to note between Quine and Carnap is that both acknowledge the external questioning of reality as meaningless,[53] yet they then differ since for Carnap it is metaphysically meaningless and for Quine only epistemologically so. They further deviate in Quine postulating the internal reality as being *the ontology* whereas for Carnap it is only what is useful to talk about, which derives from their differences regarding pragmatics and truth.

---

[53] Perhaps both Quine and Carnap could accept a real world that their theories and frameworks are describing, and just deny that we can question or talk about such a world independently. They then differ since Carnap's point is that the truth about that world can only be true relative to meaning convention, and Quine's point is that there is nothing special about meaning convention. This is discussed in the next section I.iii.

Quine acknowledges that what a discourse commits us to and what there is are different matters, but they are connected with regard to whether the discourse is true by being internal to the 'correct' scientific theory. His pragmatism comes in when we choose one theory, along with its commitments, over another because it is more likely to be true and what it says exists is more likely to correspond to the *real* existents. In this sense Quine is a fallibilist, as the ontology we derive internally from our best scientific theory *may not* be the true ontology, as our best theory may not *be* the 'correct' one, it is *only likely to be so*. The fallibilist in Quine thus acknowledges that their theory may be wrong. Quine's paper 'On What There Is' would thus be more accurately named 'On What There Might Be'! However, given that for Quine truth is immanent, whichever scientific theory is chosen as best will *be* the theory that sets what is to count as true in a way that manifests a tension with this fallibilism. If we ought to believe as true what our theory tells us, then we cannot also acknowledge that our theory may in fact not be the true one. This is the tension between Quine's immanent truth and fallibilism.

To summarize so far, for Quine, in accepting the best scientific theory on pragmatic grounds we also count it as true in an immanent sense, and we take it seriously in telling us truths about the world and its ontology. Therefore for Quine an ontology can be derived from internal to our best scientific theory and such an ontology should be taken seriously, as this ontology is connected to reality by *being* one and the same thing. For Carnap, our choice of linguistic framework based on pragmatic considerations shows that framework not to be more correct but only more practical, and thus should not be taken any more seriously than merely a helpful way of talking. Carnap recognizes, from the point of view of an adopted framework, that alternative frameworks are equally 'true' (as there is no external truth to compare them against) but differ in practicality, whereas for Quine, from the point of view of the adopted theory, no other could be equally as true since truth

is immanent (and so the adopted theory sets the standard for truth to which all other theories are subject to and fall short of). I too attempted to spell out a few tensions in the Quinean picture which provide reason to either reject it or to reinterpret it as a quietist relativism as I will do in sections IV-V of this chapter. The tensions were: (1) between Quine's fallibilism where the standard of truth is independent and truth being classed as immanent; (2) between truth being classed as immanent and pragmatics being evidential for an independent standard of truth; (3) between pragmatics being evidential which derives from a rejection of the analytic/synthetic distinction whilst acknowledging an internal/external distinction which derives from accepting an analytic/synthetic distinction (according to Quine, see section I.iii).

I hope to have shown so far that Quine aims to deviate from Carnap, and thus objects to Carnap, based on the significance of pragmatic choice and the truth gained from such a decision of scientific theory or linguistic framework. For Carnap, the choice is *merely* pragmatic, whereas for Quine such pragmatic choice is evidential for immanent truth. Therefore, ontology based on pragmatic considerations is a serious project for Quine, and he attacks Carnap's dismissal of it on that basis. Quine's argument against the insignificance of pragmatics derives from his denial of the analytic/synthetic distinction, discussed next.

I.iii. On the analytic/synthetic distinction.

Quine attacks Carnap's internal/external (IQ/EQ) distinction by guilt of association with the analytic/synthetic distinction. Quine's attack on Carnap's framework choice being *merely* pragmatic (which for Quine is evidential) is also based on Quine's denial of the analytic/synthetic distinction. In order to understand these attacks, we first must

recognize what Quine means by the analytic and synthetic. In his paper 'Two Dogmas of Empiricism' (1951b), Quine argues that no definition of the two words can be given,[54] and this is part of his argument against there being a distinction. But here are rough definitions to work with:

> To be analytic is to be true in virtue of meaning, definition, or convention. Analytic statements may include the necessary and the a priori.

> To be synthetic is to be true in virtue of empirical facts or how the world is. Synthetic statements may include the contingent and the a posteriori.

Quine argues that Carnap's derivation of the meaninglessness of ontological questions (other than being a pragmatic matter of linguistic framework choice) cannot be reached without Carnap admitting an analytic/synthetic distinction. Quine therefore regards the debate over analyticity as being very relevant to Carnap's quietist position:

> It is only by assuming the cleavage between analytic and synthetic truths that [Carnap] is able to declare the problem of universals to be a matter not of theory but of linguistic decision.[55]

> An issue has persisted between us [Quine and Carnap] for years over questions of ontology and analyticity. These questions prove to be interrelated; their interrelations come out especially clearly in Carnap's paper 'Empiricism, Semantics, and Ontology'.[56]

---

[54] Quine (1951b) attempts to show that no definition of analyticity can be given, and hence it should be rejected – he goes through examples using meaning, synonymy, and interchangeability, all failing on grounds that I do not have space to evaluate here.

[55] Quine (1976) p124

[56] Quine (1976) p126

Quine first attacks Carnap for utilizing the analytic/synthetic distinction with regard to making his IQ/EQ distinction. Quine (mis)interprets Carnap as making the distinction between internal and external reading of questions like 'are there things that are P?' in terms of P, and Quine argues that the IQ/EQ distinction cannot be conceived in this way in terms of P, thus Carnap's IQ/EQ fails. For Quine, it is not the case that there are some predicates P such that 'are there things that are P?' is an IQ and for other Ps it is an EQ. Rather, Quine argues that Carnap's distinction *needs* to be conceived in terms of the analytic/synthetic distinction: there are some predicates P such that the question is answered analytically by the framework and there are others that are not answered in this way. For Quine there is no way of comprehending the IQ/EQ distinction without the analytic/synthetic distinction. But since Quine believes it is not possible to accurately separate the analytic from the synthetic, then he argues that the IQ/EQ distinction cannot be made either. However Quine misinterprets Carnap in assuming that the IQ/EQ distinction is meant to be articulated in terms of the predicate P.

Quine sees Carnap as stating the difference maker between the IQ/EQ as being the predicate P in question. For Quine the distinction cannot be made that way, and he shows this with a category/subclass distinction:

> It begins to appear, then, that Carnap's dichotomy of questions of existence is a dichotomy between questions of the form 'are there so-and-sos?' where the so-and-sos purport to exhaust the range of a particular style of bound variables, and questions of the form 'are there so-and-sos?' where the so-and-sos do not purport to exhaust the range of a particular style of bound variables. Let me call the former questions category questions, and the latter ones subclass questions.[57]

---

[57] Quine (1976) p130

Quine gives an example of a subclass question as 'are there prime numbers between 10 and 20?', with the corresponding category question as 'are there numbers?', where the subclass is meaningful (and thus alike with the IQ) and the category is meaningless (and thus alike with the EQ). The category stands for the name of the type of thing and subclass stands for particulars of that type of thing. It is the difference between the predicates 'prime number between 10 and 20' and 'number' that distinguishes the former as subclass and the latter as category, and in turn as an IQ and EQ respectively. Quine argues that this an unsatisfactory division since "there is no evident standard of what to count as a category, or category word."[58] This parallel between the IQ/EQ and subclass/category is incorrect however, as it is plausible to consider subclass questions as external and category questions as internal. And Quine acknowledges in the end that the subclass/category "is a distinction which [Carnap] can perfectly well discard compatibly with the philosophical purpose of the paper under discussion."[59]

The error in Quine's attack above is that he misconstrues Carnap's position – Carnap does *not* attempt to make the distinction between IQ's and EQ's in terms of different predicates P that they question. It is not the case that Carnap would distinguish between types of P such that some are to be questioned internally and some externally. Rather, the distinction between IQ and EQ has nothing to do with which thing P we are talking about, but *how* we are talking about P. All questions about the existence of P can be asked both internally and externally[60] (and maybe answered both analytically and synthetically), so it depends on

---

[58] Quine (1969) p91
[59] Quine (1951a) p210. As stated in footnote 10, the IQ/EQ is not a token/type divide.
[60] For example, the question 'are there pink flowers?' could be considered both as an internal question within the theory as to whether some flowers are pink, or as an external question about the 'real' existence of flowers of a particular sort. When asked as in IQ, it could be answered analytically if there were some rule that stated that flowers come in all colours, or it could be answered synthetically by experience of seeing a pink flower or not. Therefore, the predicate P (in this case 'pink flowers') does not determine whether the question asked is internal or external, nor does it determine whether the question is to be answered analytically or synthetically.

how you are asking the question as opposed to which thing you are asking *about* as to whether the question is internal or external. The difference between the IQ/EQ is thus due to the interpretation of the question, not due to what you are questioning about (the predicate P).

There is a divide between IQ's and EQ's, but it is not the type of predicate P that is doing the dividing or making the difference between the two. So when Quine argues that we cannot divide predicates P into two categories (whether it be into the categories divided up by the internal/external, analytic/synthetic, or category/subclass distinctions) this is of no importance or hindrance to Carnap, as Carnap makes no claim to there being such a divide in the first place. There is nothing in Carnap's explanation of the internal/external distinction that points to the difference-maker being the type of predicate P. Rather, he argues that, whatever the predicate, its existence may be asked about either internally or externally, depending on whether it is asked as a metaphysical question or not. Therefore, we can now move on entirely from this particular objection regarding the predicate P making the difference between the IQ and the EQ, and assess how else Quine accuses Carnap of depending on the analytic/synthetic distinction.

Quine states: "Carnap thinks… that the question what a theory presupposes that there is should be divided into two questions in a certain way; and I disagree."[61] Now it is true that Carnap believes that things can be questioned internally to a theory in different ways, namely analytically and synthetically, as IQ's can be analytic or synthetic, and thus that what a theory presupposes can be arrived at from deriving internal answers via analytic or synthetic means. However it is *not* true that such a distinction between the analytic and synthetic *within* a framework is necessary for Carnap's theory. Such a

---

[61] Quine (1976) p127

distinction could be dropped and the IQ/EQ distinction would remain intact. The IQ/EQ distinction divides questions into those that are meaningful and those that are not, and then the meaningful internal ones can be further divided into those answered analytically and those answered synthetically. Therefore, that Quine disagrees that IQ's can be divided into the analytic and the synthetic is of no hindrance to Carnap, since Carnap does not require this distinction for his own more primary IQ/EQ distinction to hold. The two distinctions are independent in his theory and do not effect each other. The lack of a distinction between the analytic/synthetic made *internal* to a framework does not automatically result in there being no IQ/EQ distinction overall.

Another way in which Quine objects to Carnap's theory is by equating the EQ with the analytic and the IQ with the synthetic, and so by denying one distinction he automatically denies the other. However even Quine recognizes that such a parallel between the two distinctions does not follow Carnap's theory accurately, but Quine dismisses this:

> No more than the distinction between analytic and synthetic is needed in support of Carnap's doctrine that the statements commonly thought of as ontological [EQ's]… are analytic… True, there is in these terms no contrast between analytic statements of an ontological kind and other analytic statements of [internal] existence such as 'there are prime numbers above a hundred'; but I don't see why he should care about this.[62]

Quine ought not to have dismissed this as something Carnap would not care about as it shows precisely why the IQ/EQ is not bound up or parallel with the analytic/synthetic, and thus Carnap would care very much about this to show that the attack on him by guilt of association with the analytic/synthetic distinction is unfair. There is a contrast

---

[62] Quine (1976) p133

between internal analytic statements such as 'there are prime numbers above a hundred' and external statements such as 'there are numbers': the latter is ascertained through pragmatic (not analytic) questioning of whether the framework for numbers is useful whereas the former is ascertained analytically through the rules of that particular framework. The contrast is even more important when the external statement is seen as meaningless and the internal analytic statement is meaningful. This is at the heart of Carnap's IQ/EQ distinction and thus he cares about it greatly,[63] and would not want to allow for there to be no such contrast just because they are both seen as analytic. Therefore, equating the EQ with the analytic and the IQ with the synthetic does not accurately reflect Carnap's theory and so cannot be used to attack it.

Furthermore, in Quine putting forward a parallel between the analytic/synthetic distinction and the IQ/EQ distinction, it is not even clear that Carnap would regard all internal as analytic, *or* all external as analytic, thus destroying the illusion of a parallel between the two distinctions. There are many IQ's that are not analytically answered, like 'are there black swans?' which is answered by empirical evidence of experience of a black swan. Carnap could argue no EQ's are analytical due to being unanswerable as they are meaningless, unless understood as the question 'is it useful to adopt this framework?' which again is not answered analytically via rules but rather synthetically with regard to whether it is useful by fitting with our experiences. Yablo supports this:

> Existence claims of the kind Carnap would call analytic show no particular tendency to be external... [and] existence claims can fail to be analytic without... failing to be external... and it's not

---

[63] Yablo (1998 p236) agrees: "Internal/external was supposed to shed light on the felt difference between substantive, 'real world', existence-questions and those of the sort that only a philosopher could take seriously. 'Are there primes over a hundred' as normally understood falls on one side of this line; 'are there numbers' as normally understood falls on the other. Carnap should thus care very much if Quine's version of his distinction groups these questions together".

> clear that a sentence that's true in virtue of meaning [analytic] is well suited for the role of a sentence that's untrue in virtue of being cognitively meaningless [EQ's].[64]

Hence the attack on the reliance on the analytic/synthetic is unproblematic for Carnap's internal/external distinction since I have shown that the two distinctions are not identical with each other. We can now turn to Quine's issue with the analytic/synthetic distinction and see whether this has any other repercussions for Carnap's theory.

So why does Quine believe there is no analytic/synthetic distinction? Quine is fundamentally sceptical that we can look at bits of language and compartmentalize the sentences into ones that are true solely with regard to the linguistic rules (the analytic) and the ones that are not (the synthetic). He believes this divide would not be possible because he argues that *everything* has features of empirical content and thus everything is partly synthetic. Because of this, he claims that nothing can be purely analytic, as all things that may have been considered analytic will actually have elements of fact and empirical content thus making them partially synthetic. Without anything falling neatly on one side of the analytic/synthetic divide then the distinction itself crumbles.

Another way that Quine makes this point is by putting forward the analytic/synthetic distinction in the form of a practical/theoretical distinction. Everything will be in some sense empirically tested and as such nothing will be purely pragmatic (like the EQ) as the practical will be evidential. He goes on to claim that we can have practical reasons to *speak* as if there is an entity X and theoretical reasons to *believe* there is an entity X, but that our practical reasons to speak a certain way always collapse into theoretical reasons to believe in the way that we speak.

---

[64] Yablo (1998) p235-236

This is because practical reasons are evidential, and with regard to our best science the practical reasons are *always* evidential (as for Quine in science pragmatic choices point towards truth), so reason to speak of X is reason to believe in X (unless such talk can be dispensed with in our best scientific theory), and the practical/theoretical distinction collapses. Without this distinction nothing can be said to be *merely* pragmatic, such as Carnap's linguistic framework choice, for instance.

In Quine's attack on the analytic/synthetic distinction, he argues that it is "nonsense… to speak of a linguistic component and a factual component in the truth of any individual statement"[65], and as such there can be no distinction between true-according-to-the-theory (or framework) and true-in-reality. Therefore whatever may be considered true and existing internally to a theory (or framework) should be considered *true* and *existing*, period. (This is in line with Quine's immanent truth, yet is in tension with Quine's fallibilism, since his fallibilism requires our theories to potentially be 'incorrect' when compared to an independent reality or source of truth, as discussed earlier in section I.ii). Because of this, the decision to adopt a theory or framework in which one may assert the existence of X is itself in part an assertion that X exists, and so when Carnap makes claims internal to an adopted framework he is (according to Quine) also making an assertion about reality. Carnap could therefore not be a quietist, if this sort of assertion is to be taken as ontologically serious. If to be true-in-reality and existing-in-reality is simply to be true and existing according to the adopted best theory or framework, then the quietist like Carnap who makes internal assertions under the assumption that they are ontologically neutral and metaphysically quiet is mistaken. The quietist can no longer be considered quiet on these matters if making internal assertions are sufficient for providing truths about existence. As such, denial of the analytic/synthetic distinction in turn denies being quiet.

---

[65] Quine (1951b) p39

Quine also argues that the conventions of how we speak are responsive to empirical evidence. He states that how the world is will confirm or disconfirm how we speak, hence conventions are grounded in truth. Nothing is true solely in virtue of its meaning or by convention (analytic), as all will have some empirical measure to determine their truth (synthetic). Therefore there is no permanent status of being a convention, or being purely analytic, as everything is empirically tested:

> It becomes folly to seek a boundary between synthetic statements, which hold contingently on experience, and analytic statements, which hold come what may. Any statement can be held true come what may, if we make drastic enough adjustments elsewhere in the system... Conversely, by the same token, no statement is immune to revision.[66]

If nothing is permanently a convention, then nothing is purely practical, as this is exactly where Quine states that Carnap's pragmatism ends abruptly with the analytic/synthetic distinction and as such without this distinction nothing is any longer considered to be *merely* practical:

> Carnap, Lewis, and others take a pragmatic stand on the question of choosing between language forms, scientific frameworks; but their pragmatism leaves off at the imagined boundary between the analytic and the synthetic. In repudiating such a boundary I espouse a more thorough pragmatism.[67]

This thorough pragmatism is what I argued in section I.i to be a main difference between Quine and Carnap, which here I have shown to be based on Quine's rejection of the analytic/synthetic distinction. Quine's holism also leads him to reject this distinction, since he believes that theories have meaning holistically rather than individual sentences

---

[66] Quine (1961) p43
[67] Quine (1951b) p43

having their own particular meaning. This holism is incompatible with reductionism, which Quine also rejects, as individual sentences by themselves having meaning is exactly what reductionism holds and holism denies. Funnily, Quine gets his anti-reductionism from Carnap:

> Issuing essentially from Carnap's doctrine of the physical world in the *Aufbau,…* our statements about the external world face the tribunal of sense experience not individually but only as a corporate body.[68]

This means that what the external world is like will not confirm or disconfirm our *individual* statements but our theory *as a whole*. Whether Carnap's holistic views can be used against himself is debatable, as what holism will appear to be incompatible with is the purely analytic, and whether Carnap requires the purely analytic for his theory of frameworks is also debatable. This anti-reductionist holism is in tension with the analytic/synthetic distinction because the whole theory (and all the sentences within it) is considered empirical (synthetic). Therefore, the so-called-analytic parts of the theory will get confirmed by the whole theory, which itself is confirmed by what the world is like, thus these so-called-analytic parts are not purely analytic because they are confirmed by empirical (synthetic) means. Quine thus collapses IQ's into EQ's as the non-analytic category questions, and these non-analytic EQ's are, for Quine, [69] meaningful ontological questions taken as practical questions which are answerable insofar as whole theories can be confirmed or disconfirmed. This recasting of the IQ/EQ upon the rejection of the analytic leaves room for meaningful ontology in Quine's sense, and thus Carnap's pragmatic framework choice is no longer metaphysically quiet or ontologically insignificant.

---

[68] Quine (1951b) p38
[69] Quine (1951a)

Given that Carnap allows for us to change our frameworks based on experience such that we choose the most useful one to adopt at the time, the rules within the framework are thus not permanently conventional (analytic) as they are responsive to our experience which means they are empirically tested (synthetic). If this is the case, then Carnap no longer requires the notion of analyticity for his frameworks, but in so doing he has lost the battle against frameworks telling us something true about the world (as it would concede that they are responsive to the world). Furthermore, with the rules not being purely analytic they could thus be abandoned in light of evidence (on pragmatic or synthetic grounds), and they would therefore lose sense of being rules at all (due to the ease at which they can be dropped). With no analytic/synthetic distinction, the frameworks and their rules (being not entirely analytic) will be as synthetic as anything else and so can be taken ontologically seriously, making Carnap's EQ not as meaningless as he had hoped and allowing for ontology to be read from IQ's. It is here that Quine's argument against the analytic/synthetic takes its strongest form against Carnap, by not allowing for the *purely practical*, resulting in framework choice being evidential for truth and the pragmatic EQ being metaphysically loaded.[70] However I show in the next sections II-III that this argument fails as Quine *requires* the *purely practical* in his I-realism.

Quine puts pressure on the divide between 'true in virtue of framework rules' and 'accepted in virtue of practical decision'. Quine thinks this is not an interesting dichotomy because the rules are not fixed but are responsive to pragmatic changes in light of best fit with observation. As Yablo states: "no rule of assertion can lay claim to being indefeasibly correct, as it would have to be were it correct as a matter of meaning."[71] So the denial of the analytic/synthetic distinction attacks the idea of a

---

[70] Yablo (1998 p229) argues that this need not be Carnap's defeat, but rather Quine's objections call for a recasting of the internal/external distinction in terms of the metaphorical/literal distinction – I will discuss this recasting in chapter 3 section I.
[71] Yablo (1998) p237

permanent body framework rules. But this shouldn't be problematic for Carnap as he only requires that the changes made to framework rules from experience be practical rather than evidential for truth, as 'truth' requires an external vantage point which for Carnap is meaningless.

Yet it could be argued that if the analytic/synthetic distinction cannot be made then Carnap cannot get a notion of a linguistic framework[72], given that frameworks are characterized and individuated by their rules. The identity conditions for frameworks are dependent on their rules, so that having different rules entails being a different framework. The idea of a framework thus *requires* there to be a distinction between the analytic/synthetic since the framework rules are held to be purely analytic such that they are true solely by definition rather than true in virtue of how the world is (in order to avoid a connection with truth which Carnap as a quietist does not want). So without the analytic rules making up the framework there is no way of differentiating between frameworks, as Quine takes the analytic statements to simply *be* the rules that define which framework we are using. So, Carnap may need the analytic/synthetic distinction for *frameworkhood*, not the IQ/EQ. I resolve this in chapter 3 by appealing to fictions instead of frameworks.

In conclusion of this section, one need not follow Quine in attacking the distinction between the analytic/synthetic,[73] and the distinction does not map onto Carnap's internal/external distinction anyway. Without

---

[72] Yablo argues similarly: "the analytic/synthetic may define internal/external (not directly, by providing an outright equivalent, but) *indirectly* through its role in the notion of a framework" (1998 p236) and "internal/external presupposes analytic/synthetic by presupposing frameworkhood; for frameworks are made up inter alia of analytic assertion rules" (1998 p237). This is resolved in chapter 3 section I where I reformulate Carnapian frameworks as fictions to help fix Carnap's problem.

[73] The success of Quine's objection to Carnap depends upon the success of his denial of the analytic/synthetic distinction, which there is not space to assess properly here. But as Thomasson (2007) and Chalmers (2011) have argued, Quine's attack on the distinction need not be considered decisive, as even Quine himself later allows that analyticity "undeniably has a place at the commonsense level" (Quine (1991) p270).

defending the analytic/synthetic distinction myself, I instead hope to have shown that Carnap need not depend on it in order to uphold an IQ/EQ distinction and to regard metaphysical ontology in the form of EQ's as meaningless. The role of the analytic/synthetic distinction in Carnap's theory is independent of both the IQ/EQ distinction and his conclusion that EQ's are meaningless. Without the analytic, Carnap may have trouble with the notion of a framework, which I resolve in chapter 3 section I by utilizing the notion of fiction in its place. I have shown that Quine's denial of the analytic/synthetic distinction is what leads Quine towards his views on pragmatism, and it is this pragmatism along with immanent truth that distinguishes Quine from Carnap. Sections IV and V will dissolve these differences. But next I will argue that Quine cannot deny the analytic/synthetic distinction without reducing his own position to quietism, resulting in I-realism's self-defeat. I will look to the work of Yablo to support and motivate this, in order to show that Quine *requires* a distinction of the kind he *rejects*, which will prove that Quine's attack on Carnap fails and will show Quine's I-realism to fail too.

II. I-realism is not Realism.

Quine's recasting of the practical as evidential (by denying the analytic/synthetic distinction) makes room for I-realism as an ontological position (described in the Introduction chapter section V), where the pragmatically chosen theory provides the ontology. I-realism states that we read off ontological commitments not from EQ's but from our internal assertions in answer to IQ's. However, many assertions are not fit for deriving an ontology from. We talk about many things, some of which we do not take to exist,[74] and so we end up overloading our ontology inappropriately by insisting that those things exist and that we are committed to them when we talk of them. Quine's response is this:

---

[74] 'I did it for her sake'; 'unicorns have horns', yet no commitment to sakes or unicorns.

> We have had the wit to posit an ontology massive enough to crumble of its own weight… The moral to draw from the paradoxes is… that we must tighten our ontological belts a few holes.[75]

Quine accepts that there are sentences in natural language that may seem to carry ontological weight that we wish to not be committed to, and he thus proposes that we need to reduce our ontology by reducing those things to which we are committed. He allows that we sometimes say things that we do not take ontologically seriously, so we need to narrow our ontologically committing speech down to only particular assertions. He states that we sometimes speak in *merely practical* ways, even in science, for example when speaking as if there are frictionless planes for the sake of simplicity (instead of using a more literally correct but more complex description in terms of the properties of real planes as friction is reduced). Such uses need to be filtered out of our ontologically committing language, in order to not be in the ontology.[76] The problem with acknowledging this is that Quine has allowed for the 'merely pragmatic', where some language use is practical *without being evidential*. Since it was Quine's treatment of the practical *as* evidential that made I-realism a realist position, the position is thus self-defeating.

Therefore, the problem for Quine's I-realism is this: if to assert is to commit ontologically then far too much will be said to exist, yet to acknowledge that some assertions are merely practical requires a distinction that Quine rejects. In rejecting the analytic/synthetic distinction, Quine was able to reject Carnap's position on the grounds of it claiming that framework choice was to be *merely* practical. Now

---

[75] Quine (1969) p17. If we do not tighten the belt, Yablo (1998 p245) points out that I-realism "overshoots the mark" by being committed to too many things – see section III.
[76] However Quine tries to avoid this problem by saying that in our *best* theory there will be no merely practical ways of speaking – it is only this theory that we endorse and that gives us our commitments. Yet he still cites some practical as non-committal.

Quine himself is subject to that criticism. Quine needed *all* practical reasons to be evidential, such that nothing (like the choice of theory or framework) is *merely* pragmatic, yet it appears he must now allow for some non-evidential practical reasons in order to be un-committed to entities in merely pragmatic language use. As Yablo further describes:

> Does Quine allow for the possibility of ways of talking that are useful without being true?... It seems clear that he not only allows for it, he revels in it. The overall trend of *Word & Object* is that a *great deal* of our day to day talk, and a great deal of the talk even of working scientists, is not to be taken ultimately seriously.[77]

If Quine allows for scientists to use practical ways of talking that are not evidential, then even our best scientific theories may contain entities that we ought not be ontologically committed to. Quine's I-realism cannot work if there are things postulated in these theories that we do not want to be realist about but will end up being committed to due to Quine's quantificational strategy for commitment. So I-realists have to decide whether they are to be realist about too much, or whether there is a way of limiting what they are committed to. If the latter, the question is how can I-realists make a distinction between which assertions are appropriate for ontological commitment and which are not? How can the I-realist distinguish the practical assertions that are evidential from the merely practical (non-evidential) assertions?[78] As Quine puts the problem: "A question arises of what to count as reification, and what to count rather as just a useful but ontologically noncommittal turn of phrase."[79] I will now attack how Quine proposes to answer this question, which will show I-realism to be self-defeating.

---

[77] Yablo (1998) p242
[78] Yablo argues that the practical cannot be distinguished from the non-practical, but what *really* needs distinguishing is the evidential from within the practical - section III.
[79] Quine (1992) p25

Quine proposes we rid of unwanted commitment through eliminability:

> One way in which a man may fail to share the ontological commitments of his discourse is, obviously, by taking an attitude of frivolity. The parent who tells the Cinderella story is no more committed to admitting a fairy godmother and a pumpkin coach into his own ontology than to admitting the story as true. Another and more serious case in which a man frees himself from ontological commitments of his discourse is this: he shows how some particular use which he makes of quantification, involving a prima facie commitment to certain objects, can be expanded into an idiom innocent of such commitments. In this event the seemingly presupposed objects may justly be said to be explained away as convenient fictions, manners of speaking.[80]

Quine argues that with this particular method of being 'explained away' we can reduce our ontology to be more economical and appealing:

> We can in this way enjoy the convenience of an ontology of sets, up to a point, without footing the ontological bill; we can explain the sham sets away as a mere manner of speaking, by contextual definition, when the ontological reckoning comes.[81]

In such cases, Quine thinks we are not actually ontologically committed to such things, because we can show how in a serious context we can dispense with them[82] and express our best scientific theories only in literal terms when all quantified statements will be rightly ontologically committing. Quine believes these practical but unserious ways of using natural language could otherwise be expressed in fully literal terms, albeit in a more complex manner, and the fact that this can be done shows that we are to be committed only to the serious sentences. If we

---

[80] Quine (1961) p103
[81] Quine (1986) p69
[82] I argue, with Yablo (1998), against the dispensability of the non-literal, in section III.

do not want the commitment, we either have to retract the statement or paraphrase it away (this constitutes Quine's 'menu' in Yablo 2001 p72):

> Many of our casual remarks in the 'there are' form would want dusting up when our thoughts turn seriously ontological. Each time, if a point is made of it, the burden is of course on us to paraphrase or retract.[83]

The distinction then between assertions with commitment and those without rests on having a serious attitude in literal terms, so that the only ontological commitments that the I-realist takes on are those things that are spoken about seriously and literally, and are indispensable to the best scientific theory. So now it is *not* the case that just to assert 'there is a prime between 2 and 4' as an answer to an IQ is to be realist about numbers, and it is not enough to say 'there are Xs' in order to be ontologically committed to X. Quantification alone is conceded to not be enough for ontological commitment. Rather such a quantified claim of X needs to be a literal and indispensible part of the best theory, and talk of X needs to be serious, to be a realist about X. In the next chapter 2 I will argue that quantification alone is *never* enough for ontological commitment since quantification is ontologically neutral. This motivates how Quine's I-realist strategy is really rather quiet.

The concession that Quine makes is that *it is not the quantificational language itself that is doing the committing* but the attitude and type of thing talked about that determines ontological commitment. Only some quantified sentences will be ontologically committing, and the way

---

[83] Quine (1969) p100. See chapter 2 section II p91 for Quine's 'menu'. Thomasson (2015) argues that we cannot avoid commitment to entities by avoiding use of certain terms. Commitment is only *hidden* by removing a term 's' and paraphrasing, as re-writing sentences that quantify over 's' in terms of 't' will analytically entail that there are s's as t will entail s. Even if we separate what we want to be committed to from what we do not, Quine won't succeed in avoiding commitment just by using different terms. Furthermore, Berto (2012) p41 states, with regard to paraphrasing away the unwanteds, that "nobody knows how to produce such systematic paraphrases".

Quine proposes to differentiate those sentences is with regard to the attitude with which they are spoken and the theory within which they are spoken. I regard this as unsatisfactory for realism, as it shows that some language usage *is* quiet, motivating the idea that language is naturally quiet by default.[84] From this point of view it appears that the I-realist has been quiet all along when they use natural language, until they decide that they are asserting seriously about something literal and indispensible within their best scientific theory. It is only then that quantification becomes ontologically committing.[85] So now, a quantified assertion made by the I-realist and the quietist has the same default metaphysical status of being quiet. This diminishes the difference between I-realism and quietism, as it is only once you ask the I-realists if they consider their talk committing do you get a difference, but this does not seem substantial enough in order to derive realism – can it really be *that easy* to be a realist? Does a mere attitude really make a difference to ontology? Furthermore, if internal use of quantification in language only sometimes provides us with ontologically committing existence claims then in what sense is I-realism a form of realism?

I-realism appears only to be a form or realism at certain times, depending on what you are talking about and how you are talking. I-realism would amount to quietism the rest of the time, when our language is metaphysically quiet and ontologically un-committing, and so the default position is therefore quietism.[86] The I-realist is at best a

---

[84] However Quine takes it that the default is literal, committing talk, unless you can explain it away, so Quine puts pressure on the quietists to explain why their talk should not be taken literally. Quine thinks that the non-serious uses are parasitic on the serious uses, rather than the other way around, and thus thinks that language is loud until you can prove it quiet (by dispensing of it). Against Quine, I will be showing in the next chapter 2 that quantification is ontologically neutral and thus the default and natural state of formal and natural languages is to be metaphysically quiet.

[85] This further motivates what I will be arguing for in the next chapter 2 that quantification is naturally ontologically neutral and metaphysically quiet and only at times will our sentences be ontologically committing (due to the existence predicate).

[86] Here Price (2011 p48) and Wright (1993 p69) agree with me that quietism is the initial position from which we have to be shown that we ought to move, so the onus is always on the realist to show why they move, as the default position is quietism.

part-time realist, and otherwise resorts to being a full-time quietist. If I-realism is the position that takes answers to IQ's as ontological, then if we start to limit only *some* of those answers as ontological (due to some not being serious within the context of the best scientific theory) we end up significantly diminishing the defining aspect of I-realism as a type of realism. We are only committed, and so only realist, at certain 'right times'. I therefore argue that I-realism is not realism, in the ontologically significant sense that it was desired to be. The same argument runs for quantified sentences (discussed in the next chapter 2) – since we now have to limit those sentences that are ontologically committing to only the serious ones made within the context of best scientific theorizing. Quantified sentences are thus more appropriately thought of as being ontologically neutral all of the time, except when specified to be ontologically committing at the 'right times'. I will now argue that these 'right times' cannot be specified, as with Yablo I argue that we cannot specify those ontologically committing sentences.

III. Yablo on Quine on Carnap.

Quine concedes that internal assertions in answer to IQ's are not always ontologically committing. He states that it is not ontologically committing to speak in a merely practical or non-literal way, so he will need a literal/non-literal distinction in order to filter out the unwanteds from our ontological commitments. Quine trusts that in time these non-literal parts of our statements will be eroded and eventually only the literal interpretation will remain. With this Yablo[87] disagrees as he classes some non-literal (metaphorical) discourse to be indispensible and as such cannot be paraphrased away as Quine supposes it can. There seem to be many ways of speaking that we would not want to take ontologically seriously yet it is unclear that those ways of speaking

---

[87] Yablo (1998)

could be dispensed with. Being practical need not necessitate being dispensable. And indispensability need not necessitate truth, as some indispensible theories can be treated instrumentally. Sometimes indispensable components of theories may be adopted for practical reasons, for instance by providing convenient forms of expression as in the case of metaphor. Furthermore, Yablo claims we cannot do without the metaphorical because in order to do so we need to be able to at least distinguish them from the literal, which he argues cannot be done:

> The boundaries of the literal are about as blurry as they could be, the clear cases on either side enclosing a vast interior region of indeterminacy.[88]

> [The Quinean] needs a way of *sequestering* the metaphors as a preparation for some sort of special treatment. Of course, we have no idea as yet what the special treatment would be… If metaphors are to be given special treatment, there had better be a way of telling *which statements the metaphors are.* What is it? Quine doesn't tell us, and it may be doubted whether a criterion is possible.

So Yablo has two concerns: (1) Quine does not tell us what the special treatment of metaphors is to be; and (2) Quine does not tell us how to differentiate the metaphorical from the literal in the first place. This differentiating issue is the bigger worry, and for Yablo the separation is impossible, especially on a Quinean model. This is because, on Quine's model, a method to separate the metaphorical from the literal will be circular, based on the method of working out what exists. To draw a literal/metaphorical distinction, Quine needs an answer to what exists (in order to know what is merely a metaphor). But, in order to answer what exists, Quine needs to draw a literal/metaphorical distinction (to not be ontologically committed to the metaphorical). As Yablo explains:

---

[88] Yablo (1998) p233

> How the literality issue turns out depends on how the ontological issue turns out... [Quine's] advice is to countenance numbers iff the *literal* part of our theory quantifies over them; and to count the part of our theory that quantifies over numbers literal iff there turn out to be numbers.[89]

Both steps in Quine's strategy are thus flawed – not only is it circular in distinguishing the literal from the metaphorical, but the method of paraphrasing away metaphors as if they were distinguishable and dispensable is also not possible. Yablo cites three types of metaphorical language that are indispensable as they cannot be paraphrased away in the Quinean way:[90] (1) Representationally Essential Metaphors: 'The average star has 2.4 planets'. For these sentences there is a lack of a literal alternative, so the metaphor is needed for the content to be expressed. In the example given we cannot assert the non-metaphorical version (without reference to an average star) of the sentence as it would be infinitely long, and the finite version would still refer metaphorically to mathematical entities that we may not want to be ontologically committed to. (2) Presentationally Essential Metaphors: 'Crotone is in the arch of the boot'. Here there is a literal paraphrase for the content available, but it does not have the same force or cognitive effect as the metaphor. The metaphor is needed for this force, as we cannot understand what the content is about without the accessibility provided by the metaphor. In the example given, to think of the location of Crotone, we need to imagine Italy as in the shape of a boot, and so we cannot escape the metaphor if we want to understand the content in this way. (3) Procedurally Essential Metaphors: 'Juliet is the sun'. This type of metaphor is such that we do not even know what the content is, and also do not know what part of the sentence is literally tracking reality and what is not. The metaphor is indispensible here as there is no other choice, as we would not be sure what the literal alternative is.

---

[89] Yablo (1998) p258

[90] These examples can be found in Yablo (1998) p253-255

Yablo concludes metaphor to be indispensable using the above three types as examples, and states that Quine does not argue against this:

> Three grades of metaphorical involvement, then, each with its own distinctive rationale. The Quinean is in effect betting that these rationales are short-term only – that in time we are going to outgrow the theoretical needs to which they speak… If he has an argument for this, though, Quine doesn't tell us what it is.[91]

For ontology to be a meaningful enterprise Quine needs a clear literal/non-literal distinction[92] so that our internal assertions can be taken to be ontologically committing in the appropriate 'right times', otherwise we will find ourselves committed to the objects quantified over in both non-literal and literal discourse. Therefore, if Yablo is right, without a clear literal/non-literal distinction there will be no serious project of ontology, since both the IQ and EQ will be meaningless. The IQ is meaningless for the purpose of ontology as what we extrapolate internally from theories will unavoidably include commitments of the non-literal as well as literal discourse. And the EQ is meaningless as it asks what there is purely literally, yet we are unable to separate out the purely literal. Quinean methodology for realism will not work, since it rests on extrapolating ontological commitment from internal assertions made in a natural language that includes the non-literal. Without being able to distinguish our non-literal from our literal utterances, the distinction between our internal assertions that should be taken ontologically seriously and those that should not will be impossible. Without distinguishing the committing assertions from the non-committal, the I-realist is either committed to everything that they talk about or will have to concede to not be committed to anything at all.

---

[91] Yablo (1998) p254-255

[92] Price (2011 p51) agrees that a factual/non-factual distinction is required which is problematic as we are owed an account of why some language is *merely* practical and some is *evidentially* practical, or we slide to take *everything* as practical: "All discourse would thus be construed as fictional discourse, and the contrast… would be lost."

But regardless of whether Yablo is right about the impossibility of both distinguishing and dispensing with the non-literal, Quine's position still suffers since it acknowledges the merely practical whilst requiring the rejection of the merely practical, and thus is *self*-defeating regardless of being defeated by Yablo. The fact that the practical is seen as evidential of truth, for Quine, shows that nothing is *merely* practical. Thus Quine cannot divide assertions into those that are ontologically committal and those that are not, since that divide rests upon a distinction that he rejects. In order not to be ontologically committed to unwanted things, Quine marked a difference between the purely pragmatic and the factual – a distinction that he himself denies in his arguments against Carnap's quietism, as it is based on what Quine considers an impossible analytic/synthetic distinction. Quine acknowledges a literal/non-literal distinction as being between those assertions that are fit for ontological commitment and those that are not. And so regardless of whether Yablo is right about whether this distinction can be made, Quine requires such a distinction to allow for non-commitment to the non-literal. Yet Quine rejected such a distinction as it is based on the analytic/synthetic to allow for pragmatics to be evidential in I-realism. As Yablo describes:

> [Quine's] program for ontology thus presupposes a distinction in the same ballpark as the one he rejects in Carnap. And he needs the distinction to be tolerably clear and sharp; otherwise there will be no way of implementing the exemption from commitment that he grants to the non-literal.[93]

If nothing is purely practical then this includes non-literal elements of our language that Quine wished to avoid commitment to *by saying they were purely practical*. However, to be 'purely practical' is to admit a distinction between the analytic/synthetic, such that some things can remain *merely* a matter of pragmatics and always retain the status of being a convention. So Quine is stuck in a situation where he rejects

---

[93] Yablo (1998) p233

precisely what he needs in order for his I-realism to be feasible. Quine rejects the distinction between linguistic and factual components of truth, yet requires non-literal talk to be ontologically free (and hence purely practical). Therefore, in order to be able to do both, Quine needs to give an account of how the distinction between literal and non-literal assertion differs from the distinction between linguistic and factual truth (and thus between the analytic and the synthetic). Furthermore, if Yablo is right, Quine needs a substantial practical/theoretical distinction that is not based on being dispensable/indispensible as for Yablo some practical claims are not dispensable. Without such a difference between these distinctions, Quinean methodology fails.

So, despite Quine's efforts to rid philosophy of the analytic/synthetic distinction, he too requires a distinction of this kind in order to support his own I-realism. Quine cannot both attack Carnap's framework adoption for being merely pragmatic, and allow for some internal assertions to be merely pragmatic. Either he allows for the merely pragmatic (which requires the analytic/synthetic distinction) or he does not, but he cannot deny it to attack Carnap's quietism and then utilize it to save his I-realism. I-realism requires the *denial* of the merely practical in order for pragmatic considerations to be evidential and metaphysically significant (so that I-realism is ontological). Yet I-realism requires the *acceptance* of the merely practical in order for some internal assertions to not be ontologically committing. If the merely practical (that we cannot dispense with) is always in our best theories then I-realism over-commits, and we cannot work out which things we are over-committed to because we cannot distinguish these merely practical from the rest. I conclude this section that I-realism is not realism as it suffers from self-defeat. *If Yablo is right* about the indispensability of the non-literal, then I-realism cannot be realism. And *regardless of whether Yablo is right*, I-realism is self-defeating in trying to be a realist position. So I now show I-realism to be relativist instead.

IV. Quine as a Relativist.

In the last two sections I argued that I-realism is not a form of realism, and that Quine suffers from self-defeat in trying to formulate it as a type of realist ontological position. There will therefore not be much left to separate Quine's position from Carnap as both will have been shown to hold a form of quietism and not realism. In this section I now aim to show that Quine's position is a type of relativism *on its own terms*, so that independent of Yablo's critique above, Quine's position is relativist and not realist. This relativism is derived internally from I-realism and as a consequence of his 'Ontological Relativity' (1969). I will discuss these two levels of relativity in turn. Once we chip away at I-realism we can see that there is nothing realist about it due to its relativism that manifests internally, and once we learn the lesson from 'Ontological Relativity' the realism from I-realism floats away even further. I thus hope to show that relativism applies equally to both Carnap and Quine, in a quietist manner,[94] despite Quine's aims otherwise. Therefore they should not be seen as rivals but as allies against metaphysical ontology.

IV.i. Relativism from I-realism.

For Quine, what exists (or what can be said to exist) is *relative* to the best scientific theory, making him a self-confessed relativist. Quine's I-realism says nothing about reality, rather just the commitments of this best scientific theory. Yet what the theory is committed to ontologically need not mean the same thing as 'what there really is'. As Quine himself

---

[94] Some take relativism to be a kind of realism, incompatible with quietism. For me, a relativist's utterances are quiet with regard to what *really* exists (since they deny sense in what *really* exists as they only talk about relative existence). So quietism and relativism are compatible. And since I take relativism to deny absolute existence, (and realism as E-realism is absolutist), relativism is not a realist position in this sense.

puts it: "We have moved now to the question of checking not on existence, but on imputations of existence: on what a theory says exists."[95] Quine argues that we *ought* to believe what our best theories say there are, but this side steps the question of what exists, by instead questioning our normative duty to be intellectually honest in being committed to our best theory. Rather than telling us what exists, Quine tells us what we *ought to believe* exists. He acknowledges a difference between asking what entities a theory presupposes exists (what exists relative to the theory – the IQ) and what entities really do exist (what exists absolutely and non-relatively – the EQ). He conflates the two types of existence[96] in his I-realism, as discussed earlier with regard to his views on pragmatism and immanent truth, and so closes the gap between what the theory says exists and what can be truly said to exist.

As we saw earlier in section I.ii, Quine holds that truth is immanent. In an obvious sense then, what is true is whatever that theory holds, as truth is immanently tied to theory. Truth is thus relative to theory, and each theory says of itself that it is true. Relativism is not only derived from Quine's views on truth but is also a feature of being an internal 'realist'. From an internal method of enquiry Quine wants to derive external answers, and from the question of existence relative to the best theory he wants to derive non-relative absolute answers. There is thus a mismatch between Quine's method and result. Against Quine, I argue that from internal questions come only internal answers, and from relative questions only relative answers. He attempts to utilize a first-order relativist method of deriving ontological commitments (from what is quantified over internally to a theory) to attain second-order absolute results of an ontology.[97] Absolutism, and so realism, cannot be reached from Quine's internal method – only quietist relativism can.

---

[95] Quine (1969) p93
[96] This is derived from Quine conflating quantificational and ontological commitment.
[97] Price (2011) p50. Here Price agrees that Quine should be read as a quietist, and that his methods are only suitable for deriving quietist results rather than realist results.

Since Quine desires to be an absolutist, such that there is one superior and correct answer to the question of what exists, there must therefore be one best scientific theory that correctly provides such an ontology. However if there were more than one theory that comes out as 'best' according to our pragmatic ranking, then there will be more than one correct answer to existence questions relative to whichever theory is *your* best. Quine leaves open this possibility that there could be a tie for 'best' so that two theories have equally good ontologies:

> We found that two ontologies, if explicitly correlated one to one, are empirically on a par; there is no empirical ground for choosing the one rather than the other.[98]

> Simplicity, as a guiding principle in constructing conceptual schemes, is not a clear and unambiguous idea; and it is quite capable of presenting a double or multiple standard.[99]

Bestness,[100] which is calculated by simplicity, fit and fruitfulness, is a quality that is relative in itself with regard to communities who may discover what is best for them and not best for others. Therefore what exists will be relative to which theory you have chosen as best, which is chosen relatively[101] thus absoluteness of existence has to be abandoned.

---

[98] Quine (1992) p34

[99] Quine (1961) p17

[100] Yablo asks if a best theory could have equally good ontologies resulting from it – related to Quine's 'Ontological Relativity' discussed in section IV.ii. Yablo further asks if 'best' is circular: "Suppose a best theory were found; why shouldn't there be various ontologies all equally capable of conferring truth on it? Isn't a good theory in part an ontologically plausible one, making the approach circular?" (1998 p230)

[101] Quine could accept this as merely epistemological due to his fallibilism. He is interested in what we *ought to believe* exists, and that might be relative to the evidence we have, which is relative to the best theory we have. Other communities may have alternative theories, incompatible with ours, that make it reasonable to believe in a different ontology. Nevertheless, perhaps Quine could say that there is just one ontology, and merely dispute over which theory gets it right. In this dispute, we are warranted in claiming that our theory, rather than another, is most likely to be right (whilst realizing that we amend it in the future), so the dispute is over what we have reason to believe *now* which for Quine is our current best theory. But here Quine still ought to consider himself ontologically quiet, as there would be no way of telling if the theory chosen as best will be the one that has got it right, if there is just one.

This relativism counts against realism. Quine tries to resist relativism by insisting on an absolute answer to what there is and this is given by the best theory, but if 'best' is itself relative to different communities, or is calculated using relative means, then anything that bestness entails will also be relative. Having options for 'best' undermines commitment to one absolute theory (and so undermines being a realist), which then entails relativism. I have thus been arguing that Quine is a quiet relativist as opposed to an absolute realist. This is the case due to his internal approach to what there is and the fact that realism so defined comes as a package deal with an external method and absolutism. I now demonstrate how relativism is derived from his 'Ontological Relativity'.

IV.ii. Relativism from 'Ontological Relativity'.

The ontological relativism derived from Quine's I-realism is not to be conflated with his 'Ontological Relativism' (1969) that rather provides a *second level* of relativism to Quine's position. Quotes from 'Ontological Relativity' will shed light on how relativism manifests in his internal method to show how he is more relativist than realist. For example:

> I philosophize from the vantage point only of a provincial conceptual scheme and scientific epoch, true; but I know no better.[102]

This implicitly states that we have to accept that we are in no epistemic position to derive absolute answers about ontology and instead we can only work relative to our own community's conceptual scheme and theories which we pick as best *for* our community, as that is the best we can do, but the best we can do may not be correct in carving nature at the absolute joints. We only have our concepts. More quotes show this:

---

[102] Quine (1969) p25

The whole bag of ontological tricks may be correlated with elements of the native language in any of various mutually incompatible ways, each compatible with all possible linguistic data, and none preferable to another save as favored by a rationalization of the native language that is simple and natural to us.[103]

When we compare theories… on the score of what sorts of objects there are said to be, we are comparing them in a respect which itself makes sense only provincially… There is a notion that our provincial ways of positing objects and conceiving nature may be best appreciated for what they are by standing off and seeing them against a cosmopolitan background of alien cultures; but the notion comes to nothing, for there is no place to stand.[104]

Ontology is internally indifferent… to any theory that is complete and decidable.[105]

These quotes say the evidence available to us works as much in favor of a range of alternative ontologies which are incompatible with one another but are equally good, so that the evidence likewise could speak as much in favor of a range of theories. Having 'no place to stand' shows that we cannot get to absolute answers because we could not get an overall best theory for every community that works for everyone as this requires a Gods eye view of the world, or a superior view from nowhere, unmarred by relativistic community aspects. The privileged community with the absolute best theory does not exist, rather each community has their own best theory which is equally as correct and good as the other communities best theories, so ontology is relativized to a community of inquirers. This is the first level of relativism described in section IV.i.

[103] Quine (1969) p4-5
[104] Quine (1969) p6
[105] Quine (1969) p63

But in 'Ontological Relativity' Quine is adding *another* level of relativity to this relativism derived directly from I-realism, in saying that there is also relativity in one's *interpretation* of the ontological commitments of others: "there is no absolute sense in speaking of the ontology of a theory."[106] So at the first level in section IV.i, relativism manifests since there is no absolute fact of the matter about *what there is* (since we are all stuck with what our best theory says there is, and we recognize that other communities will have different 'best' theories). And now here at the second level, relativism comes about as there is no fact of the matter as to what a theory *says there is*, since working this out involves interpretation and applying our own theory, and there could be multiple adequate interpretations.[107] Hence the two levels of relativism.

At times Quine accepts that there are two levels of relativity in his position, but at other times sticks to the idea that ontology is an objective, viable project. Acknowledging the double-relativism however counts against his I-realist position and moves him directly into the quietist camp where ontology is impossible and meaningless:

> Ontology is indeed doubly relative. Specifying the universe of a theory makes sense only relative to some background theory, and only relative to some choice of a manual of translation of the one theory into the other... We cannot know what something is without knowing how it is marked off from other things. Identity is thus of a piece with ontology. Accordingly it is involved in the same relativity, as may be readily illustrated.[108]

---

[106] Quine (1969) p60

[107] This double relativism finds Quine in a predicament. He sometimes seems to accept one type of relativism (the indeterminacy of translation found in his 1969 'Ontological Relativity') yet denies another type of relativism (that derived from his I-realism as described in section IV.i which is often also attributed to Carnap's quietism). Others have noted that Quine exhibits both types of relativism but is in denial of it so as to distinguish himself from Carnap. See Gibson (ed.) (2004) p128 for details on this point.

[108] Quine (1969) p54-55

Thus ontology can be multiply relative, multiply meaningless apart from a background theory. Besides being unable to say in absolute terms just what the objects are, we are sometimes unable even to distinguish objectively between referential quantification and a substitutional counterfeit. When we do relativize these matters to a background theory, moreover, the relativization itself has two components: relativity to the choice of background theory and relativity to the choice of how to translate the object theory into the background theory.[109]

Quine cannot be a realist with these relativist aspects, and most importantly the relativism enters at the first level of best theory choice, due to his internal approach that comes with relativism, and this prevents I-realism from absolutism.[110] Furthermore, it is worth noting that Quine's fallibilism and his views about immanent truth both imply a quietist relativist position – his fallibilism shows that he is quiet as he acknowledges that his theory could be wrong, and his immanent truth shows that he is relativist as whichever theory you are in will be the true one and hence truth is relative to theory. Having shown that Quine enjoys Carnap's relativism, I now show that he enjoys his quietism too.

V. Quine as a Quietist.

What the quietists are quiet about is the external, absolute, objective, truth of a metaphysical ontology, and since Quine is also quiet about this he should consider himself a quietist relativist too. If quietism is to be defined as being quiet with regard to metaphysical existence, and in

---

[109] Quine (1969) p67

[110] Quine even explicitly rejects absolutism, which again seems to be in tension with his realist aims that derive from his immanent truth and views on pragmatism: "It is meaningless to ask this absolutely; we can meaningfully ask it only relative to some background language." Quine (1969) p49. He therefore explicitly endorses relativism.

turn if realism is about metaphysical existence, then quietists by definition are *all* those who are quiet with regard to realism. Quine and the quietists (like Carnap) say the same things, as they make the same internal assertions, and so there appears to be nothing more that meets the eye (or ear) to make Quine a realist and the quietists not, nor anything that makes Carnap a quietist and Quine not. So really there should not be any label to divide them, since they are practically indistinguishable. Quine seems to conclude on a note that is in obvious agreement with Carnap as to the tolerant relativist quietist approach to ontology, which Carnap also notes, in the two quotes respectively:

> In earlier pages I undertook to show that some common arguments in favor of certain ontologies are fallacious. Further, I advanced an explicit standard whereby to decide what the ontological commitments of a theory are. But the question what ontology actually to adopt still stands open, and the obvious counsel is tolerance and an experimental spirit.[111]

> With respect to the basic attitude to take in choosing a language form (an 'ontology' in Quine's terminology, which seems to me misleading), there appears now to be agreement between us: 'the obvious counsel is tolerance and an experimental spirit'.[112]

So here Quine has acknowledged, in agreement with Carnap, that what there really is differs to what a theory says there is, and the adoption of a theory (and thus the ontology to adopt) is open and we should be tolerant towards competing theories. Their positions are both relativist, and their shared tolerance and experimental spirit ought to be quietist rather than realist to acknowledge this relativism to theories. With regard to Carnap's disliking of Quine's terminology in the usage of the word 'ontology', he states the following, reconfirming their similarities:

---

[111] Quine (1961) p19
[112] Carnap (1950) note 5

Quine has repeatedly pointed out the important fact that, if we wish to find out what kind of entities somebody recognizes, we have to look more at the variables he uses than at the constants and closed expressions… I am essentially in agreement with this view, as I shall presently explain. [But] I should prefer not to use the word '*ontology*' for the recognition of entities by the admission of variables. This use seems to me to be at least misleading; it might be understood as implying that the decision to use certain kinds of variables must be based on ontological metaphysical convictions [whereas] the decision to use certain types of variables is a practical decision like the choice of an instrument.[113]

Since Carnap chooses linguistic frameworks pragmatically, and Quine chooses the best scientific theory pragmatically, as opposed to choosing the ones that fit premade 'ontological metaphysical convictions', Carnap argues that the word 'ontology' gives the wrong impression – it gives a *metaphysical* impression (and metaphysical impressions are always the wrong kind of impression for a good and honest anti-metaphysician). Quine acknowledges how Carnap finds his use of 'ontology' misleading, which suggests it was a terminological dispute between them all along:

When I inquire into the ontological commitments of a given doctrine or body of theory, I am merely asking what, according to that theory, there is. I might say in passing, though it is no substantial point of disagreement, that Carnap does not much like my terminology here. Now if he had a better use for this fine old world 'ontology' I should be inclined to cast about for another word for my own meaning. But the fact is, I believe, that he disapproves of my giving meaning to a word which belongs to traditional metaphysics and should therefore be meaningless.[114]

---

[113] Carnap (1956) p42-43
[114] Quine (1976) p126

Furthermore, Quine eventually comes around to noting that 'ontology' is best left to apply to the debate within metaphysics (and not to the pragmatic choosing of linguistic frameworks or scientific theories) and furthermore is meaningless and empty when considered absolutely rather than relatively, leaving him very quiet about ontology after all:

> In their elusiveness, at any rate – in their emptiness now and again except relative to a broader background – both truth and ontology may in a suddenly rather clear and even tolerant sense be said to belong to transcendental metaphysics.[115]

So here Quine agrees with Carnap that ontology is really about what there really is rather than what there is relative to theory, and so places it in the absolute realm of metaphysics. And since Quine also agrees with Carnap that metaphysics is meaningless, Quine can be shown to be a quietist. The only way of saving ontology from this meaninglessness is to practice it in a relative rather than absolute way – for Carnap this was relative to linguistic frameworks and for Quine this was relative to the best scientific theory. Therefore Quine has been shown to be not only quietist about metaphysics but also relativist about ontology, in the same way as Carnap. The fact that Quine uses the word 'ontology' where Carnap does not is simply a terminological dispute between them, and furthermore the fact that Quine uses the word 'realism' for his position where Carnap does not is also a terminological dispute. Rather, their positions are very similar, being both quietist and relativist. Quine may have wanted his position to be realist due to his acknowledging that there is an external reality *out there,* but due to his fallibilism and relativism he ends up being nothing but quiet about that reality. I therefore hope to have shown that Quine's I-realism is more appropriately interpreted as a quietist relativism, very much like Carnap's own position, and thus they are in agreement and not rivals.[116]

---

[115] Quine (1969) p68
[116] My conclusion is similar to Price (2011) in the paper 'Metaphysics after Carnap'.

VI. Conclusion.

In this chapter I hope to have resolved some historically mistaken assumptions – that Quine and Carnap are rivals, and that Quine's criticisms defeat Carnap's position. Quine, having conceded that ontology is metaphysical, and further argued that ontological questions are meaningless unless relative, is thus in all important respects on the same team as Carnap, and what I have argued is that this team is the quietist relativist team.[117] Ultimately they are both anti-metaphysics, and so the difference between Quine's I-realism and Carnap's quietism becomes one of terminology. Such a conclusion is not vital to the core aim of my thesis to develop 'Neo-Carnapian Quietism', but it helps to motivate why Carnapian positions need not be rejected at the hands of Quine. Having shown that Quine's attacks on Carnap's quietism fail, I hope to have shown that Carnap's position is not to be ignored or standardly assumed as defeated. The purpose of the Introduction chapter and this chapter 1 was to set the scene ready to present the Neo-Carnapian Quietist position that develops as a natural progression out of the Quine-Carnap debate and Yablo's response to it. In the next chapter 2 I will develop the Meinongian aspect of the Neo-Carnapian position, in chapter 3 I will develop the fictionalist aspect motivated by Yablo, and in chapter 4 I will develop the dialetheist aspect. But first, in the next chapter 2, I will attack Quinean metaontology from the ontological neutrality of quantification in formal and natural languages, in order to further motivate the rejection of Quinean I-realism and the adoption of Carnapian quietism, and to demonstrate the unique and attractive coupling of a basic form of Meinongianism with quietism.

---

[117] Of course, there are other interpretations of Quine's theory, but I hope to have put forward a plausible one with quotes for evidence. Anyhow, Quine himself argues that there is no determinately correct interpretation of theories, and so this must apply to his own theory too. Quine's own theory, by its own lights, can thus not have determinate sense, even though he puts the theory of indeterminacy forward quite sensibly. Quine therefore experiences self-reference problems. The contradiction that arises from self-reference appears in Carnap's position too, discussed in chapter 4.

CHAPTER 2:

QUIET MEINONGIANISM

The dispute between Quine and Carnap addresses the issue of ontological commitment and how it may be derived from natural and formal languages, and the metaphysical significance and implications of the language usage. For Quine, quantification in natural language is ontologically committing, and to speak positively and seriously of things is enough to take them to exist. For Carnap, such language usage is ontologically neutral, and one can speak freely without commitment to realism. In this chapter I argue that quantification is not ontologically committing and I show that instead we can talk about existence with a predicate for 'exists'. We would quantify over non-existents as well as existents, thus quantification must be ontologically neutral, developing a picture similar to Meinongianism. I aim to put forward a Meinongian-inspired quietism about quantification, to show that the Quinean cannot derive an ontology to be a realist about either directly from a natural language like English or indirectly through the formal language of first order logic by looking to what is quantified over, and so I-realism fails.

In this chapter I show that quantification is ontologically neutral, by describing how quantifier commitments are not to be conflated with ontological commitments. Quantificational terms like 'some', and quantifiers like '∃', are non-committal, so domains are not restricted to include only existents. I first address the issue of how Carnap and Quine establish an existent/non-existent divide, then I revisit Quine's problem from chapter 1 of quantifying over the non-literal in section II. Section III outlines and attacks how Quine derives ontology from quantification, and sections IV-V argue against Quine by showing how quantification in natural and formal languages are ontologically neutral respectively. I will then finish with a picture of my quietist version of Meinongianism.

I. The existent/non-existent divide.

As we saw in the Introduction chapter section V, Quine is an I-realist. I-realism involves being ontologically committed to internal quantified existence claims of the frameworks that we have chosen to adopt in presenting the best theoretical account of the world. This is due to Quine's slogan 'to be is to be a value of a bound variable' (TB). Since we are only committed to those internal claims that are true relative to and made within adopted frameworks, Quine can retain a realist/antirealist distinction. This distinction amounts to, on one side, the frameworks whose internal quantified existence claims we do accept (because we adopt those frameworks and their domains of quantification), and, on the other side, the frameworks whose internal quantified existence claims we do not accept (since we do not adopt those frameworks or their domains). The Quinean I-realists *appear* better off than the Carnapian quietists with regard to retaining an existent/non-existent distinction, as it *appears* difficult for a Carnapian to mark a sufficient difference between those things we ordinarily take to exist (like horses) and those that we do not (like unicorns). Yet appearances can be deceiving: I argue that actually it is the Quinean who is in trouble here.

For the Quinean I-realist, ontological commitments are made by choosing to adopt things in considered scientific theories. One can be I-realist about horses when in fully serious theoretical mode and choosing to have horse-talk amongst the commitments of one's final best theory. Likewise, one can be I-antirealist about unicorns when in fully serious theoretical mode and choosing not to adopt unicorn-talk. The Quinean can say 'I believe in horses because they have made their way into my best theory and as such I quantify over them' and 'I do not believe in unicorns because they are not amongst the quantifier commitments of my best theory'. It is this that marks Quine's

existent/non-existent divide – the inclusion/exclusion in the domain of quantification of the best scientific theory. If we want to find out what we ought to believe exists, we look to what is quantified over in our best scientific theory, and anything that is not in that domain can be said to not exist. This retains an existent/non-existent divide of the required kind, however as I will show, the distinction cannot be successfully made in this way with quantification and domain inclusion.

Carnap could try to make an existent/non-existent divide along the same lines as Quine regarding adoption: Carnap could say 'I choose to talk in terms of horses rather than unicorns because horses are quantified over in my adopted frameworks'.[118] But the difference is, unlike Quine, that does not mean Carnap believes in horses and not unicorns, as Carnap *just* does not find unicorn-talk practical (and thus not best to adopt). The non-adoption of linguistic frameworks due to pragmatic considerations is all that Carnap can appeal to in order to differentiate between the reality of horses and unicorns. But this does not do anything to differentiate their ontological status, as ontologically they are on a par (since what *really* exists does not make sense). Carnap does not have a way of privileging one framework over another aside from regarding its practicality, so from the perspective of the unicorn framework unicorns will exist, and from the perspective of the horse framework horses will exist, and it seems that is the end of the matter.

The only distinction that seems to be made is which frameworks are practical and which are not. Quine, unlike Carnap, reads into the fact that the horse framework is more practical than the unicorn framework

---

[118] This is similar to Eklund (2006b p102) where we rule yetis out because there is no match with empirical observation and so it is impractical to speak of yetis as existing. Likewise, within our 'thing' framework its standards of evidence say that it is more natural to speak of horses rather than unicorns because nothing will fall under the concept of 'unicorn' according to the meaning of 'unicorn' in our framework rules.

and argues that finding the horse framework more practical is a reason for taking seriously its ontology and not the ontology of the unicorn framework. For Carnap, the only ranking of frameworks that can be done is by pragmatic virtues but this has no ontological significance, so all we can do is choose pragmatic frameworks to extrapolate internal existence from, and this will entail nothing about external existence. For Quine, again all we can do is pragmatically choose scientific theories to extrapolate internal existence from, yet Quine argues that this internal existence is precisely the existence that realists are searching for. For Quine, as detailed in chapter 1 section I, pragmatic virtues are evidence for truth, but not for Carnap. Since Carnap does not read into practical decisions in order to be quiet, it leaves him seemingly unable to draw the required distinction between existent things like horses and non-existent things like unicorns where Quine seems to be able to do so. Yet I will show that Carnap is actually better off than Quine in this regard. And besides, the Carnapian need not be troubled by this anyway since as a quietist they are not expected to provide any more of a distinction between horses and unicorns than between those entities which are useful to talk about and those which are not. To demand a more thorough explanation of why we talk of horses existing and unicorns as not is simply to beg the question against the Carnapian who claims that the explanations do not go any deeper than that of linguistic practicality.

Despite that, the Carnapian *can* in fact make the required distinction anyway. We seem to be able to say, quite common sensically, that there are no unicorns, and as such Charlie-the-Unicorn does not exist. The Carnapian could say that this is a (failed) attempt at external existence talk. Or the Carnapian could accommodate for an existent/non-existent divide that is not metaphysical (so is acceptable to them as quietists) by responding that 'non-existence' is a consequence of (or is implicitly stated by) the meaning rules for the language laid down internal to the linguistic framework. I will propose that my Neo-Carnapian allows for a

primitive first order existence predicate[119] of individuals, that horses instantiate and unicorns do not. This allows for internal true negative existentials, so that 'Charlie-the-Unicorn does not exist' is true internal to and relative to the framework, and an existent/non-existent divide is made using this predicate. There are thus two ways to understand Neo-Carnapian claims of (non-)existence: (1) by the rules of the framework implying (non-)existence; and (2) by the existence predicate.

To 'exist' is to be described as existing *according* to the linguistic framework, and as such is an *internal* predicate of existence. This existence predicate is a way of dividing the things quantified over into those described as existing and those that are not, internally to the framework. Therefore this predicate is metaphysically *quiet*, since the existence it is predicating is internal rather than external, and is thus consistent with Carnap's quietism. A framework can describe things as existing according to the framework's rules, and those things will fall under the existence predicate. I refrain from saying this existence is ontological since the use of that word is misleading. We gain a thin, metaphysically quiet, type of existential commitment with the existence predicate, not a full-blown ontological commitment. Quine explicitly does not endorse an existence predicate, and rather believes existence is tied to quantification. However, as shown in chapter 1 sections II-III and in the next section, Quine cannot successfully select those things to which he does want to be committed to using quantification, because of the non-literal sneaking into the domains of our best scientific theories. I argue that Quine's attempt at making such a division is faulty. And now I will discuss how Quine falls into problems by treating existence as quantificational rather than as a predicate, regarding the non-literal.

---

[119] I treat this existence predicate as primitive and intuitive as a property that only some things have, similar to Berto (2012) p71: "What does commit us to the existence of something? The fast answer is: to state that it exists... Such existential commitment is formally expressed by a designated existence predicate, 'E'." I will be writing this predicate as 'E!'. The existence predicate is denied in Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781), which I do not have space to discuss. But see section VII for more on E!.

II. The predicament from loaded quantification.

Quine's I-realism depends on our internal assertions being able to be, at the appropriate times, ontologically committing, via quantification. The standard Quinean view is that quantifiers do the ontological committing in languages. It is part of this view that quantified sentences are only true when the thing they purport to quantify over really exists, so that reference to an existent thing is required for truth. So in order for our internal assertions to be true, the entities spoken about must exist. This is in part based on the Quinean assumption that to be in the domain is to exist, given TB (to be is to be a value of a bound variable). We cannot speak of anything that is not in our domain, and so whatever we speak about we are ontologically committed to. This problematically commits us to too much, given the alleged indispensability of the non-literal.

We saw in chapter 1 section III, with the help of Yablo, that we have to talk about the literal and non-literal together in one voice. Without a way of paraphrasing away the non-literal, and moreover without a way of distinguishing *which* are the non-literal assertions that require paraphrasing away, we are left with a mixture of the literal and non-literal posits in the domains of our theories. If the non-literal posits are forever with us then they will be quantified over and wrongly ontologically committed to on the Quinean model. This motivates a change in how we treat quantification, to accommodate for the non-literal posits that are inevitably quantified over in the domain but are not fit for being part of our ontology. If we are to talk about the non-literal (which for Yablo we cannot help but do), then the non-literal is in the domain, and so we quantify over the non-literal. Domains have to include the non-literal because we cannot separate them from the literal (according to Yablo) and thus we will not get purely literal domains. My solution is to treat domains as being ontologically neutral.

The predicament over how we talk truthfully about non-existent entities or in a non-literal way is motivated by the predicament of being ontologically committed to that which we quantify over. Thus the predicament is dissolved when quantification is unloaded and domains are ontologically neutral, since this allows for us to talk of things that end up in our domain without being automatically ontologically committed to them due to quantifying over them. This allows Carnap to be ontologically uncommitted in language use, which is what he wants for ontologically unconcerned enquirers. To deny loaded quantification is to deny Quine's I-realist methodology which centres around TB. This chapter thus attacks Quine's methodology (section III) and motivates quietism in both natural (section IV) and formal (section V) languages, by putting forward a quietist version of Meinongianism (section VII).

In this chapter I will show that the *existence* of the objects found in a domain of quantification is never required for quantified language to be used in a meaningful or truthful way. Rather, our quantified assertions are ontologically un-committing, yet this will not result in them being meaningless or false. We can speak meaningfully and truthfully without having an *existent* thing to be speaking about or to be ontologically committed to. Instead, the thing we speak of is simply a member of the domain, but that member need not be an *existent* thing (instantiating the predicate for 'exists'), which is the result of denying Quine's view of ontologically loaded quantification. In rejecting such loaded quantifiers, I not only attack I-realism but also any view that requires our terms to refer to an existent thing in order for usage of those terms to be meaningful or true. Such views are orthodoxy in modern philosophy,[120] and are a main motivator for positions like fictionalism that try to resolve the predicament over how discourse of non-existents is used without commitment (see chapter 3 section V.ii on this predicament).

---

[120] See, for example, Frege (1892), Russell (1905), and van Inwagen (2001). Debates in scientific realism particularly are founded on this view, as they revolve around the predicament of being committed to whatever science refers to, including the abstract.

As Yablo describes, there is a Quinean 'menu'[121] to deal with such a predicament, including (1) paraphrasing away the problematic so-and-so's to avoid commitment; (2) to stop talking of the so-and-so's to avoid commitment; and (3) to bite the bullet and just be committed to the so-and-so's. To this menu Yablo adds fictionalism: (4) to treat talk of the so-and-so's as fictional to avoid commitment (defended under quietism in chapter 3). This menu is crucially missing the Meinongian option that I defend in this chapter: (5) we talk truthfully of the so-and-so's as such talk does not bring ontological commitment anyway. It seems Quine's menu is offered only in restaurants for those on a strictly non-Meinong diet. I propose that we ditch such restaurants as the menu is not so appetizing, and instead head to a Meinong-friendly cafe for a serving of Neo-Carnapian Quietism that is *quietly* fictionalist *and* Meinongian (see the Conclusion chapter for their proposed compatibility). Quine's menu is as dismissive of Meinong as Meinong is dismissive of the predicament itself. In denying that quantification is ontologically committing, one is not forced to eat off Quine's menu as the predicament (and debates that revolve around this predicament) is dissolved. I will now reject Quine's loaded quantification by denying how he restricts domains to existents.

III. Quinean loaded quantification.

To be quantified over in our best scientific theory is Quine's ontological criterion. Quine however does not argue [122] for this criterion of ontological commitment, and provides only the following minimal (and unsatisfactory) justification for ontologically loading the quantifiers:

It is the existential quantifier… that carries existential import.

---

[121] Yablo (2001) p72. I reject (1) and (2) in chapter 1 section III. (3) is like Platonism.
[122] Berto (2012) p31 seems to agree with me here: "There is no argument positively supporting the thesis that existential commitment is expressed by quantification: Quine assumes that a domain of quantification can encompass only existing thing*s.*"

This is just what existential quantification is for, of course. It is a logically regimented rendering of the 'there is' idiom.[123]

Variables of quantification, 'something', 'nothing', 'everything', range over our whole ontology, whatever it may be.[124]

The artificial notation '∃x' of existential quantification is explained merely as a symbolic rendering of the words 'there is something x such that'. So, whatever more one may care to say about being or existence, what there are taken to be are assuredly just what are taken to qualify as values of 'x' in quantifications. The point is thus trivial and obvious.[125]

This is as much explanation that we will get from Quine, as he claims it is simply 'trivial and obvious', but I aim to try to find and understand some justification for the loading. I will explore two possible reasons why the Quinean may conclude that the quantifier carries ontological commitment: (1) because ∃ is a regimentation of the ordinary language 'there exists' idiom and this already carries ontological commitment; (2) because ∃ is ontologically loaded by virtue of its semantics.[126] These reasons correspond to the two issues I clarify later in this chapter: (1) whether quantification in natural language is ontologically committing; and (2) whether quantification in formal language is ontologically committing. I argue that quantification in both English and first order logic are ontologically neutral in sections IV and V respectively. But firstly, in the rest of this section III, I explore if there is anything nearing an argument from Quine for ontologically loading quantification, looking to other elements of his philosophical picture for clues or justification. In particular I will look to Quine's set theory, and his slogans about entities, identity, and values of bound variables.

---

[123] Quine (1969) p94
[124] Quine (1961) p13
[125] Quine (1992) p26
[126] Azzouni (2004)

Quine begs the question against those who are quiet about ontology by stating that quantification is ontologically committing without reason. Quine conflates quantifier commitment with ontological commitment[127], as he aims to derive ontological commitments using the commitments of quantification. In this chapter I hope to show that the commitments that Quine achieves through this quantificational strategy is simply the (ontologically neutral) quantifier commitments, and as such these will not be sufficient for a purported ontological position such as I-realism. The quantifier commitments are thus not appropriate for being treated as ontological commitments, since the quantifier only commits in an ontologically neutral way to what is in the domain rather than to what exists. Quantifier commitments are about the domain, and ontological commitments are about existence.[128] I will argue that a domain should not be equated with the set of existent things, hence separating the commitments one gains from quantifying over a domain and the commitments one gains from speaking of existence. Quine conflates the two types of commitment (the quantificational and ontological), which ontologically loads his quantifier in a way that I will argue against here.

It is worth noting however that it would be unfair to describe Quine as giving a 'loaded' reading to the quantifier, as Quine does not distinguish between a loaded and a neutral reading. Quine does not observe ∃ as loaded because he sees no contrast class of 'unloaded', as quantification just *is* about existence for him. For Quine, what ontological commitment *is* is to be committed to the truth of a quantified claim in our regimented best scientific theory, as there is no other sort of commitment. Quine accepts that what *actually* exists is a different matter to what a theory *takes* to exist (quantificational commitments), but for Quine these only "explicitly separate with respect to alien

---

[127] These terms are from Azzouni (2004) who distinguishes the types of commitment.
[128] Azzouni (2004) p126. There is also existence derived internally to a framework by the existence predicate that gives *quiet* existential commitments. See sections I and VII.

discourses."[129] However I aim to show that they necessarily separate. I argue that 'quantifier commitment' is not the commitment required for ontology, as being in your domain is not equivalent to being in your ontology. Quine thinks domains do provide an ontology and it is due to his restriction on domains that secures this. It is this restriction[130] that 'loads' his quantifier. I describe Quine as holding that domains are to be restricted to the existent things, but this may be misleading as Quine more accurately restricts 'things' to only the existents.[131] My talk of domain restriction to existent things should thus be read as Quine's restriction on things themselves. And now I will discuss the restrictions.

III.i. Domain restrictions from SET, NE, and TB.

In this section I will show that Quine's commitment to the set-theoretic version of model theory (named 'SET') and the following two slogans[132] 'NE' and 'TB' contribute to his ontological loading of the quantifier ∃:

> *SET:* Domains are sets
>
> *NE:* "No entity without identity"
>
> *TB:* "To be is to be the value of a bound variable"

Quine's slogan TB is intended as a descriptive tool to find out what exists – our ontology will be made up of those things bound by variables in the best scientific theory. 'To be' is for Quine to be an existent entity, and to be a 'value of a bound variable' is to be quantified over in the domain. So TB states that to be an existent thing is to be in the domain of quantification. I reject TB since it entails quantification is

---

[129] Quine acknowledges that our quantifiers range over what the theory *takes* to exist. What *really* exists will be what the correct theory takes to exist: this is his fallibilism.
[130] Special thanks goes to Tom Stoneham for helpful discussion on domain restriction.
[131] I discuss this restriction of 'thing' in section VII of this chapter on Meinongianism.
[132] Quine (1948) p24

ontologically loaded. But TB does not bring us to the truth of what exists on its own since all it does is "test the conformity of a given remark to a prior ontological standard"[133] (the standards for inclusion in the domain, and the standards used to establish the best scientific theory) rather than to the actual ontology. As Quine acknowledges:

> We look to bound variables in connection with ontology not in order to know what there is, but in order to know what a given remark or doctrine, ours or someone else's, says there is... But what there is is another question.[134]

Furthermore, TB cannot tell us what exists because answering 'what exists?' with 'every thing!' is trivially true when 'thing' itself is restricted to existents. (The issue over the debate of what is to count as a thing is discussed in section VII). What is needed in order to know what exists is which domain the quantifiers are ranging over, and to understand the 'prior standard' for inclusion in that domain. Quine believes that all things in the domain will be existent, due to his insistence that inclusion in a domain (and to be a thing) is ontologically loaded. This is driven by restricting what it is to be a legitimate 'thing', and thus a member of the domain, using the same conditions that are required for existence. If the conditions for being an existent thing are also the conditions for being eligible as a member of the domain, then restricting the domain with those conditions will result in restricting the domain to only existents. The way to evaluate TB then is to evaluate what it means to be included in a domain, to see whether this domain includes all and only existents. I will show how the domain may become restricted to the existents by looking to SET and NE in turn, and I suggest rejecting these in favor of ontologically unrestricted domains. With an ontologically neutral domain, we get neutral quantification. With neutral quantification, we get neutral language use. And therefore we can reject Quine's I-realism.

---

[133] Quine (1961) p15-16

[134] Quine (1961) p15-16. This supports my interpretation of Quine as a quiet relativist that I argued for in chapter 1 section IV, since he is quiet about what there *really* is.

- *Restriction from SET.*

For Quine, and in the standard set-theoretic version of model theory, domains are seen as sets. Domains therefore will for Quine be restricted in the same way that sets are restricted. Sets are restricted by identity, since sets are required to have determinate identity conditions. For sets to have determinate identity is for there to be a determinate answer as to whether one set *a* is identical to another set *b*. This is due to Frege:

> If we are to use the symbol 'a' to signify an object, we must have a criterion for deciding in all cases whether 'b' is the same as 'a', even if it is not always in our power to apply this criterion.[135]

It is an assumption of set theory that sets meet such determinate identity conditions (in particular via the axiom of extensionality which says that two sets are identical iff their members are identical). So set theory also tells us that sets are identified by their members, and as such their members must also meet these determinate identity conditions – for every member of the set, there is a determinate answer as to whether it is identical to another member of the set. Since the set-theoretic version of model theory states that domains are sets, domains thus take on these same conditions. Domains, and members of domains, therefore must also have determinate identity conditions. This is the restriction from SET on what can go in a domain: *all members must have determinate identity conditions.* This can be represented by the circle below being the domain, and the restriction of identity to be included in the domain – thus the entry requirement for the domain is identity:

Identity

---
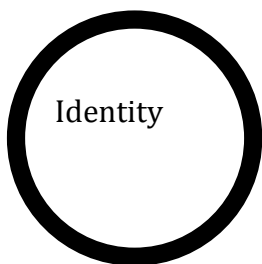
[135] Frege (1884) p62

- *Restriction from NE.*

Quine's slogan NE states that there is no entity without identity. So all entities must have determinate identity conditions. This may sound similar to the restriction imposed by SET – that members of the domain must have determinate identity – but this restriction posed by NE applies to only *certain kinds of thing*. An 'entity' for Quine means an existent entity, as there are no other entities for Quine. As such, his NE states that there can be no *existent entity* without determinate identity conditions. Whereas, SET states that there can be no member of the domain (existent or not) without determinate identity conditions. So the restriction from NE on what can go in a domain is: *all the existents must have determinate identity conditions.* This can also be represented by the circle below being the domain, with the section marked off for all of the existent entities having determinate identity conditions:

Existents have identity
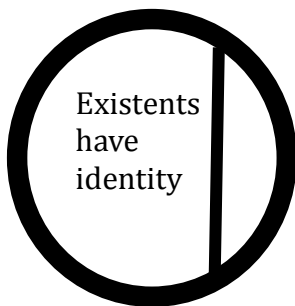
We are trying to find motivation or justification for TB, where the whole domain is restricted to include only existent things. So far, from SET and NE we only have the domain restricted to include those things with determinate identity. What the Quinean must do then, is to hold a *biconditional* reading of NE, so that the identity restriction selects *all and only the existent things* to be included in the domain. That way, all things with identity must be existent. The biconditional is between 'being an entity' and 'having identity', and the entailment is read as going in both directions – not only do all existent entities require identity, but all entities with identity require existence. So we read NE as saying both 'no entity without identity' and 'no identity without entity'. These are the two directions for the biconditional NE:

Left-Right: Entity X cannot exist without having determinate identity conditions as in order to exist it must be determinately distinct from other existents.

Right-Left: Entity X cannot have determinate identity conditions without existing as existence is required for completeness or determinacy (which non-existents are said to lack).

This restriction from a biconditional NE can too be represented below with the circle as the domain, and now with the biconditional reading of NE we get that all the things in the domain that are existent have identity and all the things in the domain with identity are existent:

Existents have identity & things with identity have existence

From the biconditional NE we bridge the gap between SET and TB – SET provides us with the restriction that domains can only contain things with determinate identity conditions, and the biconditional NE provides us with the restriction that the only things with determinate identity conditions are existents, which brings us to TB which states that to be in a domain is to be an existent entity. Therefore, we derive that all and only existent things can be quantified over in a domain, hence TB and why ∃ is read 'there exists' by the Quineans. Quine's constraint on domains ensures this reading of ∃ and I argue that this constraint is unnecessary. I will now reject this constraint by proposing that we either reject the restriction that SET imposes (that all members of domains require determinate identity conditions) or we reject the restriction that NE imposes (that all things with identity are existent).

III.ii. Rejecting TB via SET or NE.

To burn the bridge that leads us to TB we can deny the biconditional reading of NE, in particular by denying the direction Right-Left by showing that non-existents *can* have identity and *can* go in a domain, and thus we quantify over non-existents, so ∃ is neutral. To do this we need to find non-existents which meet the determinate identity conditions imposed by SET. Or, we can simply reject SET by denying the set-theoretic version of model theory that requires domains to be sets with determinate identity conditions. To do this we need to show that we can quantify over things that lack determinate identity conditions. In the rest of this section I explore these options of rejecting SET or NE.

Quine's NE is motivated by his issue with possible fat men in doorways:

> Take, for instance, the possible fat man in that doorway; and, again, the possible bald man in that doorway. Are they the same possible man, or two possible men? How do we decide? How many possible men are there in that doorway? Are there more possible thin ones than fat ones? How many of them are alike? Or would their being alike make them one? Are no two possible things alike? Is this the same as saying that it is impossible for two things to be alike? Or, finally, is the concept of identity simply inapplicable to unactualized possibles? But what sense can be found in talking of entities which cannot meaningfully be said to be identical with themselves and distinct from one another?[136]

---

[136] Quine (1961) p4

The problem with the possible fat man in the doorway is that there is no determinate answer as to whether he is identical to the possible tall man in the doorway, or the possible smelly man in the doorway etc. Without there being a determinate answer as to whether one is identical with another is for those things to be lacking determinate identity conditions. For Quine, not having determinate identity conditions goes against what it is to be an object or an existent entity. So the possible fat man does not qualify. For Quine this may be just a plea to stop talking about possibilia, but it has the effect of restricting our domains of quantification. The question is whether NE is motivated by the possible fat man being an illegitimate thing to talk about, or by such talk problematically introducing him as an object into the domain as an existent thing. If being a member of the domain has no ontological significance and only signifies that we just talk of that thing then it seems unproblematic to talk of possibilia and to place them in a domain – it is only problematic if quantification is ontologically loaded which would give you existent possible fat men. Yet Quine defends his identity constraint because he thinks it affords our resultant theory a degree of clarity and definiteness. But what I want to demonstrate is that it is not necessary to impose such a constraint, and so quantification without Quine's unnecessary added restriction is naturally ontologically neutral.

The biconditional NE ensures that all and only existents have determinate identity conditions, and this is a substantial and potentially controversial claim which makes Quine's logic heavily theory-laden. We need not accept such a heavy load with our logic though, and in rejecting NE we can reject Quine's ontologically loaded logic. Firstly, it is not clear that *all* existent things meet Quine's identity conditions (and as such the conditions are not necessary), and secondly, some *non*-existent things may meet those identity conditions too (and as such the conditions are not sufficient). By not being necessary we deny the direction Left-Right by showing that we can have an entity without

identity, and by not being sufficient we deny the direction Right-Left by showing that we can have non-existents with identity. So even if the domain is restricted by SET to include only those things with determinate identity conditions, this set of things need not be a set of existent things, and thus we cannot look to the domain to provide us with an ontology. Determinate identity conditions do not pick out all and only existents, so even if the domain is restricted by SET to have determinate identity conditions this does not restrict the domain to all and only existent things. It thus seems that determinate identity is neither necessary nor sufficient for existence or 'thingness'. Therefore the biconditional NE cannot be a constraint on domain specification.

As stated before, to have determinate identity conditions means that for all a and all b there must be a definite answer as to whether $a=b$. Benacerraf[137] takes issue with this claim with regard to numbers and sets, by showing how there is no definite answer as to which sets the numbers are. Benacerraf notes there are many potential reductions from numbers to sets but since there is no principled way to choose between them then numbers are not reducible or identical to sets. If numbers exist then they require determinate identity (according to NE), and without there being a fact of the matter as to which, if any, sets they are identical to, then they do not meet this condition. Many philosophers of mathematics, particularly in the structuralist tradition, take the lesson of this to be that numbers exist but without determinate identity, denying NE. So here identity is not necessary for existence.

There are also examples within modern science of existent things without determinate identity conditions, such as fermions and bosons in Bose-Einstein statistics.[138] Other examples to show that determinate

---

[137] Benacerraf (1965) p62
[138] This is an example borrowed from Cie and Stoneham (2009) p87-88

identity is not necessary to be an existent are things like rainbows or heaps. Azzouni[139] uses the example of fictional characters to show that determinate identity is not *sufficient* for existents either as the non-existent fictional things like Mickey Mouse may meet the condition by stipulation. Therefore it seems that the biconditional reading of NE is too strong, and by rejecting it in some direction with a counterexample we thus break the argument that leads us to hold TB and load ∃.

But if we feel compelled to allow for the biconditional NE, then in order to prevent the restriction on our domains to only existents we would thus have to reject SET instead. This would allow for things *without* determinate identity into the domain, which could include many non-existents, and the biconditional NE would merely state that those things in the domain *with* determinate identity will also be those things in the domain that exist. To reject SET is to deny the set-theoretic version of model theory, and so denies that domains are sets. It is standard to take domains as sets however this leads to problems that may motivate its rejection anyway. For example, when domains are sets we cannot have unrestricted universal quantification. This is because unrestricted quantification would require an unrestricted domain, and if the domain is seen as a set then this requires that set to be unrestricted. Such an unrestricted set is a set of everything, which will therefore contain itself, opening the way to Russell's Paradox (discussed in chapter 4 section II.i). Therefore, if one wants to allow for unrestricted quantification or an unrestricted domain, as Quine in fact seems to (as he answers the question of what exists with 'everything!'), then one needs to deny SET to avoid ending up in Russell's Paradox. This allows for us to quantify over non-existent things without determinate identity, and prevents the move from SET to the biconditional NE to TB that loads quantification.

---

[139] Azzouni (2004) p101

III.iii. Rejecting TB via quantification.

If Quine has an argument for TB it is a pretty poor one, depending on a problematic biconditional reading of NE, a paradoxical acceptance of SET, or an unmotivated statement that quantification being loaded is simply 'trivial and obvious'. We can deny SET or NE as demonstrated above to block the route to TB, or we can provide independent reasons for ontologically neutral quantification to show that not only is Quine's loaded reading unmotivated but also is not at all trivial or obvious. I will now focus on showing why TB is wrong on independent grounds by looking at what quantification is in natural and formal languages.

As stated at the start of this section III, there could be two reasons why one may hold that quantification is ontologically loaded: (1) because ∃ is a regimentation of the ordinary language 'there exists' and this is already ontologically loaded; (2) because ∃ is loaded by virtue of its semantics. These reasons correspond to the two issues I will clarify in the next two sections IV-V respectively: (1) whether quantification in natural language is ontologically committing; (2) whether quantification in formal language is ontologically committing. I argue that quantification in both English and first order logic are ontologically neutral, and that examples of uses of quantification in both natural and formal languages provide evidence against TB and do not support Quine's triviality thesis, whereas neutral quantification is consistent with such evidence. The burden of proof is thus firmly on the Quinean to provide an argument (rather than stating that it is simply trivial) for taking quantification to be ontologically committing despite prima facie examples that suggest that we seem happy to quantify over things without taking them to exist. In the next section I look to examples from the natural language of English and in section V I look to first order logic to provide evidence that quantification is ontologically neutral.

IV. Natural language quantification is neutral.

In this section I attack the assumption that quantification in natural language is ontologically committing. Quantified statements begin with quantity words like 'some', 'all', 'most', etc. In this section I will explain why 'there exists' is not synonymous with 'some' in English to show why 'there exists' is not quantificational (but rather 'exists' is a predicate) and how 'some' (along with other quantified idioms) is ontologically neutral, just as in the formal language of first order logic (discussed in the next section V). ∃ cannot represent the meaning and logical role of both 'some' and 'there exists' in English (and cognates in other natural languages) since 'exists' is not quantificational (but rather is a predicate). 'Some' quantifies neutrally over the domain, a domain that is split into existents and non-existents by the existence predicate. So 'some' is neutral quantification over a number of things, and 'exists' is a predicate for describing things as existing according to the framework. Thus 'some' is quantitative (about the amount of thing) and 'exists' is qualitative (about the type of thing). I also discuss this more in section V. Here I will argue that quantified sentences have nothing to do with existence – they should not require existence for their truth or meaning, and they should also not imply any ontological commitment.

I now turn to examples. If 'some' is to mean 'at least one existent thing', then there will be no difference between 'some' and 'there exists'. Burgess and Rosen for instance argue it is not easy to understand what the difference can be.[140] Priest responds that they could simply reflect on the sentence "I thought of something I would like to give you as a Christmas present but I couldn't get it for you as it doesn't exist."[141] Here, the 'something' cannot mean 'at least one existent thing' as the

---

[140] Burgess and Rosen (1997) p224
[141] Priest (2005) p152

sentence would then be contradictory. However, other quantified 'some' sentences do appear to be ontologically loaded, like 'some chocolate is in my fridge', which will be true only if there *exists* chocolate in my fridge. Here however, it is not the 'some' that is giving the appearance of ontological loading, rather the 'in my fridge' is. 'Some' needn't require existence, but to be 'in my fridge' does, as here it is a physically located thing to which it seems the existence predicate applies. Further, 'some' *cannot* require existence since that would entail that we cannot talk of some non-existent things without contradiction. For example, '*some* mice have American accents' is arguably true due to Mickey Mouse, yet we do not feel that the truth of this sentence commits us to Mickey's existence. This is contrasted with '*there do not exist* mice with American accents' to articulate the lack of commitment to Mickey by explicitly utilizing a negated existence predicate of 'exists' to deny his existence.

Priest's Christmas present example above is a variant of a famous example of Strawson's,[142] who points to a dictionary of legendary and mythical characters and says, with regard to the characters, 'some of these exist and some of them don't exist'. The seemingly loaded word here is 'exist', and 'some' must be considered neutral, to prevent the contradiction in the second disjunct which would come out as 'there exist some characters that don't exist'. To account for sentences such as this without contradiction, we must be able to use 'some' in an ontologically neutral way. This points towards the ordinary usage of quantification in natural language to be ontologically neutral. Furthermore, there may be no way of making sense of our fictional practice but to quantify over fictional entities, and as such we must ensure that quantification is ontologically neutral to avoid commitment to such fictional entities. Treating the quantifier as ontologically neutral,

---

[142] His actual example is: "A child asks to look at a book, actually the Classical Dictionary, and I hand it to him, saying: 'A good proportion of the characters listed are mythical, of course; but most of them existed'." Strawson (1967) p13. Here, 'a good proportion' and 'most' can be translated as meaning 'some' as quantificational terms.

and distinguishing 'some' as a quantifier and 'exists' as a predicate, will gain expressive resources for sentences which contain both 'some' and 'not exist' (like the examples above[143]) so as to prevent contradictions.

A realist may protest that actually 'some' just by definition means 'at least one existent thing' and that these examples can thus be dealt with by being not strictly speaking true. They could argue that all such examples are a misuse of language that is parasitic on their realist use of 'some', and are properly interpreted as involving a cancelling (perhaps fictional) prefix to create a more accurate sentence such as '*in Disney* there exists at least one mouse that has an American accent' to make it true. These realists will argue that all uses of 'some' are ontologically committing until it is cancelled by such a prefix, otherwise the sentence will just be false if it involves non-existent things. However such a strategy will not work for Priest and Strawson's examples, which involve a true sentence and a neutral use of the word 'some', where no prefix will fit. These examples give cases when you quantify over a domain of objects, some of which are existent and some are not, so you cannot prefix your quantification with a fictionality operator (for instance) to explain what is going on. This is because only part of the sentence will pertain to non-existent (perhaps fictional) things and another part of the same sentence pertains to existent things, and so an overarching cancelling prefix for the whole sentence will not do since only part of the sentence will require the commitment to be cancelled.

Azzouni[144] claims that the debate over ontologically loaded language becomes irresolvable in this way of looking to intuitions in examples,

---

[143] If those examples were unconvincing, then take our ordinary talk of past or future objects, such as my dead parrot, or unborn baby, which demonstrate that we speak of things that do not exist now. Otherwise, true negative existentials and talk of fictional entities are clearly demonstrative of a need for neutral quantification. Bueno (2009).

[144] Azzouni (1997) p208

since any example given to demonstrate the ontological significance (or lack of) will not convince the opponent who will deny the legitimacy of that example. It is here that the realist and the quietist come to be talking past each other, since they will hear the use of 'some' in different ways to each other in these examples, and deny the truth of the sentence unless the 'some' is being used in the way that they themselves hear it. However, it cannot be considered relevant to the debate to put forward how you *hear* things, as how you hear things may be incorrect due to misleading language and the messiness of English. Azzouni also acknowledges that our ordinary ways of speaking about ontology are treacherous. Sometimes we ordinarily try to quantify over only what exists. Other times we use 'there is' in an ontologically neutral way. Even the word 'exists' does not always indicate ontological commitment due to our use of 'really'[145] to emphasize commitment. Therefore Azzouni concludes that we cannot locate the word 'exists' to spot our ontological commitments as we can use the word differently, sometimes *ontologically neutrally*. As such, there is no committal phrase.

It is clear, after all, that the natural language of English is messy and inconsistent regarding the use of 'some' and 'there exists'. Our intuitions about language can therefore not be relevant to this debate. Yet it *is* relevant to this debate to consider that this messiness supports the quietist side of neutral quantification, since the 'some' can always be read in the same neutral way, rather than being loaded at some times and neutral at other times (as the realist would have to state). The I-realist sees a distinction between ontologically committing uses of 'some' and neutral uses of 'some' whereas the quietist does not. The

---

[145] But even 'really' is sometimes ontologically irrelevant, which shows that English is always ontologically neutral and metaphysically quiet, as Azzouni describes: "That… the word 'exist', and even such words accompanied by 'really', have standard ontically irrelevant uses is what motivates my claim, in my [2004] and in my [2007], that there are no words or phrases in the vernacular that—by virtue of their standard usage— convey ontic commitment. All candidate words and phrases that I'm aware of are routinely used in ontically irrelevant ways." Azzouni (2010) p82

quietist will argue that the way we use 'some' need not ever require a cancellation of the ontological commitment, as there is nothing ever to cancel. The quietists reading of 'some' accommodates the messiness of English and tidies it up somewhat, by reading 'some' consistently in the same neutral way, and saving 'exists' to be utilized as a predicate for a description of the thing as existing, relative and internal to frameworks. The examples show the difference between the quantificational neutral term 'some' and the non-quantificational predicate term of 'exists'.

The realist default is to have loaded quantification, and to cancel the commitments with a prefix or paraphrase at the appropriate times, and the quietist default is neutral quantification, and to add existence as a predicate at the appropriate times. Given that the fancy footwork involved in cancelling ontological commitments seems to be far more substantial and frequent than the minimal efforts to utilize an existence predicate instead to introduce a commitment, I believe that the quietist default is correct. With quantification being shown to be naturally ontologically neutral, it is therefore more natural to treat all quantification as neutral and to supplement it with an existence predicate in order to articulate some form of commitment. And so far I have argued that, against Quine, ∃ cannot be a regimentation of the natural language 'there exists' in virtue of carrying ontological commitment, since 'there exists' is not quantificational and quantification in natural language is ontologically un-committing.

In the next section V, I further argue, against Quine, that ∃ cannot be ontologically loaded in virtue of its semantics alone, since quantification in formal language is also ontologically un-committing. I will show that quantifiers in formal languages like first order logic are naturally quiet without ontological commitment, and therefore the unregimented quantifiers in natural language are quiet and ontologically neutral too.

V. Formal language quantification is neutral.

Our modern classical logic appears to be ontologically loaded, and thus metaphysically unquiet. We cite ∃x as meaning 'there exists an x' and quantification is as such a mark of ontological commitment. However, in the words of Priest, "the view that the particular quantifier is 'existentially loaded' is a relatively new one historically and… it has become entrenched in modern philosophical logic for less than happy reasons."[146] The *particular* quantifier that Priest speaks of is known (much to Priest and others[147] dismay) as the *existential* quantifier: ∃. So as to prevent confusion, Priest re-symbolizes the particular quantifier as 𝔖, which is the Fraktur letter 'S' to stand for meaning 'some', instead of ∃ which has come to stand for meaning 'there exists'. As a quietist, in order to remain ontologically neutral one must resist the 'existentially loaded' reading of quantifier ∃ and use only the neutral 𝔖. I aim to show first order logic to be ontologically neutral so as to reflect the quietism I have in place as a Neo-Carnapian, and to further defeat I-realism.

In this section I will show that the quantifier ∃ is to be read as the ontologically neutral 'some'. Reading ∃ as 'there exists' is incorrect,[148] as 'there exists' is *not* a quantificational phrase. ∃ properly understood *is* 'some' which Priest re-symbolized as 𝔖 to avoid confusion, and is named the 'particular' as opposed to the misleading 'existential'

---

[146] Priest (2008) p42. Priest uses the term 'particular' here, which I have been told was originally used by the Polish logicians, Lejewski (1954) and Łukasiewicz (1921).

[147] See Azzouni (2004), Fine (2009), Berto (2012), and Hofweber (2007), for example.

[148] I thank an anonymous reviewer for pointing out that it is not that there is a correct or incorrect way of reading ∃ of predicate logic, since these are artificial languages and the meanings of the symbols are stipulated, not discovered. They claimed that it is not that Quine has made a mistake in understanding his formal language, as it is a matter of stipulation how we use it. They further claimed that Quine has not smuggled in the metaphysical load, rather he is explicitly proposing a certain connection between logic and ontology. They say that the connection can be questioned but not on the grounds that Quine is making a mistake about the meaning of ∃. I disagree here, since I argue that ∃ is a *quantifier* that must symbolize *quantifier* terms, not including 'there exists'.

quantifier (because existence has nothing to do with quantification). The difference between 'some' and 'there exists' is that 'some' is an ontologically neutral quantificational term, and 'there exists' is not a quantificational term (as 'exists' is a predicate). 'Some' is about the *number* of things (namely only some of them), and so is *quantitative*, whereas 'there exists' describes the *way* things are (as existing things), and so is *qualitative*. As Berto states: "Existence and numbering should not be confused."[149] Thus, 'some' is fit for numerical quantificational use, and 'there exists' is not as it is not a quantifier term. ∃ therefore cannot be the logical regimentation of the non-quantificational 'there exists'.

The reason 'there exists' is not quantificational can be motivated by looking to Generalized Quantifier Theory[150]. According to Generalized Quantifier Theory a quantificational noun phrase is made up of a determiner and a noun. Determiners are words like 'some', 'all', 'a', 'most', 'five', which are ontologically neutral quantitative terms. Nouns include words like 'numbers', 'cats', 'objects', which are terms for kinds of thing. So, it is true that the sentence 'there is a number that is prime between 2 and 4' is a quantified sentence, but it is not true that the quantifier is 'there is'. Actually, the quantifier is 'a number', with 'a' being a determiner and 'number' being a noun. The 'there is' is not part of the quantification, and sometimes is not even existential – for example in the sentence 'there are many clever detectives, some of which do not exist', where 'there are' and 'some' are both used in an ontologically neutral way. The quantification itself is always neutral, located in the determiner and noun. Therefore, according to Generalized Quantifier Theory, ∃ translates to the neutral quantifier 'some' in English, rather than the non-quantificational 'there exists'.[151]

---

[149] Berto (2012) pxiv
[150] Hofweber (2007) p23 and see Gamut (1991) for details.
[151] The Quinean conflates 'some' with 'there exists', making both quantificational and both ontologically committing. This is precisely what I deny, since it over-commits one to everything they quantify over which includes non-existents, described in section II.

The argument for quantifiers being ontologically neutral can be strengthened by looking at the logical connection between the two quantifiers ∀ and ∃. Berto asks, "why existential? The dual of 'universal' is not 'existential', but 'particular'."[152] As such, the dual of 'all' should be 'some' and not 'there exists'. This can be demonstrated by considering the inter-translatability[153] between ∀ and ∃ where one quantifier is defined in terms of the other: ∀x(Cx)=~∃x(~Cx) and ∃x(Cx)=~∀x(~Cx). Furthermore, when we look to the numerical quantities of these quantificational words, we can see that 'some' means more than nothing and up to everything, and as such ∃ is 0%<n≤100%, and 'all' just means everything and as such ∀ is n=100%. So ∀ is an *instance* of ∃, since the 'all' case of 100% is just one way of being 'some' (where 'some' encompasses anything greater than 0% up to *and including* 100%). Therefore, ∀x(φ)x→∃x(φ)x should be a valid inference, since whatever is true of all of the x is true of some of the x. For example when I have eaten all the cakes it is true that I have eaten some of the cakes. What is true in the universal case ought to carry over to the particular. However when the particular case is ontologically loaded in virtue of reading ∃ (incorrectly) as 'there exists', then when we infer the particular case from the universal we therefore can prove that something exists (!). We can thus miraculously derive ontology from logical inferences if we accept ∀x(φ)x→∃x(φ)x as valid and take ∃ to be ontologically loaded.

The above inference ∀x(φ)x→∃x(φ)x is therefore taken as *invalid* when you allow for domains to include non-existent things, or to be empty, and treat ∃ as loaded. Classical logicians respond by not allowing for empty domains,[154] and Quineans respond by not allowing for non-

---

[152] Berto (2012) p21

[153] Berto (2012) p21: "∀ can be defined as ~∃...~, while ∃ can be defined as ~∀...~". And see p71 for how the quantifiers are inter-translatable when ontologically neutral.

[154] Classical logic assumes domains are non-empty, and I can agree with the classical logicians here. But whereas for the classical logician this involves an implausible ontological assumption, for me it begs no ontological questions to require domains to be non-empty, since domains can be full of things that may or may not exist.

existent things in domains, in order to retain the validity of the inference and not prove the existence of the things they do not want in their ontology.[155] This is because if we do allow for an empty domain or for domains to include non-existents, whilst we can hypothesize about what all the x would be like in the universal part of the inference, we cannot say anything about a particular x since this requires existence when we read ∃ as loaded. Yet my response is that we should take ∃ to be ontologically neutral and simply to mean >0%, so that the inference is valid, even when the domain contains non-existents (or is empty). This ensures that we cannot derive ontology from logic. We can keep the consistency and inter-translatability between ∀ and ∃ by treating them both as ontologically neutral, which allows them to quantify over domains that contain whatever it is that we speak about. And these domains can be neutrally specified by a meta-language, described next.

Formal languages like first order logic are interpreted with model theory. The model theory for a language is a specification for a model, which consists of a domain and for every 1-place predicate an extension which is a subset of the domain, and for every n-place predicate a set of n-tuples of members of the domain. There are two rules for the quantifiers in our formal language of first order logic: (∃) when at least one element of the domain is in the extension of the predicate; (∀) when all elements of the domain are in the extension of the predicate. We specify the domain, and specify the extension of the predicates. Thus far there has been no mention of existence or ontology in the meta-language of model theory, and so the model is naturally metaphysically quiet. The metaphysical noise comes through not in the quantification but in the specification of the domain to be quantified over – if the domain is specified in a metaphysical or ontologically

---

[155] Free logicians respond by allowing for empty domains and neutral quantification over these domains, yet my position differs from free logics due to not requiring domains that are empty but insisting that domains include existents and non-existents. There are many kinds of free logics – some quantify over non-existents, some do not.

loaded way then quantifying over it will also be loaded. Quantification is only committal if the specification of the domain in the model theory is committal. And whether domain specification is committal depends upon whether the meta-language in which the model theory is couched is itself committal.[156] Model theory does not require an ontology and ensures that formal languages have no ontological commitments, so that quantification itself is ontologically neutral. There is therefore nothing in the semantics of ∃ that makes it ontologically loaded. Yet Quine's rules for inclusion in a domain are not neutral, and this is where ontology is smuggled in, through the back door of domain specification. And the way in which Quine specifies and restricts his domain is faulty.

VI. Quine's circular method.

In practice, whatever we talk about goes in a domain, and according to Yablo, as we saw in chapter 1 section III, this necessarily includes the non-literal. Any further restriction is not part of standard model theory. The point of looking at the model theoretic approach to semantics was to show that it is done in an ontologically neutral way, and that the metaphysics is an unnecessary addition. Quine included this addition due to his preconception of what things exist (which did not include the possible fat man in the doorway). He thus looked to what he thought existed in order to derive his loaded logic which was then used to tell us what exists. So it seems he constructed logic to fit around his premade metaphysical ideas. Quine's method as such is circular (although Quine prefers to call it 'holistic') as he decides on his ontology and molds identity conditions to fit, then these conditions deliver ontological

---

[156] Azzouni (2004 p54) similarly: "[Quine's] line of reasoning contains the crucial and unnoticed presupposition that the language in which the semantics for the objectual quantifiers is couched (the 'metalanguage') is itself one with quantifiers that themselves carry ontological commitment. That is, [we are forced] to regard our original set of (objectual) quantifiers as ontologically committing only if we regard the quantifiers in the metalanguage as ontologically committing."

results. Azzouni makes a similar remark against this circularity: "One can't read ontological commitments from semantic conditions unless one has already smuggled into those semantic conditions the ontology one would like to read off"[157] and this is precisely what Quine does. It is circular to get ontology from logic given how Quine chose his logic – to fit his ontology. Quine thus provides an unhelpful criterion for existing (to be in the domain) and a criterion for being in the domain (to exist).

The identity constraint dictates what can go in a domain, and motivates scepticism about talk of possible fat men, and then the domain is loaded, but without the constraint the domain is neutral. So it is the identity constraint that is loaded, rather than the logic itself. Far from providing us with a metaphysically-neutral device for distilling our ontological commitments, then, Quine's machinery is not innocent.[158] If this logical machinery is utilized to find out what exists, then the answer to that question cannot already be presupposed in that machinery's construction. Quine derives an ontology from injecting metaphysics into logic, to get metaphysics out the other side. Quine does his metaphysics first to make his logic ontologically loaded, so it is not the logic itself that is loaded, rather it is the metaphysical prerequisites on domains. And these prerequisites can be rejected as outlined in section III: in rejecting the restriction from SET or NE, we reject the resulting TB, and end up with quantification that is ontologically neutral. I have thus argued that there are no ontological commitments to be revealed by the quantifier ∃. Those like Quine who think otherwise have not examined the semantics of their formal language correctly and have not noticed that they have smuggled that metaphysical load in by placing an unnecessary constraint on their model theory via SET and NE. Hence, ontological commitment need not be equated with quantification since inclusion in a domain need not be equated with ontology.

---

[157] Azzouni (2004) p55
[158] This point was made by Carl Warom who was my respondent when I presented this idea at the White Rose Philosophy Postgraduate Forum at the University of Leeds.

'Some' is ontologically neutral in first order logic since such logic is only interested in quantifying over a formal domain, and this only has ontological significance depending on the constraints on (and specification of) inclusion in a domain to restrict that domain. When the domain is restricted, the quantifiers will only be able to quantify over those things that made it through that constraint. Logic, without such constraints, is ontologically neutral. I have shown that first order logic need not be ontologically loaded by looking to model theory to show how quantification stripped down is ontologically neutral. It is only in Quine's background rules from SET and NE that restrict what can be quantified over to give quantification ontological significance. Model theory has no ontological commitments, showing that the domain is not the set of existents, and as such formal languages like first order logic are naturally neutral. I have denied TB, via rejecting SET and NE and showing that quantification is neutral, as it is not the logic that supports ontologically loaded quantification, rather it is just Quinean rhetoric about possible fat men motivating restrictions on domains, making them ontologically loaded. Without a domain restriction, quantification ceases to have anything to do with existence. As Berto summarizes:

> [Neutral] quantifiers had better be called just quantifiers. 'Existentially committing quantification' is restricted quantification.[159]

And what I have argued in this chapter is that such restricted quantification to only include existents in the domains is unmotivated and incorrect, and so it is not 'trivial and obvious' that $\exists$ signifies ontological commitment as Quine states. I have shown that $\exists$ is not ontologically loaded as it is not a regimentation of 'there exists', nor is it loaded in virtue of its semantics. $\exists$ is therefore ontologically neutral and means 'some', named the particular, rather than existential, quantifier. This is in line with the Meinongian view of quantifiers, discussed next.

---

[159] Berto (2012) p72

VII. Quietist version of Meinongianism.

I hope to have shown that there is no formal obstacle to having non-existents as legitimate things to talk of and go in a domain, and Yablo has shown (chapter 1 section III) that we cannot help but have them in domains. In reading ∃ as 'some', named the 'particular' quantifier, I put forward quantification as being ontologically neutral. Quantifiers are loaded when the domain being quantified over is loaded – if a domain contains only existent things then quantifying over that domain will be ontologically committing. In allowing for (non-empty) domains, and thus quantifiers, to be ontologically neutral, I have not diverged from the standard Tarskian account of objectual quantification. Rather I hold that we should be just as quiet about the model and the existence of the objects in the domain as I am quiet about anything else as a loyal Neo-Carnapian. Talk of domains is as quiet as any other talk, so my account is still Tarskian as it still has domains, but domains are not ontologically restricted and the quantifier over them is ontologically neutral.

The unloaded domains that I advocate can contain both existent and non-existent objects, which sounds to most ears to be very Meinongian. Meinongianism, according to Berto and Plebani, is "a non-standard (meta-) ontological view according to which the notion of existence is not captured by the quantifier."[160] In this respect I am clearly in agreement with Meinongianism. Berto and Plebani further add that "existence is, rather, a fully-fledged, non-trivial feature which some things have and others lack."[161] Here is where I diverge slightly from Meinongianism, since despite agreeing that existence is a predicate which some things have and others lack within a given framework, I do not put forward this predicate as being 'fully-fledged' or being anything

---

[160] Berto and Plebani (2015) p99
[161] Berto and Plebani (2015) p99

metaphysically robust. 'Existence', for me, like any other property, is internal and framework relative. While my view thus has some similarities to such a Meinongian position, this label should be placed with care, since Meinongians traditionally provide a metaphysically loud answer to questions of existence (and non-existence, subsistence, and being), yet I as a Neo-Carnapian stay quiet on all such matters.

'Meinongianism' names a theory stemming from the views of Alexius Meinong, which is often unfairly met with ridicule. Meinong's 'theory of objects' (1904) is a theory about non-existent objects that explains how we can say true things about them and quantify over them in our domains. Meinongians believe that we can refer to non-existent things, and talk of them truthfully, due to quantifying over them and having them as members in our domains of quantification. When we speak of non-existents, then, our talk refers to objects in the domain that are non-existent things. So it is not that our language can be true without *referring*, but rather without referring to an *existent* thing. The 'theory of objects' thus has similar aims to mine in this chapter – to show that we can speak truthfully and meaningfully of things without requiring them to exist. The 'theory of objects' is famously objected to by the likes of Quine and Russell[162] for ending up in paradoxical, inconsistent, or counterintuitive situations. These objections rest upon a heavyweight realist interpretation of Meinongianism such that the Meinongian objects exist or fail to exist in a metaphysically substantial way. I will discuss these objections and my quietist response later on in this section. What I propose is a quietist version of Meinongianism (with neutral quantification and quiet predication of objects as existent and non-existent) that will therefore defuse many of these objections.[163]

---

[162] Quine (1948) and Russell (1905). See Quine especially for the ridicule of Wyman. Currie (1990 p132) argues Meinongianism "must be rejected" due to scepticism issues.
[163] Other types of Neo-Meinongians who respond to these objections include a nuclear way (Parsons 1980), a dual copula way (Zalta 1983), and a modal Meinongian way (Priest 2005 and Berto 2008). I cannot discuss the virtues of each Neo-Meinongianism here. I will just compare my version to Meinongianism found in Berto & Plebani 2015.

For the Meinongian, naïvely put, there are existents *and* non-existents. I hold that both are types of thing, and the over-arching name for these things are that they have 'being'.[164] All existent things have being, but not all being things have existence. Domains of quantification include things with being, which are further divided up into the existent things and the non-existent things. For the quietist Neo-Carnapian, when the domain is split in this way, these existents and non-existents are not to be classed as ontologically substantial – they do not exist or not exist in any metaphysically way, rather existence is just one predicate among many that can apply to entities within a linguistic framework. However, the existence predicate that divides the domain for a naïve Meinongian is going to be potentially much more metaphysically heavy-weight than that proposed by myself for a Neo-Carnapian Quietist, since for me the domains are themselves framework relative with no metaphysical preference for one framework over any other. Thus to have both types of thing, the existents and non-existents, in the domain together is not such a big deal for the quietist as it may be for a naïve Meinongian. Given that existents and non-existents in the domain are talked about in a metaphysically quiet manner by the Neo-Carnapian, the view that I am proposing could be classed as a *quietist* version of Meinongianism.

Since Meinongians quantify over both existent and non-existent things, their quantification over domains containing both such things must be ontologically neutral, and they must employ a predicate for existence to differentiate the existents from the non-existents (since being in the domain no longer makes the difference). Meinongians have defined (misleadingly) their neutral quantifiers using the Quinean ontologically loaded quantifiers ($\forall$ and $\exists$) and the existence predicate (E!) as such:[165]

---

164 Meinong, more accurately, rather held that concrete objects exist, abstract objects subsist (bestehen), and some objects exist in no way whatever (they have Nichtsein). I do not give an account of subsistence, hence further reason to place the label with care.
165 Berto and Plebani (2015) p103. The Meinongian neutral particular quantifier Σ is the same as Priest's replacement of the $\exists$ with the symbol $\mathfrak{S}$, as we saw in section V.

E! is taken as a first-order predicate of existence for individuals.

Λ is the neutral universal quantifier.

Σ is the neutral particular quantifier.

$\forall x =_{df} \Lambda x(E!x)$

$\exists x =_{df} \Sigma x(E!x)$

Therefore, to say 'all existent things are P' is defined as such:

$\forall x(Px) =_{df} \Lambda x(E!x \rightarrow Px)$

And to say 'some existent things are P' is defined as such:

$\exists x(Px) =_{df} \Sigma x(E!x \land Px)$

Using these neutral quantifiers, the Meinongian can say, without contradiction, that *some things do not exist* (because 'thing' is neutral):

$\Sigma x(\sim E!x)$

This Meinongian picture has often been wrongly accused of employing two sets of quantifiers – one set as ontologically neutral and one as ontologically loaded. This is an easy mistake to make when Meinongians try to define one in terms of the other or utilize both in the same equation as done above. For example, van Inwagen misrepresents such Meinongianism as "the way of the two quantifiers."[166] The reason this is a misrepresentation is because for the Meinongian there is just one type (or set) of quantifier, and there are simply different ways of *restricting* this quantifier. The ontologically loaded quantifier ∃ is thus identical in type with the ontologically neutral quantifier Σ, but ∃ is just

---

[166] Van Inwagen (2003) p138

restricted to existents. There is only one quantifier, that Meinongians and others like Quineans are using, but there are many ways of restricting what it can quantify over in its domain, and so the Quinean loaded version of quantification for instance is simply restricted quantification to existent things. Such a restriction, as I have argued in this chapter, is due to restricting what can go in a domain by restricting what is to count as a 'thing'. And as I will now describe, it is precisely this disagreement over what is to count as a 'thing' that is at the centre of the debate between Quineans and Meinongians, and thus between Quineans and the position I am putting forward as Neo-Carnapianism.

According to Berto, "the debate between Quineans and Meinongians is largely metaontological."[167] Berto explains that there is an *ontological* debate *within* the Quinean tradition over whether propositions exist between the realists and the nominalists (which is made possible due to a shared notion of existence), yet there is a *metaontological* debate *outside* the Quinean tradition over what 'exists' means or what counts as a 'thing' between the Quineans and Meinongians. Within ontology, disputants argue over which things exist once they have agreed on the metaontological issue of what it means to exist and what it means to be a thing. When asked 'what exists?' the Quinean answers 'everything', the Meinongian answers 'not everything'[168], and so the Meinongians not only deny Quine's triviality thesis (that it is 'trivial and obvious' that everything exists) but also claim Quine's thesis to be untrue (since it is not the case that everything exists). I believe that a simple way to understand the dispute between Quineans and Meinongians is to see the disagreement between them as most fundamentally revolving around what they are counting as a 'thing'. They may very well have the same list of *existents*, but not the same list of *things*, and this is due to the differences over what they take a legitimate 'thing' (or object) to be.

---

[167] Berto (forthcoming) p3

[168] There is also the 'noneism' of Routley (1982) or Priest (2005) that is distinguished from Meinong by taking abstract objects not to *subsist*, but to simply *not exist at all*.

As described in section III, the Quinean conflates 'thing' with 'existent thing', as for Quine an entity just is an existent entity and there are no other types of entity or thing out there. As such, the Quineans list of existents is identical to their list of things. This is what the Meinongians disagree with. The Meinongian does not equate 'thing' with 'existent thing' as they believe there are *other types* of thing, namely the non-existent things, and as such their list of things will be much longer than (and thus not identical to) their list of existents. I will use the general term 'being' to apply to both types of things (the existent and the non-existent), and so where the Quinean says 'exists' (to encompass all of the things) I will say 'being', and will reserve existence to apply to only some of those things that have being, in a simplistic Meinongian way. Quine uses 'exists' to be everything in the domain, but for Meinong the domain includes things that do not exist. Therefore the debate between Meinong and Quine can be clarified as not over *what exists* but over what it means to be a *thing* – for Quine 'thing' is just existent things and for Meinong 'thing' includes both existent and non-existent things.

So Meinong has a larger domain of things than Quine, and Quine's domain *may be* the same size as Meinong's sub-domain of existent things. In other words, the set of things picked out by the Quinean existential quantifier *may be* identical to the set of things picked out by the Meinongian existence predicate, since they may agree on what is to be counted as 'existing'. They disagree here on whether there are any entities left after specifying the existent ones. The dispute between them is thus not regarding ontology, since it is not regarding what is to be counted on the list of *existent things*, but rather more fundamentally regarding what is to be counted on the list of *things*. Both the Quinean and this Meinongian agree that a thing needs to be in the domain in order to talk truthfully of it (so that there is something to refer to, unlike free logicians who do not need a thing in the domain to refer to), and are committed to this thing once we quantify over it, but they

disagree as to what counts as a thing here, and they disagree over which type of commitment the quantifier brings (for the Quinean the commitment is to the existence of the thing, for the Meinongian it's not).

I argue that Quinean metaontology places unnecessary restrictions on quantification. Meinong says that to restrict your things to solely the existents in this way is to have "a prejudice in favor of the actual."[169] What Quine calls the study of ontology is therefore what Meinong calls the study of objects, but Meinong's study of objects is a study of a much larger set of things than Quine's study of ontology (which is restricted to only existent objects). I want to reserve 'ontology' for the study of the objects that exist (which is crucially not *all* objects). Quine complains that Meinong has an unlovely and exploded ontology,[170] but this complaint is inappropriate if it is interpreted as saying that there is an exploded list of existent things in the world. The complaint rather only states that Meinong has a larger domain of things, since there *may be* no more or no less existents within it than the Quinean. Meinong *may have* exactly the same ontology as Quine (the same list of existent things) but rather have an exploded set of objects in general (a longer list of all types of things). To me it is far more 'unlovely' to exclude non-existents from our domains. Rather it is Platonism that is truly unlovely by having a long list of weird existents! So, the debate becomes over whether it is preferable to stop talking about non-existents (Quine's menu option 1 or 2),[171] extend our list of existents (option 3), or extend our list of things in domains (the Meinong option– Quine would conflate this with option 3). As 1 and 2 are arguably impossible, and 3 implies an unlovely Platonism, I argue that we choose the quiet Meinongian way.

---

[169] Meinong (1904)

[170] Quine (1948) p23. Aimed at Wyman, a caricature of Meinong that more accurately represents Russell in his *Principles of Mathematics*. My representation of Meinong is also perhaps more like Wyman and Russell due to its over-simplified description here. Otherwise, without anything subsisting but only either existing or not, my simplified Meinongianism has similarities with the noneism of Routley (1982) and Priest (2005).

[171] See section II p91 for this menu (Yablo 2001 p72), and chapter 1 section III where I follow Yablo in taking options 1 (paraphrase) and 2 (dispensability) to be impossible.

Since I have followed Yablo in saying that we cannot help but quantify over non-existent things (thus denying options 1 and 2) it is natural to take the Meinongian option.[172] But as a quietist, I want to resist the traditional Meinongian claims about the metaphysical status of being, existence, non-existence, and subsistence, nor do I wish to make claims about which entities have such a metaphysical status. I propose a metaphysically quiet division of existent and non-existent things *within* frameworks, which shows that quiet Meinongianism is not unlovely, as it is not *really* committed to non-existents, and I will now go on to argue that quietist Meinongianism is preferable to traditional Meinongianism.

Meinongians use a 'principle of comprehension'[173] for their objects, to explain what non-existent things there are and which properties they can bear. This principle of comprehension will restrict our talk of non-existent things and will explain how we can talk truthfully of non-existent things. It is this principle in its unrestricted form that leads the Meinongian positions into trouble since it is this principle that leads the Meinongian into inconsistency and triviality. Different Meinongians put forward different versions of the principle in order to avoid such results (and those with a different versions call themselves Neo-Meinongians), but what I will argue is that the quietist Neo-Carnapian can avoid the principle altogether (hence why the title of being a Neo-Meinongian only loosely applies to my Neo-Carnapian position since I do not put forward a different version of the principle but rather discard the principle altogether). This is the main advantage of my quietist version of Meinongianism, as it retains the Meinongian insight of quantification whilst avoiding the problematic 'principle of comprehension' altogether.

---

[172] There are other ways to resolve quantifying over non-existents, like 'fictionalism' which states that when we speak of non-existents we speak *fictionally*, and thus not truly, to avoid commitment. This was Yablo's meal 4 on Quine's menu in section II p91 that I endorse *quietly* in conjunction with *quiet* Meinongianism: I retain the truth of our talk in a Meinongian way whilst judging the talk on usefulness in a fictionalist way. See chapter 3 for fictionalism and the Conclusion chapter for compatibility issues.

[173] Also called the 'Characterisation Principle' (CP) in Priest (2005). I use the 'Principle of Comprehension' and describe it as it is found in Berto and Plebani (2015) p108.

The basic (unrestricted) form of this principle of comprehension is:[174]

(POC) For any condition Ax with free variable x, some object satisfies Ax.

POC states that for whatever property you ascribe there will be a thing (either existent or non-existent) that instantiates that property (or set of properties). So, if I talk of a pink unicorn then there will be a thing in the domain that has the properties of being a pink unicorn. Russell[175] famously notes that one could also talk of the round square or other contradictory objects, and thus end up with contradictory things in the domain. This is the inconsistency objection. But this should not be problematic as those contradictory things need not also instantiate the existence predicate, so POC does not directly lead to postulating *existing* contradictory objects. Russell however also notes that one could talk of the existing God, for example, and thus end up defining things into existence (which is ironically the problem that I set out for Quineans in deriving an ontology from the inference between ∀ and ∃ in section V). This is the triviality objection. When the two objections are combined, and we take existence a property, we can define into existence an object that has contradictory properties as well as the property of existence. Together the inconsistency and triviality objections take a strong form, as it is counterintuitive and against our classical laws of logic that there could be an existent thing that instantiates contradictory properties.

The quietist version of Meinongianism that I put forward will avoid the inconsistency and triviality objections by avoiding POC altogether. We can see that this is a legitimate move for the Neo-Carnapian by recognizing that the position that I am putting forward already has a way of restricting what we talk about and a way of explaining what things (existent and non-existent) there are by tying quantification to particular linguistic frameworks and their rules. My position thus has

---

[174] The CP, in footnote above instead of POC, can be seen as an account of descriptions. Unrestricted CP is something like: P(ixPx) where 'i' is a definite description operator. It postulates that any object *has* those properties that it is *characterized* as having.

[175] Russell (1905) p483

no need for POC, or any principle like it, since POC has no work to do in a Neo-Carnapian theory of linguistic frameworks. The Neo-Carnapian utilizes framework rules to restrict our talk, and looks to frameworks to determine which things exist and do not exist relative and internal to those frameworks and what properties those things have. Framework rules provide the restrictions on such things, and so there is no need for another general principle like POC to tell us in an absolute sense what things there are, as objects can *only* be said to exist or not *relative* and *internal* to a framework whose rules suffice to determine a framework-relative criteria for thingness and existence. Since everything is relative to the framework rules for the Neo-Carnapian, there is nothing left for a POC to determine or restrict. The POC is only required if we think that there is some absolute realm of being, and want to ask what belongs to that realm. But this picture is abandoned in the Neo-Carnapian model in which things are only quantified over within rule-governed frameworks.

Furthermore, the Neo-Carnapian is quiet about metaphysics, and so the position I advocate does not have a view of reality (or being) but rather only has a view internal to linguistic frameworks. The pressure on the Meinongian of putting forward a principle of comprehension like POC comes from a realist perspective of what there is and is not in reality and what those things are like. Therefore, by *not* holding a realist view, such pressure vanishes, and by holding a quietist view with a theory of frameworks, there is no need for a principle of comprehension. Without a need for a principle of comprehension like POC, this quietist version of Meinongianism can escape the usual charges of inconsistency and triviality that result from such principles.[176] I therefore conclude that in putting forward ontologically neutral quantification, I put forward a quietist form of a naïve Meinongianism that avoids some problems that traditional Meinongians may face, and trumps the Quinean alternative.

---

[176] However the charge of contradictory objects and going against classical logic could be re-raised against the quietist Meinongian internal to the frameworks, but they could respond that these frameworks could just be dismissed as not helpful to adopt.

VIII. Conclusion.

In this chapter I have argued that Quinean methodology for realism fails, by showing that quantification in both natural and formal languages are ontologically neutral. For Quine's I-realism to be a tenable ontological position, either internal use of English can provide us with ontological commitments, or it can be translated into first order logic to manifest those commitments, in order to derive an ontology to be a realist about. I have argued that neither of these options are possible, and as such I-realism is not a form of realism. This completes my attack on Quine's I-realism and my defense of Carnapian quietism. Quineans may think that quantification in formal languages is ontologically committing because of the model theoretic machinery, the set theory, or the Tarskian semantics. I have shown that such machinery only gives us an ontology if domains are not allowed to contain non-existent things, and so a domain restriction is needed. This restriction is not something that has been argued for successfully by Quine, and ∃ certainly is not trivially or obviously loaded, as Quine initially states. The model theoretic, set theoretic, and Tarskian semantics can be adopted just fine without ontological commitment, since there is no good (non-question-begging) argument for why domain membership requires existence. I conclude that we can have classical objectual quantifiers without existence, in a quietist Meinongian way, and that ∃ is the 'particular' quantifier since there is nothing existential about it at all. Having motivated quietism by showing quantification in both natural and formal languages to be ontologically neutral, I have shown that we can talk about things meaningfully and truthfully without ontological commitment or the requirement of existence. Whatever can be spoken about is in our domain, and since this domain is no longer ontologically loaded our true language usage is no longer restricted to be about only existents. Many have assumed otherwise, and this has been a main motivation for fictionalism, which in the next chapter 3 I reframe under quietism.

CHAPTER 3:

QUIET FICTIONALISM

In chapter 1 I outlined Carnap's quietism, and utilized Yablo's argument from the metaphorical to attack Quine's I-realism and to defend Carnap against Quine's critique. Chapter 2 took insight from Meinongianism to explain how the metaphorical and non-existents enter into our domains. This chapter develops Yablo's argument into a type of quiet fictionalism in order to describe our language usage and to save Carnap's linguistic frameworks from a dependence on the analytic. Here I describe what I mean by fictionalism and how it can be coupled with Carnap's quietism. I believe that Carnap's quietism can be helpfully reinterpreted as a type of fictionalism, and also that fictionalism is best developed as a form of quietism. This quietist fictionalism is differentiated from traditional fictionalism by being divorced from antirealism and by taking a global scope rather than being about particular discourses or entities only.

I will start this chapter by motivating the idea that Carnap's quietism can be reformulated as a type of fictionalism. Then in section II, I show how metaontology informs ontology, and thus how our metaontological fictionalism informs our ontology of fiction and not the other way around. I describe the Neo-Carnapian effects on ontology regarding the traditional way of describing fictionalism, in order to motivate how fictionalism needs to be reframed as a quietist position, in section III. Then, in section IV, I put forward my proposed quietist version of fictionalism and describe how this combination works, differentiating it from antirealist fictionalism. Sections V-VII outline common features of fictionalisms to show how the Neo-Carnapian satisfies them despite being quietist rather than traditionally antirealist. I distinguish between the hermeneutic and revolutionary fictionalisms in section VIII, and will conclude with an overview of the Neo-Carnapian position and its allies.

I. Yablo's path through fictionalism.

In chapter 1 section I.iii, I presented Quine's critique of Carnap that the notion of a linguistic framework needs an *analytic/synthetic* distinction. Yablo responded to this critique and argued that one does not need to hold that the rules making up linguistic frameworks are analytic in order to be able to understand the idea that some ways of talking can be adopted for merely practical reasons. Yablo defends Carnap by calling for a change in how frameworks are understood, and in this chapter I follow Yablo's suggestion and redefine frameworks as fictions, inspired by his replacement of the *internal/external* with a *metaphorical/literal* distinction which can be made independently of the *analytic/synthetic* distinction. Yablo says we should think of this distinction as between assertions in make-believe fictional games[177] and those outside of them:

> The usual charge against Carnap's internal/external distinction is one of 'guilt by association with the 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.[178]

We can easily free the internal/external distinction from the analytic/synthetic distinction once we remind ourselves of the purpose and role of Carnap's original distinction in the first place. The internal was meant to provide a way in which we can assert a sentence S (which will become true relative to the framework it is internal to), without presupposing or requiring an answer as to whether S is really true (external to the framework). The internal/external distinction was put

---

[177] For Currie (1990 p18-22), the authors of fiction produce phrases partly with an intention shared by their readers to make-believe the propositions expressed by those phrases, so make-belief is the attitude towards fiction. This is in line with my position.
[178] Yablo (1998) p229

forward as a way of saving our internal assertions from being bound by external truth-values, so that we may freely assert for purely pragmatic purposes instead. Yablo describes the enterprise of utilizing language for its pragmatic features rather than its truth-value (which is, by the way, a traditional fictionalist enterprise – see section V.iv) as such:

> Now, what is our usual word for an enterprise where sentences are put at the service of something other than their usual truth-conditions, by people who may or may not believe them, in a disciplined but defeasible way? It seems to me that our usual word is 'make-believe game'.[179]

These make-believe games are what I will take as fictions. The same analogy can be made for fictions, since in fictional contexts we make assertions internally to fiction without a care for whether the assertions are true independent of the fiction (and sometimes we even know them to be false). This is much like how Carnap wishes ordinary language to be utilized internal to linguistic frameworks – carefree of independent external truth-values (since Carnap is quiet about such values). The parallel between Yablo's proposed distinction and the internal/external distinction is also made clear with regard to the meaninglessness of questioning truth external to frameworks or make-believe games:

> Numerical calculation does not answer to external facts about numbers for the same reason that players of tag don't see themselves as answerable to game-independent facts about who is really 'IT'; just as apart from the game there is no such thing as being 'IT', apart from the framework there is no such thing as being 'the sum of seven and five'.[180]

---

[179] Yablo (1998) p243

[180] Yablo (1998) p240. A parallel here to fictional works is that it would be meaningless to question something from within the fiction in an external manner, i.e. 'Does Sherlock smoke a pipe externally to the Holmes stories?'. So, questioning external to frameworks is just as meaningless as questioning external to fictions.

When we speak of numbers and make numerical calculations we are not committed to the ontological reality of numbers, just like when we are involved in a game or in a fiction we are not committed to the reality of what we are make-believing about. Here the analogy is clear between the game (or fiction) and Carnap's frameworks, with regard to what is external to them – being external to the fiction or framework is to be external to where the game or language gets its meaning. As such, in Yablo's words, there is 'no such thing' as the game- (or fiction-) or framework- independent realm. So the realm independent of the game (or fiction) becomes as inaccessible and meaningless as the external is for Carnap. It is as meaningless to ask the external question of whether the sum of seven and five is *really* twelve independent of the number framework as it is to ask if I am *really* 'IT' independent of the game of IT.

These make-believe games, or fictions, are chosen in much the same way as Carnap proposes to choose frameworks: by being the most 'apt' or having the most 'cognitive promise'.[181] So here is yet another analogy between frameworks and fictions. Fictions can thus be used in place of frameworks to make Carnap's quietist point without reference to analyticity. The analytic rules that were problematic according to Quine are replaced by presuppositions of fiction. The fictions are generated by these presuppositions, whose status is such that we choose not to question them. The principles of generation of fictions are those things that are treated as not up-for-grabs, like presuppositions and like how we ought to treat frameworks. If we simply presuppose the framework, then things will follow from that framework's rules, much like when we presuppose a fiction with a story that follows. The Carnapian now has no need for analyticity in their internal/external distinction or in their formulation of a framework as there is no special status of rules – they just have things following from presuppositions so the rules themselves are the presuppositions. See sections VI-VII for more on presupposition.

---

[181] Yablo (2005) p101

However the Quinean may still be able to object here. The Quinean objection to this presupposition may well be that a 'presupposition' is just another name for an analytic framework rule, and Quine's critique will apply equally as well to these. The Quinean may argue that there is nothing special about being a 'presupposition' – in the context of theorizing we will sometimes find ourselves altering these in the light of evidence too. So the special status of presuppositions (as being things that are taken on and unquestioned) may be attacked by the Quinean, as anything is open to questioning in light of such evidence. However, the Carnapian can respond to this by pointing out that in fictional works the presuppositions are not presented as attempting to get the facts about the fiction-independent reality right, and so this is why we do not question such presuppositions. Sometimes in fiction we even know the presuppositions to be false. Thus the special status of the unquestioned presuppositions is due to the presuppositions not being the type of thing that we care to question since they were not in the job of representing the fiction-independent reality in the first place (and hence are not altered or questioned due to evidence from this reality).

So in answer to Quine's problematic question of what a framework is if not identified by analytic framework rules, Yablo argues that they are make-believe games, which I will construe as fictions. My idea is to interpret Carnapian linguistic frameworks *as fictions*, inspired by Yablo's construal of the internal/external distinction being made with regard to make-believe games in order to show that it is free of the analytic/synthetic distinction. Just as there were frameworks for each type of entity (the 'thing' framework and the 'number' framework etc.), so there will now be a fiction for each type of entity. When we utilize number-talk, for instance, we employ the number fiction, and our numerical calculations will be as ontologically un-committing as the assertions made within fictional contexts are. Our employing of fictions is metaphysically insignificant, and is only evidence of us finding that

fiction as practical to employ in order to speak of the entities internal to that fiction. Just as we *presuppose a fiction* without taking it on in a metaphysically serious way, we now *presuppose linguistic frameworks.*

This fictionalist position arises as a natural progression from Yablo's critique of Quine's critique of Carnap, and is pitched by Yablo (2001) as a strong possibility in escaping ontological commitment from language usage. Yablo puts forward a version of fictionalism as an alternative to the Quinean method of paraphrasing away the dispensable non-literal talk (as Yablo disagrees that such paraphrase is possible – see chapter 1 section III. These methods come from Quine's menu[182] – see chapter 2 section II page 91). This alternative is required to avoid commitment to the non-literal, and the fictionalist proposal provides a fictional non-committal context as a contrast to the scientific context in which we take talk ontologically seriously. So it helps the Carnapian explain their non-committal use of language, but most importantly allows them to escape Quine's critique by redefining frameworks independently of the analytic/synthetic distinction. Yablo gives further motivation as such:

> At one time the rationale for fictionalism was obvious. We had, or thought we had, good philosophical arguments to show that X's did not exist... X's were obnoxious, so we had to find an interpretation of our talk that did not leave us committed to them. That form of argument is dead and gone, it seems to me... But there is another possible rationale for fictionalism. Just maybe, it gives the most plausible account of the practice.[183]

---

[182] Yablo (2001) p72. In chapter 2 sections II and VII, I argued that we dismiss Quine's menu in opting for a Meinongian option which dissolves the predicament that leads to the menu. Here I now motivate the fictionalist menu option, but this is not in place of the Meinongian option, rather it's an untraditional *quiet fictionalism* that is compatible with the *quiet Meinongianism* that I put forward in chapter 2. It retains the truth of our talk in a Meinongian way, whilst judging the talk on its usefulness in a fictionalist way. In being *quietist*, the fictionalism and Meinongianism become deflated and compatible. I discuss their compatibility and reconciliation in the Conclusion chapter of this thesis.
[183] Yablo (2001) p87

I agree that fictionalism can be motivated without appealing to the non-existence of the 'obnoxious' entities, as I believe that such an antirealist rationale can be met by quietism instead (see section V.i). However, unlike Yablo, I put forward fictionalism as being prescriptive, rather than descriptive, and so my rationale for fictionalism will not be that it provides 'the most plausible account of the practice' but that it provides the most plausible account of how we *ought* to treat the practice (see section VIII). So now that the Neo-Carnapian takes frameworks to be fictions, are they then to be seen as fictionalists? I aim to show that they are. First, I will address how Neo-Carnapian metaontology effects the traditional understanding of what it is to be a fictionalist, before then describing what a Neo-Carnapian *quietist* account of fictionalism is like.

II. The priority of 'meta'.

As Yablo states, one rationale for fictionalism is that it provides the best account of our discourse, by seeing it as being fictional. It then remains to be said what it is to treat a discourse *as fictional*, and what being *fictional* is like. This may require looking to the metaphysics of fiction in order to understand the fictionalist position in terms of fiction, so that the role of 'fiction' in fictionalism is analogous to that in fictional works. Otherwise, if fictionalism is not based on the metaphysics of fiction, then is 'fictionalism' really the correct name for the position once all similarity with fictional works is lost? As Bourne notes, "some of the most distinctive aspects of paradigm 'fictionalisms' do not themselves have much to do with fiction"[184], yet for Bueno, only "fictionalism based on the metaphysics of fiction is 'truly fictionalist'."[185] Sainsbury's book *Fiction and Fictionalism* is dedicated to this issue, in order to clarify how much of fiction there really is in philosophical fictionalist positions.

---

[184] Bourne (2012) p2
[185] Bueno (2009) p59

Sainsbury's plan is "to get straight about the metaphysics of fiction before discussing fictionalism, to see how one affects the other"[186], and he concludes that the fictionalist should ensure that their ontological motivations match up with their metaphysics of fiction (so if their fictionalism is motivated by antirealism, then they ought to be an antirealist about fictional entities). Here I will argue that the strategy of looking to the metaphysics of fiction first is the wrong starting point, especially as a quietist who denies meaning to metaphysics. I will argue that the correct direction is to do the metaontology first and this will then tell you what you can say about the metaphysics of fiction (so, I propose to look to our fictionalism before our fictions). Just as getting one's metametaphysics clear will clarify one's metaphysics, likewise getting one's metaontology clear will clarify one's ontology. With an understanding of our metaontological position *of fictionalism*, we can then understand our ontological position *on fiction*. So we clarify meta-X before clarifying X. In this sense, we can say that 'meta' has priority.

A Carnapian quietist denies the meaningfulness of the debate between realists and antirealists, for all things X. Included in the quietist's list of rejected debates, then, is the debate over whether fictional entities really exist. Hence, the Neo-Carnapian, as a quietist, cannot be motivated by an account of the metaphysics of fiction, as the Neo-Carnapian denies the meaningfulness of the debates over the metaphysics of fiction. The entire debate surrounding the metaphysics of fiction (whether to be a realist or antirealist about fictional entities) is faulty according to the Neo-Carnapian. Thus they cannot apply the results of that debate to inform their fictionalism, rather they apply their quietism to *that* debate in rejecting it. The metaphysics (of fiction) does not influence the metametaphysics (of quietist fictionalism), as the direction of entailment is the other way round. One should start with the most foundational or fundamental level of inquiry – that of

---

[186] Sainsbury (2010) p205

metametaphysics (where quietism is adopted) – and let those results impact the metaphysics in turn. Given what sort of metaontology you buy into will prescribe what sort of ontology you will consider yourself as being able to do, and since the Neo-Carnapian buys into quietism, this entails that they cannot take a metaphysical ontological stand on any type of thing X (including fictions). Therefore, I propose that we look to our metaontology first (that of quietist fictionalism) and this will influence our ontology (on fictions). The Neo-Carnapian cannot look to their metaphysics of fiction to inform their fictionalism, as their fictionalism is metaphysically quiet. The Neo-Carnapian therefore is quiet about the ontology of fiction, and their fictionalism will be related to fictions in senses other than ontological status (see sections V-VII).

An understanding of fictions was meant to help us in understanding fictionalism, but as we have seen this is not the case when your fictionalism is motivated by a metametaphysical view like quietism. The fictionalism here will motivate what we can say about fictional entities, and not the other way around. The Neo-Carnapian cannot look to the realist/antirealist debate in the metaphysics of fiction to help elucidate their fictionalism (as they stay quiet on this debate), but they can look to other aspects of fiction that do not depend on their reality to clarify what they mean by a fiction.[187] Fictionalisms can draw on these ideas about fiction, such as ideas on truth in fiction, and belief in fiction, which are discussed in sections VI and VII respectively. I distinguish antirealist fictionalism from quietist fictionalism in section IV, providing their similar fictionalist features in section V which will demonstrate how the term 'fictionalism' is appropriately fitting for the Neo-Carnapian. But first, in order to motivate why fictionalism requires divorcing from antirealism, I show how Neo-Carnapian metaontology affects how we traditionally describe fictionalism in an ontological way.

---

[187] What happens when this fictionalist is fictional *about fictions*? Simply, fictionalism about fictions is just a fiction within a fiction. I do not spend time giving an account of fiction here, rather I just see fictional works as fictions within fictional frameworks.

III. Antirealist fictionalism.

An antirealist in the traditional ontological sense, according to Carnap's model, is just someone who answers the external question with a 'no' (and thus does not adopt the framework that governs that particular entity). But someone who does not adopt the framework for an entity X cannot take any stance on X at all for they cannot meaningfully speak of X without its framework. Therefore traditional antirealism is no longer considered a viable position (see Introduction chapter section IV.ii). Traditionally, fictionalism is motivated by antirealism:[188] "The typical motivation for fictionalism is ontological."[189] But fictionalism cannot be so understood as antirealist anymore given that antirealism is at best meaningless and at worst an impossible position to hold. Fictionalism must then be removed from any antirealist foundation. Since I follow Carnap in rejecting the external question (EQ), rather than concluding that Carnap's metaontology rules out fictionalism I will instead show that the traditional way of formulating fictionalism is faulty and will put forward my own Neo-Carnapian type of fictionalism[190] with quietist foundations. The divorce of fictionalism from antirealism, and the new combination of fictionalism with quietism, is discussed in section IV.

[188] Such traditional fictionalists that are motivated by antirealism include Leng (2010) on mathematics, Joyce (2001) on morality, van Fraassen (1980) on scientific theories, Field (1980) also on mathematics, Rosen (1990) on possible worlds, Brock (2002) on fictional entities, Kroon (2001) on temporal parts, and Yablo (2000) on abstract entities. These are in contrast to the likes of Eklund (2005) who suggests that we can be indifferent towards ontology whilst utilizing a way of talking, Jay (2011) who puts forward a realist fictionalism, and agnostic fictionalists like Bueno (2009) for example. These *agnostic* fictionalists like Bueno (2009) would be similar to my Neo-Carnapian quietist fictionalism in spirit but would be different in motivation. Bueno's view is also Neo-Meinongian, and so has similarities to my view in chapter 2. The Neo-Meinongian is actually *similar* to the fictionalist since they both take discourses at face value, and the discourses are useful and in some sense true without being about existent things. I thus take fictionalism and Meinongianism to be *compatible* together with quietism too. I will discuss their compatibility further in the Conclusion chapter of this thesis.
[189] Eklund (2005) p558
[190] One way of articulating fictionalism *internal* to a Carnapian model that I have not considered is as such: within a framework, an entity X is described to not exist (by not instantiating the existence predicate). This *internal* fictionalist could say they want to talk *as if* X instantiates the existence predicate for its usefulness in doing so. I do not think this works since there would be no use in mis-describing X, as opposed to just changing to a more useful framework where X *does* instantiate the existence predicate.

Traditional fictionalists hold that it is acceptable to say (1) 'there is a prime between 2 and 4' as an answer to the internal question (IQ), even though they strictly regard this answer as false given that they too say (2) 'numbers do not exist' as an answer to the external question (EQ). However, since the Carnapian rejects this metaphysical understanding of the EQ as meaningless, the traditional fictionalist position cannot be meaningfully formed. One could not answer the EQ because to do so is meaningless unless construed as the acceptance of a framework, and so in answering the EQ negatively the traditional fictionalist makes a meaningless claim and does not accept the language framework within which they would then go on to answer the IQ. In denying the EQ they deny the applicability of the IQ, and as such say meaningless things.

What distinguishes fictionalism from other antirealist positions is that the fictionalist continues to utilize the discourse of the entity that they deny the existence of *for its usefulness*. So traditionally, fictionalists *do* adopt the framework for an entity X (by talking about X) even though they answer the EQ 'no' by being antirealist about X. This now does not make sense on the Carnapian picture, since answering the EQ 'no' is to not adopt the framework. The traditional fictionalist about mathematics for instance, is antirealist since they deny that there are objects in their ontology that are numbers, but is distinguished by further saying we should still talk 'as if' there are objects in the ontology that are numbers since it is useful. This fictionalist therefore encounters some tension in their double standards between what they believe and how they talk.[191] So, they strictly answer the EQ negatively (that there are no such things existing to which their talk refers to, and so are antirealist about those things) but continue talking about such things for its use so pretend to answer the EQ positively. They talk like a realist without being a realist.

---

[191] This double standard is conveyed in sayings like 'wanting their cake and eating it too', 'talking with the vulgar and thinking with the learned' (Berkeley), 'philosophical double talk which repudiates an ontology whilst simultaneously enjoying its benefits' (Quine 1960 p242). But this double standard is blurred if the EQ is seen as pragmatic.

This is not an attractive way of being a fictionalist since it motivates a certain type of dishonesty. I put forward the Neo-Carnapian Quietist way as a better way of construing fictionalism, as it will not require such phenomenologically problematic and dishonest double standards. This is because the Neo-Carnapian will stay quiet with regard to the EQ, and will simply have *one* attitude towards the thing in question which will be in answer to the IQ. (Although they will answer the pragmatic EQ positively so as to adopt the framework for its practical utility).[192] For the Neo-Carnapian to be classed as fictionalist whilst maintaining their quietism will require fictionalism to be divorced from antirealism, which I will now go on to describe in section IV. Section V will motivate how this quietist fictionalism is continuous enough with traditional fictionalism to be deserving of the name fictionalism. Having motivated that Neo-Carnapian metaontology affects traditional fictionalism, I will now show what a Neo-Carnapian account of fictionalism would be like.

IV. Quietist version of fictionalism.

Carnap's motivation for his quietism was to allow people to speak as they feel is useful without the constraint of ontological commitments, in order to be tolerant of free speech without ontological scruples getting in the way. This description of Carnap makes him sound very much like a fictionalist indeed – the value of language as being useful independent of existence, and to have the freedom of speech (talking like a realist) without being ontologically committed to the things that you talk about (not being a realist). These typical characteristics of fictionalism, such as the value of discourse as being useful and the lack of ontological commitment to what we speak of, will be discussed in the next section V.

---

[192] This seems to trivialize/simplify quiet fictionalism, as it encompasses anyone who speaks of an entity X and has adopted the X-framework for its usefulness. Fictionalism does not describe any particular way of being other than talking in a way that is useful. This is in line with my aims to show that the position is *global* and applies to *everyone*.

Despite the fictionalist features in Carnap, Yablo[193] states that Carnap would have most likely resisted the comparison between his quietism and fictionalism, since Carnap is trying to defend ordinary internal talk which people do not consider as being fictional. However I believe that Carnap's quietism can be helpfully re-interpreted as a type of fictionalism, and that Yablo's concern is misguided, given the distinction between hermeneutic and revolutionary fictionalism that I will describe in section VIII. Given that the ordinary inquirer that Carnap is trying to defend may not consider their talk as being fictional, I would prefer not to impute so much error into their ways and so will be opting for revolutionary fictionalism which states how we *ought* to treat the discourse rather than how we *do* treat it.[194] Carnap may also have denied any likening to fictionalism due to the traditional association of fictionalism with antirealism – an unviable ontological position to a Carnapian quietist. But by the end of this chapter I will have given an account of how fictionalism need not depend on antirealism and can be considered as a quietist position, thus being acceptable to a Carnapian.

The Neo-Carnapian construes frameworks as fictions, and is quiet about the area outside of them (the metaphysical external reality). The Neo-Carnapian is not a fictionalist about this external reality, and so does not treat talk of external reality as fictional. Rather the fictionalism manifests with the idea that all our internal talk is internal to fictions, and is therefore presented as a way of construing the frameworks *as fictions*. Given that Carnapian quietism is global, so will the fictionalism be global,[195] as all frameworks will be considered as fictions. Therefore,

---

[193] Yablo (1998) p243

[194] Standardly revolutionary fictionalism is described as imputing *more* error than hermeneutic, since hermeneutic fictionalists say that people already are talking in a fictionalist way (and so are not getting anything wrong in how they speak). However, I regard the error in hermeneutic as greater than that in revolutionary. See section VIII.

[195] This global aspect distinguishes the Neo-Carnapian from traditional fictionalisms about certain entities or discourses, like morality (Joyce 2001), science (van Fraassen 1980), mathematics (Field 1980), possible worlds (Rosen 1990), fictional characters (Brock 2002), temporal parts (Kroon 2001), and abstracta (Yablo 2000), for example.

this is a fictionalist way of dismissing all EQ's concerning what really exists, and treating all IQ's as relative to fictions. All talk is fictional and the contrast class is lost. All frameworks are treated as fictions, and sentences can be true or false internally to them. Internal talk is thus truth-evaluable from a quietist point of view, and what makes the talk true or false is the fiction, rather than any external reality. So the IQ 'is there a prime between 2 and 4?' is a fictional question, and when one answers that 3 is a prime number they are answering according to the mathematics fiction. Talk of 3 will not be about the number 3 externally, as this is meaningless. If our talk about numbers is not about numbers in the external world, then we may ask what *it is* about, and my version of fictionalism says that it is about the mathematics fiction, referring[196] to things in that fiction. Sentences will be made true in an internal sense in virtue of fiction presuppositions, like Carnap's frameworks had rules for usage which made sentences true or false according to it. All truth becomes relativized to fiction, and as Currie explains, what is true in the fiction is "what is part of the story."[197] (See section V.iii and VI). I now describe how quiet fictionalism compares to traditional fictionalism.

V. Traditional features of fictionalisms.

Traditional fictionalism, as defined in section III, tends to be based on antirealist foundations. The antirealist aspect of traditional fictionalism plays an important role in motivating the fictionalist ideology of using a discourse for its usefulness. It is influenced by the idea that one cannot speak truthfully of an entity X unless X exists, and so if X is non-existent then any discourse purporting to refer to X will be false. The fictionalist move is to then continue to utilize this discourse even though it is false, *because it is useful*. The fictionalist motivation is thus derived as such:

---

[196] Against my view, Currie (1990 p180) argues that fictional terms do not refer *at all.*
[197] Currie (1990) p56. In his 1990 Currie clarifies that to be true in the story it must be reasonable for the informed reader to infer that the fictional author believed it. (p80)

Antirealism: Xs do not exist.

Predicament: If Xs do not exist then Xs cannot truthfully be spoken of.

Error theory: X-discourse is false, so we are in error when speaking of X.

Pragmatism: X-discourse is valued as useful, despite being false.

Traditional fictionalisms are united in the following common features: (i) antirealism; (ii) the predicament; (iii) error theory; (iv) pragmatism; (v) involving something less than absolute truth; and (vi) involving something less than belief. The truth involved in (v) can be relative truth, or true under a presupposition, discussed in section VI. The attitude involved in (vi) can be acceptance, where we accept what is presupposed and believe what it derives, discussed in section VII. I will go through each of the common features in turn to show how the motivation for fictionalism is somewhat undermined as a quietist, yet how quietism can still maintain the ideology of fictionalism in many ways. The positive component of fictionalism (that discourse is valued as useful) is retained by the Neo-Carnapian, despite lacking the negative component (of antirealism). And hence the Neo-Carnapian is fictionalist.

V.i. Antirealism.

The typical motivation for traditional fictionalisms is ontological, namely to be an antirealist but talk like a realist, so that one may reap the benefits of the discourse without "paying an ontological bill".[198] A traditional fictionalist about a type of entity X claims that X is like a fictional entity in being *unreal*, and so we are ontologically uncommitted to the fictional claims about X. Fictionalism is thus traditionally antirealist because statements about X are considered fictional and X is considered unreal rather than factual and real. Despite being antirealist in theory, this fictionalist appears as a realist in

---

[198] Woodward (2008) 274

practice, because in practice they use the language as they would if they were realist for its practical advantages. However, the fictionalist need not be realist in practice all of the time as they may assert their antirealist beliefs in critical contexts. The defining aspect of the fictionalist is that they adopt a fiction some of the time in order to continue using a realist-like discourse despite their antirealist beliefs, so as to talk without ontological commitment to something they count as unreal. The discourse is seen as useful so that dispensing of it due to antirealism is not preferable. The fictionalist thus engages in realist talk in the form of a fiction so as to speak without ontological commitment.

Despite taking antirealism to be meaningless, the Neo-Carnapian may still fulfill a good proportion of the fictionalist ideology by arguing for the value of utilizing a discourse without ontological commitment, by being ontologically quiet (rather than by being antirealist). They would thus also pay no ontological bill when talking in a useful, realist-like, way. The Carnapian has no ontological commitments[199] since they are quiet about ontology, and so like an antirealist fictionalist they can talk about all sorts of things without being ontologically committed to the things talked about. The role antirealism plays in fictionalism (to refrain from ontological commitments) can thus be successfully performed by quietism, demonstrating that the Neo-Carnapian can be construed as a fictionalist despite rejecting antirealism and being quietist instead. All commitments to a metaphysical reality are merely apparent, and so all discourses have the same status as fictional discourses. The status of the fictional discourse is not antirealist (since this is meaningless for the Neo-Carnapian) but rather is non-committal ontologically, which is what quietism provides. The Neo-Carnapian therefore still fulfills the role played by antirealism in fictionalism with their quietism, and so can be said to retain the fictionalist rationale of adopting a discourse for its practical utility without paying ontological bills for how they talk.

---

[199] But they do have *quiet* internal existential commitments from the predicate 'exists'.

V.ii. Predicament.

The 'Predicament' says 'If Xs do not exist then Xs cannot truthfully be spoken of'. This can be split into two parts: (1) 'If Xs do not exist then a domain of quantification cannot contain Xs'; and (2) 'If the domain of quantification does not contain Xs then Xs cannot truthfully be spoken of'. In chapter 2 I attacked part (1) of this predicament,[200] since I argued in a Meinongian way that domains need not be restricted to existents, and so quantification is ontologically neutral. I concluded that there is no entry requirement of existence to be included in a domain, and anything that we talk of (existent or non-existent) can be in a domain.

The Neo-Carnapian therefore undercuts the motivation for traditional fictionalism from antirealism, since not only is antirealism not a viable position but also this antirealism would not lead to the conclusion that our discourse is false (due to the Meinongian aspect dismissing the predicament – see chapter 2 p91). The connection between antirealism and error theory, via this predicament, is broken, since not-existing does not entail not-being-in-a-domain, so not-existing does not entail not-being-able-to-be-truthfully-or-meaningfully-spoken-of. Regardless of whether antirealism is true, then, we cannot get to error theory since the predicament that connects them is rejected. In this way, is seems Meinongianism is incompatible with fictionalism, as the Meinongian allows for talk of non-existents to be *true* by allowing them in domains, yet the fictionalist explains why talk of non-existents is *false* by treating them as fictions. However under quietism they *are compatible*, since truth and falsity is *internal*. The Neo-Carnapian is a quietist Meinongian, yet can still be fictionalist by adopting a discourse for its usefulness rather than its *external* truth. More on this in the Conclusion chapter.

---

[200] I do not attack the second part of this predicament, since to allow for truthful talk without reference to *anything* is to allow for empty domains, like in free logics.

The very point of Neo-Carnapian Quietism is to retain our ability to speak about things regardless of their ontological status, as we are to be quiet about this status, yet it need not follow that we then stop talking about things altogether. The point was to be able to continue to talk in a useful way without ontological constraint, but it was not the case that without the ontology the talk is automatically false. This is very much in tension with the fictionalist 'Predicament' that without entity X existing the X-discourse will be faulty in some way, and in need of rescuing on the grounds of it still being useful. However in denying that existence has any effect on a truth evaluation we need not conclude that a discourse is faulty just because its terms do not refer to existent things. So having denied antirealism and the 'Predicament', we then lack the error that motivates traditional fictionalism. Without this predicament, there is no entailment from antirealism to error theory, and without reason to be in error there is no reason to be a fictionalist. The error, according to traditional fictionalism, was due to antirealism, with the predicament making the connection. In order for the Neo-Carnapian to be a fictionalist then they will need to arrive at their error theory independently of the predicament and the antirealism that they deny.[201]

V.iii. Error theory.

The traditional fictionalist, motivated by an antirealism that leads the discourse about X to be untrue (under the 'Predicament'), will state that the discourse user is in error, and as such antirealist fictionalism is based on an error theory. If all of the X-discourse is untrue, then when we use it to make positive claims about X we say something false. The

---

[201] Some fictionalists deny the connection between the discourse being false and being in error about the discourse, since they take it that speaking in fictional terms does not always involve being in error: Joyce (2001) p197 "When a child make-believes that the upturned table is a ship, she is *thinking* the proposition 'the table is a ship'... without believing that proposition. The proposition is, of course, false, but we could not on that account accuse the child of any error". Thanks to Stephen Ingram for this.

discourse user may be in error also in one of two ways: (1) by believing their discourse is true when it is false; or (2) by treating the discourse in a realist way rather than an antirealist/fictional way. So, speakers can be in error by believing their talk of X to be true when it is actually false, or by using X-talk in a realist way when they ought to be or are unknowingly using the term for entity X in a fictional way. According to the traditional antirealist fictionalist, under the mistaken 'Predicament', if Xs do not exist then all our positively quantified talk of X is false. Our *discourse* is in error (by being false), and the *discourse user* is in error (by believing it to be true or at least by not believing that it is fictional). It is these two stages of error that then motivates the fictionalist to find something positive about the discourse to allow us to still be justified in using it, *despite the error*. The error theory thus motivates pragmatism.

As shown above, the Neo-Carnapian does not get to error theory from antirealism, since they reject antirealism and the predicament that links it to error theory. However the Neo-Carnapian still locates error in the discourse user. The Neo-Carnapian thus fulfills this criterion for being a fictionalist by locating the error in language users either by thinking they are speaking about the external world (but actually they are being metaphysically quiet), or by not treating linguistic frameworks as fictions. Their error is in believing realism to be true and thinking they are speaking in a realist way accordingly, or by not acknowledging frameworks as fictions. (The differences between attributions of error will be discussed further in section VIII which describes two types of fictionalism, hermeneutic and revolutionary, which attribute these different types of errors to their users of the fictional discourse.)

The Neo-Carnapian can thus retain the error theory aspect of fictionalism by treating ordinary discourse users as being in error in some way. But as shown above, the traditional fictionalist also treats

the *discourse itself* as being in error, not just the *discourse user*, since the discourse itself will be false. The Neo-Carnapian can too here meet this fictionalist criterion, if being 'in error' is just being *'not externally true',* since the frameworks themselves will *not* be externally true (yet this does not make them *false* as for the Neo-Carnapian being externally true or false is meaningless). The Neo-Carnapian treats the frameworks themselves as non-cognitive because they are to be adopted for purely pragmatic reasons and are not based on external truth. Given the rejection of external truth, the frameworks have nothing to be true according to, and so they are not externally true (or false). So the discourse itself can also be seen to be 'not externally true' on the Neo-Carnapian model. The difference is *the reason* for it not being externally true, as it is not due to being externally *false* but due to not being externally *truth-apt*. The Neo-Carnapian therefore also fulfils the error theory aspect of traditional fictionalism, making it worthy of the title.

The Neo-Carnapian hence distinguishes between internal truth (true according to the internal rules of the framework) and external Truth (with a capital T, Truth in the external metaphysical realm). The traditional fictionalist takes the discourse in question to be in error by not being *True*. Such fictionalists talk about 'true in the fiction' for what the Neo-Carnapian calls 'internal truth', so the traditional fictionalist view is that a claim such as 2+2=4 is not True, but is true in the fiction. The Neo-Carnapian proposal is to call 'true in the fiction' simply 'true', and to reject the meaningfulness of Truth talk (as this is meaningless by being external and independent of the frameworks). So the Neo-Carnapian follows the traditional fictionalist in saying that claims within a framework are true in the sense of being 'true in the fiction', but rejects the assumption behind such fictionalism that there is a value of Truth that goes beyond that. So, like the traditional *non-global* fictionalist, the Neo-Carnapian rejects the Truth of these claims, but unlike the non-global fictionalist, they do not think *any* discourse

meets the external Truth standard. So all that is left is the fictionalist assessment of the pragmatic value (see next section V.iv) of speaking in a particular way that does not appeal to Truth – this value is usefulness.

V.iv. Pragmatism.

A key positive aspect of being a fictionalist about an entity X is that X-talk does not have to be literally or externally True in order to be valuable. In terms of the antirealist fictionalist, X-talk will actually be False, yet they retain X-talk as it is still useful to speak *as if* X exists. The ideology here is that literal external Truth is not the *only* value to discourse, and usefulness is a value that does not depend on such Truth. Fictional discourse is considered useful, and so the fictionalist about X can say that discourse about X is fictional, and is useful, regardless of whether X exists which entails whether X-talk is True (according to the 'Predicament'). A discourse about X can be classed as valuable simply for being useful, and this is the fictionalist's pragmatic ideology, which I believe the Neo-Carnapian can fulfill. It is this positive pragmatism of fictionalism that I believe is the most important aspect to retain.

Despite the Neo-Carnapian rejecting the 'Predicament' (that non-existence implies false discourse) due to their Meinongian aspect, they still agree that a discourse can be valued as being simply useful. The Neo-Carnapian meets this fictionalist criterion by holding that the frameworks we speak within are useful to employ as a whole even though they are not Truth-evaluable as a whole. The reason they are not Truth-evaluable as a whole is because in order to be so they would have to be evaluated by something outside of those frameworks, which is an external realm to language that the quietist denies and states is meaningless. Therefore, the Neo-Carnapian is fictionalist about a

discourse that on the whole is not *Truth-apt*, whereas the antirealist fictionalist takes the discourse to be not *True* (and thus False). The Carnapian frameworks are considered as useful to utilize their language within, and so they are fictional and have value independent of Truth. Furthermore, the discourse internal to the fictional framework is useful despite not being based on an existing external reality to make it True, and so the discourse is valued as useful independent of whether it is based on metaphysically existent things. So the Neo-Carnapian, like the traditional fictionalist, maintains that the discourse in question does not refer to existing things in the metaphysical realm. For the Neo-Carnapian this is because such a realm is meaningless and for the traditional fictionalist this is because that realm does not contain the entities in question. Thus despite lacking the traditional route to pragmatism, the Neo-Carnapian still maintains the fictionalist ideology.

The Neo-Carnapian therefore picks up on the positive pragmatic element of fictionalism by saying the only virtue that *matters* (or even that there is) for evaluating a discourse is the pragmatic one. There is thus no need to find fault with the discourses, but rather, the Neo-Carnapian can provide a fictionalist account of what is valuable about them – namely their usefulness. The discourses in question have a value that is independent of their Truth, since for the Neo-Carnapian this Truth is external and thus meaningless and not relevant to the value of the discourses. This is enough to maintain the fictionalist pragmatic ideology to show how the Neo-Carnapian can be seen as a fictionalist. The Neo-Carnapian has therefore demonstrated their fictionalism by (i) maintaining the appeal to lack of ontological commitment (through quietism rather than antirealism); (ii) their attribution of error to the discourse and the discourse user (through it being quiet and not realist); and (iii) valuing a discourse for being useful (despite it not being True). I will now show how the Neo-Carnapian maintains fictionalist aspects in truth and belief in the next two sections VI-VII.

VI. Truth and Presupposition.

Fiction is often contrasted with fact, so that 'fictional' means something like 'False'. This is how the antirealist fictionalist treats fictions, in order to be ontologically *un*committed to the fictional statements and for the speaker to be in error. Traditionally speaking, the fiction is treated as overall to be unreal in some way. However, Currie has argued that "fictional works often contain true sentences"[202] and can reveal facts about reality, and so it may perhaps not be fitting to equate fiction completely with Falsity. This counts against the connection between the metaphysics of fiction and fictionalism, since the metaphysics of fiction shows that fictions are not strictly speaking entirely False or unreal, yet traditional fictionalism treats the 'fictional' discourse as being *entirely* False and unreal. This also counts against the analogy to fiction that a quietist fictionalist like the Neo-Carnapian can make, since they cannot compare what is true in the fiction to what is True in reality for they are quiet about such an external reality. Nevertheless, hopefully this shows that there is more of a connection between quietist fictionalism and the metaphysics of fiction than between antirealist fictionalism and the metaphysics of fiction, as the quietist does not demand fictions to be entirely false or unreal, but rather only demands that they not be judged on those features since they are quiet about such external facts.

When the Neo-Carnapian states that linguistic frameworks are to be treated as fictions, they do not mean that they should be treated as False or their objects seen as non-existent, (because to be evaluated as False would require an external Truth to assess the fiction against, and for their objects to be seen as non-existent is to be unquiet about reality). Rather, the Neo-Carnapian treats frameworks as fictions

---

[202] Currie (1990) p9. He argues against Lamarque and Olson (1994) that truth *is* a value in fiction, and that "[fictions] are sensitive to aspects of the real world." (2012 p23), and furthermore that "fictions... may lead indirectly to knowledge." (1998 p161)

because they are valued aside from their Truth. Furthermore, the Neo-Carnapian does not claim that fictions are not True and are therefore False, instead they claim that fictions are not True *or* False and thus are not Truth-apt. The frameworks for the Neo-Carnapian are therefore fictions that are not Truth-evaluable as a whole (as they are quiet about Truth), however the sentences that make up the fiction are capable of truth and falsity internally to the fiction. Absolute Truth is given up along with external reality, so the quietism extends its target from metaphysics to Truth. What remains is existence relative to fictional frameworks and truth relative to fictional frameworks. There can be nothing to be said to exist externally, and nothing to be said to be True absolutely. This is because to be True absolutely would mean to be true not relative to the framework but independently and externally, and thus delves into the meaningless external reality that quietists deny.

So how are sentences internal to a fictional framework meant to be true or false according to it?[203] Byrne explains that what we cannot do is simply read off what is true by what is stated (explicitly or entailed) in the fiction as this provides neither a necessary nor sufficient condition for truth according to a fiction.[204] The reasons given are that some things stated may be false (by an unreliable narrator, for instance), and not all truths are stated (because there are too many truths to state). The first of these worries may be put aside for the Neo-Carnapian, as there can be no way that the fiction states something that is false, as the falsity would have to come from an independent source of judgment, and all truth is relative to the fiction so what the fiction dictates is automatically what is true relative to that fiction. As for not all truths

---

[203] Problematic cases include sentences like 'Holmes is famous', which according to the Holmes fiction, it is false that he is famous (as in the story he is not famous), and according to 'real life' fiction, it is true that he is famous. This may be solved by just stipulating which fiction you mean or are speaking within, so that the sentence is assessed relative to whichever one is presupposed: false in novel fiction, true in real life fiction. Walton (1990) resolves this with cross-fictional games as extended fictions.
[204] Byrne (1993) p1

being stated, this is the incompleteness problem,[205] and again I believe this not to be a worry for the Neo-Carnapian as the only truths that may be assertable are going to be relative to a fiction and so there must be some fiction that states it otherwise it would not be classed as a truth. So, for all truths asserted, they are relative to a fiction which states it in some way, and no falsehoods will be stated by the fiction as this goes against the definition of relative truth that the Neo-Carnapian is working with. Of course, something can be false relative to a fiction, but that will be when the fiction states it *as being false* (according to the framework rules). The difference between what is stated and what is true in the fiction is more a problem for *literary fictions*, rather than the type of *fictionalism* in the Neo-Carnapian picture. This is because what I mean by fiction is simply what falls out of the sets of presuppositions and principles of generation and so the analogy breaks down and the problems faced by literary fictions are not faced by the Neo-Carnapian.

This fictionalist-style relative truth adopted by the Neo-Carnapian goes faithfully back to Carnap: the linguistic frameworks have rules for usage and meaning of the terms in that framework, where sentences about an entity X are internal to the X-framework and responsible only to that framework's rules of assertion, where 'true' is a label we apply to the sentences the rules let us assert. So, truth is relative to the frameworks (or fictions) rules. Sentences that are internal to the framework are then divided into the ones that become (i) trivialized (i.e. are true as a trivial consequence of the framework itself); and others that become (ii) empirical (or by being non-trivial consequences of the framework rules). If we have adopted a framework for the system of X, then the sentence 'there are Xs' says X exists internally to the X-framework and so is of the former category (trivial). More specific sentences however are not so trivial and fall into the latter category: they would be true or false empirically, or relative to the rules governed by the X-framework.

---

[205] Currie (1990 p54) calls it 'indeterminacy' as there are *indeterminate* parts of fiction.

The Neo-Carnapian will follow Carnap's approach to relative truth with regard to fictions in place of the frameworks, and will include the notion of presupposition to explain how people can assert the sentences truly (relative to a framework) without a prefix of 'according to the fiction it is true that...', for example. The presupposition is about the fiction, such that sentences in a fiction are true when they follow from the presupposition of that fiction. This is parallel to Sainsbury's[206] approach, to work under the presupposition of a fiction and see what is true relative to and according to it. No talk will be presupposition free, as all talk (in order to be meaningful) will be internal from within a fiction, and as such the fiction will be presupposed in order for the sentence to be asserted meaningfully by a speaker. The sentence will then be true if it is true relative to the fiction that has been presupposed.

In the context of the assertion, the presupposition itself is not up for debate, rather it serves much like a Carnapian framework against which various sentences are evaluated, some as true and some false.[207] This status of the presuppositions as not being up for debate was discussed in section I of this chapter, to show that in fictions the presuppositions are not the types of thing that we question in response to evidence (since the for the Neo-Carnapian there is no such evidence or external Truth to judge the presupposition against). So the Neo-Carnapian position involves relative truth instead of absolute Truth, where relative truth is like fidelity (to be faithful to the fiction presupposed) and is true under the presupposition of the fiction. (Such relativity was discussed in chapter 1 section IV where I argue that both Carnap and Quine ought to be considered as quiet relativists.) Next I discuss belief.

---

[206] Sainsbury (2010). Another parallel between Sainsbury's approach and mine is that, as Sainsbury notes, the notion of truth under a presupposition needs cashing out in more detail – Sainsbury provides no such cash, and neither do I. Instead I can defer to Yablo's account (2006, 2009, 2010, and 2014) where he has replaced games of make-believe with presuppositions and simply spells these out as being the things we take for granted in the process of evaluating a claim. (See Berto and Plebani (2015) p81).

[207] Sainsbury (2010) p146

VII. Belief and Assertion.

According to Sainsbury you do not believe what you presuppose, rather you may merely accept it.[208] Presupposition is distinct from pretense, as presupposition produces genuine assertions yet pretense *as pretending* produces utterances that are not to be taken as genuine assertions.[209] Once a presupposition is accepted, all sentences uttered under it are genuine. You do not pretend to assert the internal claims, as you mean and believe them to be true (relative to presuppositions of the fiction that they are internal to). Once you have accepted the presupposition of the fiction, you can assert and believe all the sentences that are made relative to it. The decision of whether to accept the fiction that will then be presupposed will be a choice of whether it is fruitful and conducive to the aim for which the language is intended (parallel to how Carnap's frameworks are chosen). The Neo-Carnapian will argue that we should accept the best fictions and adopt them as presuppositions which are not to be believed to be True or False, but rather we should believe what these fictions state as being true according to that fiction. This is a feature typical of fictionalists - that the fiction itself is not to be believed, but something less than belief, like acceptance. This acceptance and presupposition of the fiction is parallel to that found in fictional works, in order to work within and talk internally to that fiction.

There has to be a sharp distinction between acceptance and belief,[210] as the fictionalist can fully accept the fiction F without F-talk being True (and in the Neo-Carnapian case, without F-talk being Truth-apt), and so accepting F cannot be the same as believing F (as belief requires the

---

[208] Sainsbury (2010) p146

[209] Currie (1990 p13) agrees that pretense is not the correct attitude towards fictions.

[210] Cohen argues (1989) belief is thinking that something is likely to be true, whilst acceptance is taking it as a premise in one's reasoning without making a claim about its truth. Stalnaker (1973, 1974) treats acceptance as the appropriate attitude toward the stuff taken as presuppositions in conversation. These are in line with my proposal.

thing to be at least capable of truth). Furthermore, there must be a difference between the fictionalist acceptance of the fiction F and the realist belief in the theory T, otherwise there would be no way of spelling out what the difference is between something being true and something being useful. Without a sharp distinction here, as Horwich argues against Van Fraasen,[211] there is no way of distinguishing a realist attitude from a fictionalist attitude, and no way of demonstrating why the fictionalist's attitude falls short of belief and thus why they should fall short of being a realist. This could be used as an argument to try to show how the fictionalist is really a realist, since if we cannot merely accept without belief then our acceptance of a theory is to believe in that theory and to be a realist about that theory's entities. However, as argued in chapter 1 against Quine's I-realism, it is actually the case that arguments like this show how the realist is really best understood as a quietist fictionalist. If there is no difference between the quietist and the Quinean I-realist, the burden lies with the I-realist to say why their attitude is strong enough to derive ontology from it to be realist about.

But anyhow, the Neo-Carnapian *can* make the required distinction between acceptance and belief, in order to distinguish the quiet fictionalist attitude from that of the realist. Taking fiction F to be one of the frameworks accepted by the Neo-Carnapian, the sentence (1) 'F-talk is True' and the sentence (2) 'F-talk is useful' have different contents. This is because the fictionalist sees value in F-talk other than Truth, such as usefulness, which is independent of Truth, so that to be useful is not simply to be True and visa versa.[212] Therefore (1) and (2) are not equivalent because Truth and usefulness are distinct virtues. Fiction F is merely accepted, by being believed to be useful (but not being believed to be True), whereas the realist's theory T is believed and

---

[211] Horwich (2004) and van Fraasen (1980)

[212] Perhaps, however, the Neo-Carnapian conflates internal truth (with a non-capital t) with usefulness, since if the framework is adopted as useful then anything that comes out true relative to that framework is only true because of the frameworks usefulness.

conflates (1) and (2) which is precisely what the fictionalist denies. The Neo-Carnapian will deny (1) as it is meaningless, since a fictional framework cannot be said to be externally True or False but can only be said to be useful. Since usefulness is a value independent of Truth, according to the fictionalist, the Neo-Carnapian does not derive (1) from (2). Fiction F can be accepted as useful, but it cannot be assessed as True as this is meaningless. The Neo-Carnapian asserts and believes internal sentences of F (which can be true with a non-capital 't'), whilst only accepting Fs and not making assertions about Truth or belief in Fs.

So, to summarize, the rules of fictional frameworks (F) are not True or False, and they are non-cognitive.[213] They are to be *presupposed* so that internal statements are true or false *relative* to that presupposition which is itself not up for debate. The Neo-Carnapian can ask the IQ of whether it is true-in-F that there are Xs, and rejects the EQ about which F is objectively True. So, a sentence S is true-relative-to-a-fiction-F iff S is part of the content (or follows from the rules for meaning and usage) of F. Then there is no further question of whether S is True absolutely: all we can say is that S is true or false relative to this or that F, and that this F is more useful than that F*. Furthermore, I have argued that the Neo-Carnapian does not *believe* what they presuppose (the frameworks F), they just *accept* them. Then under that presupposition of F, things can be fully asserted and believed within F. We accept the Fs, but believe the sentences that are true relative to this presupposed F. This nearly completes my description of the Neo-Carnapian as a fictionalist, so all that is left is to describe if the position is revolutionary or hermeneutic fictionalism, and to defend this from a quietist viewpoint.

---

[213] Kalderon (2005a) helpfully distinguishes between non-cognitivism and non-factualism. Usually non-cognitivism is taken to mean not truth-apt and therefore is not fit to be believed, which is how I have used the term in this thesis. Yet Kalderon splits cognitivism to be about attitudes and factualism to be about truth, such that being truth-apt is to be factual and being believed is to be cognitive. Non-cognitivism should thus be taken to only mean 'not fit for belief', rather than conflated with being 'not truth-apt'. His fictionalism, unlike mine, is non-cognitivist and factualist. I thank Chris Jay for pointing this out to me and for helpful feedback on this chapter in general.

VIII. Hermeneutic and Revolutionary Fictionalism.

Fictionalism comes in two forms – Hermeneutic (HF) and Revolutionary (RF) – where the distinction between them lies in their claims about what we *do* and what we *ought* to do, respectively, when it comes to our use of a discourse. HF tells us that our talk is properly understood as fictional, whether we know it or not, whereas RF tells us that if we do not already talk in this fictional way then we should do. Fictionalism is meant to be, according to HF, the best explanation of our current usage of the language, and, according to RF, the best explanation of how we ought to use the language. I describe HF and RF and their problems, arguing non-traditionally that HF imputes *more error* than RF does.

VIII.i. Hermeneutic Fictionalism (HF).

HF says that there are good reasons to think that we are already engaging in a fiction, where we adopt a fictionalist attitude when using the language that is proposed to be fictional yet sounds realist. HF attempts to explain what it is that our seemingly realist utterances mean. HF argues that if no entity X exists to which our X-talk is meant to refer to, then the best explanation of X-talk is that it is fictional. According to one possible articulation of HF, what we really mean when we say 'abortion is wrong' is '*in the moral fiction*, abortion is wrong'. This is meant to be the best account of our language usage on the assumption that the discourse is false to begin with. HF is traditionally intended to avoid imputing error to the discourse user, as it claims that we are not in error when we say 'abortion is wrong' since we never meant it as an assertion of objective morality – it was relative to a moral fiction all along. However I will argue that there is still an unacceptable amount of error imputed to the discourse user by HF, more so than RF.

HF, like RF, is traditionally motivated by antirealism. HF tells us that as language users we already have employed a fiction as there are no facts for our language to refer to. If HF and antirealism about a type of entity X are true, then when we engage in X-talk we engage in a fiction of X, whether we are aware of the latter engagement or not. If we are *not* aware of our fictional engagement then we are wrong about our own beliefs as we did not know that we were referring to a fiction – this option I call 'the fictionalist in error'. If we *are* aware of our fictional engagement then we *do* know that when we make a seemingly realist claim we do not really mean it – this option I call 'the self-conscious fictionalist'. I will now argue that both of these options of knowing and not knowing about our use of a fiction are unlikely and undesirable, and thus HF does not best explain our current use of language.[214]

- *The Fictionalist in Error.*

If HF is correct in saying our use of language is that of engaging in a fiction, then it seems safe to say that some of us would be shocked upon being informed of this. Some would argue that it just does not *feel* like they are saying 'in the moral fiction, abortion is wrong' when they claim that abortion is wrong and would refuse to accept that they are engaged in a fiction as HF says. Moreover they may argue that they would be appalled at the lack of access they would have to their own beliefs if it really were the case that they were actually referring to a fiction rather than reality. They would thus be in error about two things: (1) about abortion being wrong, as abortion is not *actually* wrong according to the traditional fictionalist; (2) about themselves *believing and saying* that abortion is actually wrong, as HF states their belief and assertion is rather something like 'in the moral fiction, abortion is wrong'.

---

[214] This section VIII is inspired by work that I did at the University of Nottingham on my Masters course from 2010-11 in the Ethics module with Andy Fisher who I thank.

According to HF the language-user who was unaware of the truth of antirealism would not only be in error about what they were using (a fictional rather than factual discourse) but would also be *deceived* by what they were using. For them not to know that they did not mean 'abortion is wrong' (but only meant 'in the moral fiction, abortion is wrong'), the moral fiction would have to deceive them into believing that abortion was *in fact* wrong. The 'fictionalist in error' would have to be described as someone who is deceived by the fiction, or else they would not be in error about their use of the language and their beliefs as to what their language refers to. If they were not so deceived, they would be described as a 'self-conscious fictionalist'. It is undesirable to be deceived and in a state of ignorance about the facts and what beliefs we hold. And if we are unknowingly speaking in a fictional way, this would be a surprising failure of first person authority, and supposedly could not do justice to the phenomenology of our use of language.

- *The Self-Conscious Fictionalist.*

On the other hand, if someone *is* aware that when they say 'abortion is wrong' they are really saying 'in the moral fiction, abortion is wrong' then this person knows the morality they use is fictional: this person uses the moral fiction consciously, hence is described as the self-conscious fictionalist. When this person says to someone that they believe abortion is wrong, this person is speaking deceitfully[215] as they do not really believe that abortion is wrong, they just accept it as being true in a fiction. They are deceiving others into thinking they are

---

[215] It is not the case that all utterances of fiction are deceiving. When someone tells me that Bugs Bunny loves Lola Bunny they are not deceiving me because both them and I are aware that they are talking about something fictional. In the moral fiction case however, when the 'self-conscious' moral fictionalist (A) tells a moral fictionalist 'in error' (B) that abortion is wrong, A is deceiving B in that B would believe that A meant what A said. A talks in a way that others like B take literally (as they are not aware of the fictional engagement), when A does not take it literally themselves.

speaking about morality rather than a fiction, and such a conscious deceit looks somewhat suspect to being called a lie. Is the self-conscious fictionalist a liar? Joyce claims "it would be nice to avoid the conclusion that fictionalists are liars"[216] and offers the response that they are not because they have "no malevolent agenda."[217] However some liars also have no malevolent agenda, like the liar who says their friend's bum does not look big in that dress (when it actually does and the friend does not want it to be so), but this does not stop them from *being a liar*.

Joyce also offers the response that the fictionalist is free to assert their *real* beliefs, (antirealism and the fictional engagement), but does not do so as it "is inappropriate for 99% of conversations."[218] So, it is therefore apparently appropriate to lie 99% of the time, and truth is deemed inappropriate for most conversations, thus diminishing the value of truth. Garner describes this as "dangerous because it undermines our integrity by forcing us to find ways to defend things we know to be false"[219] for the vast majority of our interactions. Further, Garner asks:

> What serious philosopher can long recommend that we promote a policy of expressing and supporting, for an uncertain future advantage, beliefs, or even thoughts, that we understand to be totally, completely, and unquestionably false?[220]

The response would be that the recommendation is grounded in the usefulness of upholding a fiction in comparison to the usefulness of abandoning the talk altogether. But now the question is, how useful would a fiction be when its users are self-conscious? Can a fiction do the job it is meant to do for the people who know they are engaged in it?

---

[216] Joyce (2005) p297
[217] Joyce (2005) p297
[218] Joyce (2005) p297
[219] Garner (2007) p512
[220] Garner (2007) p512

Because if not, then it cannot be recommended. Joyce answers that in a group scenario where every member of the group was a 'self-conscious' fictionalist these troubles would ease away. Conversation would be held at an equal level between them as they would all understand what they meant by 'abortion is wrong', namely 'in the moral fiction, abortion is wrong'. Furthermore, they would all be accepting that we should talk in this pretend-realist way as it is more useful than not doing so, despite all knowing that their actual beliefs were antirealist. A community of 'self-conscious' fictionalists would be able to reap the benefits of a realist society more so than an eliminativist community could in light of antirealism. Therefore, according to the rationale of HF, we all *ought* to accept a fictionalist approach to become part of the flourishing 'self-conscious' fictionalist community. This is the 'ought' of RF – if we do not already engage in a fictional way, then we ought to do so. But ought we?

VIII.ii. Revolutionary Fictionalism (RF).

RF is in part motivated by error theory. In acknowledging our previously error laden discourse we have the option to dispose of it, however RF argues that despite its error we should recognize its usefulness and adopt it as a fiction. In light of antirealism, the best explanation of how we *ought* to proceed in our use of the language is by way of fictionalism, so RF claims, where we retain our realist discourse in the same way as HF says we already do. This does not mean we would have to deny our antirealist beliefs because we would still assert them in critical contexts (in the philosophy staffroom, perhaps). What RF argues is that it is useful to adopt a fictional, as-if 'realist' attitude towards an entity X outside of these critical contexts, instead of adopting eliminativism as we may think our antirealist beliefs demand.

RF claims that realists are in error with respect to their belief in a fact of the matter, and once they have come to know this error (and thus believe antirealism to be the case) they should not abandon their practice but instead treat it as fictional practice instead. HF on the other hand, as I have stated above, locates the error, not just in our belief in facts, but in our belief *in our belief* in facts (i.e., in what we think our beliefs are), as apparently our actual belief is in a fiction. So, according to RF we are wrong about there being facts, and according to HF we are also wrong about what we think we believe (that we believe in facts). It seems more plausible to be wrong just about some piece of information external to us rather than to be wrong about what our own thoughts are. I therefore am arguing, non-traditionally, that HF should be rejected on the basis of imputing *more error* than RF, and that RF can be defended from a quietist point of view for the Neo-Carnapian position.

In this section I have argued against HF. According to HF, the best explanation of our current discourse is that it is fictional, and thus we already engage in fictions. I then presented two options for a discourse user: the fictionalist 'in error' and the 'self-conscious' fictionalist. I argued that neither of these options would be plausible or attractive, as they describe the language user as being deceived or as being deceiving. RF under quietism however would not prescribe a culture of deception, as no falsehoods are being advised to be told. Rather, the quietist RF states that, if quietism is true, then we ought to consider our language use as being internal to fictions. The way we talk will not be deceiving or lying, as it will be *true* relative to the fiction. A quietist RF therefore escapes the problems associated with a more traditional fictionalism, especially HF, and I therefore hope to have shown how quietism can be coupled with fictionalism as a Neo-Carnapian. I will now provide a brief recap of the main features of the Neo-Carnapian position that I have described in this chapter, comparing it to similar positions in the literature from Thomasson (2015) and Price (2011), before concluding.

IX. Neo-Carnapian Quietism as fictionalism.

In this section I go over the main aspects of Neo-Carnapian Quietism and how it can be seen as a fictionalist position. The Neo-Carnapian is still a Carnapian in as much as they state that philosophers should be quiet with regard to metaphysical matters. So they are quietist, because serious ontology read from our metaphysical external questions cannot be done. They are neither traditionally realist nor antirealist, as statements of reality are external and meaningless, and therefore so must be statements of irreality: "it is obvious that the apparent negation of a pseudo-statement must also be a pseudo-statement."[221]

The Neo-Carnapian says the existence of things cannot be questioned externally, and that they only exist relative to frameworks in as much as the framework is useful. Therefore, the Neo-Carnapian is a relativist: truth is relative to frameworks that are chosen pragmatically. The Neo-Carnapian is *externally* non-cognitive and non-factual:[222] the fictional frameworks themselves are to be accepted rather than believed, and are not Truth-apt, since there is no such external Truth. On the other hand, the Neo-Carnapian is *internally* cognitive and factual: once fictional frameworks are presupposed, anything internal to them can be believed and taken as truth-apt relative to its rules. Given that frameworks are now to be considered as fictions, ultimately the Neo-Carnapian position is fictionalist. The Neo-Carnapian fulfills the fictionalist requirements of escaping from ontological commitment in language usage, valuing language for its usefulness regardless of its Truth, and by attributing some level of error to the language user too.

---

[221] Carnap (1950) p30

[222] Here I use Kalderon's (2005a) distinction which I mentioned in footnote 213 in section VII between being factual (about truth) and cognitive (about attitude). If I were to hold factual fixed to be about internal truth (rather than external Truth) then the frameworks would always be factual, as they say of themselves that they are true.

The error is attributed as such. With regard to the quietism of the Neo-Carnapian, it is not the case that we *ought* to be quiet about the external reality, rather it *is* the case that we *are* quiet about it since our attempts to speak about it are meaningless as terms cannot have meaning outside of their language framework. We are thus mistaken if we think that we do talk meaningfully about the metaphysical external reality, as actually we are never more than quiet about it. And we are not mistaken if we already intend our talk to be as metaphysically quiet as it is. Therefore, the Neo-Carnapian can be considered *hermeneutic* with regard to their *quietism* (as language is *described* as quiet). On the other hand, with regard to the Neo-Carnapian's *fictionalism*, I have opted for a *revolutionary* account to avoid imputing too much error to those who do not think they already *are* talking about fictions and rather more weakly I have stated that they *ought* to think of themselves as talking within fictions (as language is *prescribed* as fictional). In not doing so already, the language user can be said to be in error here as well.

The quietism of the Neo-Carnapian is with regard to metaphysics, and the fictionalism of the Neo-Carnapian is with regard to the frameworks (to treat the frameworks *as* fictions). Thus the hermeneutic descriptive aspect applies to metaphysics (we *are* quiet about it) and the revolutionary prescriptive aspect applies to frameworks (we *ought* to treat them as fictions). The Neo-Carnapian is hermeneutically quietist, as we *are* quiet about metaphysical reality, yet is revolutionarily fictionalist, as we *ought* to consider our frameworks as fictions in order to give use and meaning to our internal talk if it is no longer to be about metaphysical reality. Our talk internal to fictions can be about existents and non-existents which make up a domain, split by a metaphysically quiet existence predicate, and thus the Neo-Carnapian has a quietist Meinongian view of quantification. This completes my description of Neo-Carnapian Quietism as a fictionalist position and now I compare it to positions in the recent literature from Thomasson and Price.

IX.i. Comparison to Thomasson's Simple Realism.

The position of Neo-Carnapian Quietism can be compared to Thomasson's 'simple realism' position with regard to her 'easy ontology' found in her recent book *Ontology Made Easy*.[223] Simple realism is motivated by Carnap's deflationism (or quietism as I have called it in this thesis – though Thomasson's reason for usage of the word 'deflationism' instead of 'quietism' will soon be made clear), and as such could be seen as a fellow Neo-Carnapian position. However my position differs from Thomasson's simple realism in a few important respects.

To briefly describe Thomasson's position: ontological questions are easy to answer, and in this way ontology is *deflated*. The ontological questions that are meaningful on Thomasson's account are akin to Carnap's internal questions (IQ's), despite Carnap stating that it is misleading to call internal use 'ontological'. This is the first place where my Neo-Carnapian Quietism differs from simple realism – for me, answers to IQ's are ontologically quiet, for Thomasson, answers to IQ's are ontological answers (and as such she calls herself a 'realist' and not a 'quietist'). For Thomasson, we can get our ontological answers – our easy ontology – from trivial inferences in our language usage (where certain 'application conditions'[224] are fulfilled for the terms used). We can derive an ontology including numbers from the sentence 'I have two hands' by making an analytic inference to another sentence where numbers are quantified over, such as 'the number of hands I have is two'. Here is the second place where my Neo-Carnapian Quietism

---

[223] Thomasson (2015)

[224] For Thomasson (2015 p90), a term refers if its application conditions are fulfilled, but the conditions under which different kinds of thing exist are as various as the application conditions are, so she denies that there are any shared criteria of existence. Application conditions are among the semantic rules of use for terms we master as we acquire language, but they need not be necessary and sufficient conditions and need not be stateable, as they are simply conditions under which the term would be correctly applied, entitling us to truly say 'there is an entity X' for instance.

differs from simple realism – for me, quantificational use of language is ontologically non-committal, whereas for Thomasson such usage is committal (and thus I regard her as Quinean in that respect). For all the same reasons that I rejected Quinean metaontology in chapter 2, I also reject these trivial inferences that lead Thomasson to her easy ontology.

Thomasson is clear that the ontology she derives is one not to be fretted over – it is the not the heavy duty metaphysical ontology that we would like to avoid commitment to. I argue, however, that such commitments derived from such inferences are merely quantificational and not ontological, so any use of 'ontology' or 'realism' is potentially misleading as a faithful Carnapian. It is because of this that she avoids using the term 'quietism' to describe her Carnapian position, as she is *not actually quiet* when she calls herself a realist. However she regards this realism as being sufficiently deflated to justify her using the term 'deflationism' to describe her Carnapian position. In my view, this deflated realism is not the ontological realism that metaphysicians were after, and furthermore I have argued in chapter 1 sections II, IV and V, that such a deflated or internal realism (such as Quine's I-realism and Thomasson's simple realism) is not worthy of the title 'realism'.

Not only do I believe it to be misleading to call her position a simple '*realism*' doing easy '*ontology*', but also I believe it to be misleading for her to regard her position as deflationary. Thomasson, as noted above, tells us that commitments in her simple realism are not heavy duty, yet she also rejects them being called 'thin'[225] – she argues instead that the existence derived is existence *full stop*, thus denying a distinction

---

[225] Thomasson (2015 p146) explicitly and revealingly states: "I think, however, that we should not suggest that the entities to which we become committed via trivial inferences are in general 'thin and inconsequential', 'ontologically shallow' or that their existence is somehow to be understood in a deflationary manner. Instead we should simply say that such entities exist – full stop."

between the heavy and the thin commitments. If the commitments from simple realism are not thin, then ontology does not seem to be deflated but merely redefined, and in that sense Thomasson moves away from the Carnapian incentive and defining feature of rejecting ontology.

Thomasson regards her easy approach to ontology as in competition with fictionalism, traditionally construed. But she also recognizes the similarities between fictionalism and her simple realism, which could motivate my marriage of a deflationary view like Carnap's with fictionalism in my Neo-Carnapian Quietist position. Thomasson states:

> In many ways, the fictionalist approach and the easy approach are similar. Both are equally opposed to both traditional Platonism and to traditional nominalism or eliminativism about disputed entities. Both bring to ontological debates a 'no worries' attitude that suggests that we can preserve the discourse in question without saddling ourselves with a heavy-duty ontology (such as Platonism in mathematics). Both reject the assumption that the function of, say, mathematical discourse is to track objects… And they tend to appeal to the same sort of philosopher: someone who suspects the heavyduty realist of taking the discourse in question too seriously, and suspects the eliminativist of overreacting by rejecting a perfectly functional range of discourse.[226]

It is here clear to see how traditional fictionalism could be seen as similar to a deflationary view like Thomasson's easy realism or Carnapian quietism, and thus clear to see how fictionalism could be treated itself as deflationary or quiet. However Thomasson also notes where the positions crucially differ:

---

[226] Thomasson (2015) p178

> The views are clearly in conflict, for taking the easy approach leads us to the simple realist view that there are entities of the disputed kind, while the fictionalist does not assert that there are such entities.[227]

This takes the difference to be that fictionalism traditionally is antirealist, and Thomasson's position is realist. My Neo-Carnapian Quietist position is neither. Traditional fictionalists thought that ontologists took ontology too seriously as the language usage is actually just fictional, whereas Thomasson says that fictionalists take it too seriously as there is no need to avoid the commitments derived from language usage. Since Carnap *did* want to avoid such commitments, and avoided realist *and* antirealist branding, again I believe my Neo-Carnapian position to be closer to Carnap's quietism than Thomasson's simple realism is. To summarize, I take my position to have important differences to Thomasson's simple realism, yet since my position is not traditionally fictionalist (as it is quietist) such differences do not include those noted by Thomasson between traditional fictionalism and deflationary approaches. Otherwise, I agree that we are Carnapian allies.

IX.ii. Comparison to Price's Naturalism without Mirrors.

Price, like Thomasson, cites Carnap as an ally to his position.[228] Price is a discourse pluralist, and so is pluralist in the same way as Carnap has a plurality of linguistic frameworks.[229] Yet Price deviates significantly from Carnap in putting forward his position as a type of *realism*, in the same way as Thomasson does in the previous section. Price states:

---

227 Thomasson (2015) p180. However it is curious that Thomasson cites this difference when she goes on to claim that "where ontological issues are concerned the two views are on a par." Thomasson (2015) p182.
228 Price (2011) p13
229 Price (2011) p37 and p283

> Discourse pluralism is not an irrealist position. The pluralist accepts with all sincerity that there are moral states of affairs, possible worlds, numbers, or whatever. What he or she rejects is the additive monist's attempt to put a further metaphysical gloss on such existential claims. Without the gloss, discourse pluralism sits quite happily with a non-metaphysical or 'minimal' realism.[230]

So in this way, like we saw with Thomasson, the faithful Carnapian would say that such use of the title 'realism' is misleading if it is not a metaphysical position. Price calls his position 'Naturalism without Mirrors' because it is a naturalist position without representationalism. Naturalism is taken to be the view that natural science constrains philosophy in some sense, and representationalism is the view that our language represents the world. Since naturalism is traditionally taken as holding representationalism, in denying representationalism Price puts forward a new type of naturalism.[231] The naturalist part of Price's position is not something that I have attributed to the Neo-Carnapian Quietist position, however it is plausible that Carnap himself would have embraced such naturalism (but not in the Quinean way of privileging the scientific framework as delivering metaphysical results). Price's naturalism is globally expressivist and pragmatist, and so has some important connections worth noting with regard to the global, non-cognitivist, and pragmatist aspects of Neo-Carnapian Quietist.

Price's position is expressivist since it regards language as being non-cognitive, in the sense of not being truth-apt nor fit for belief. He notes the following difference between his non-cognitivist expressivism and traditional fictionalism:

---

[230] Price (2011) p49
[231] Price (2011) p11 and p184

> It is worth noting an important difference between fictionalism and expressivism... A [moral] fictionalist [for example] thinks that moral claims have an everyday use and a literal use... In contrast, an expressivist has no need to admit that there is any sense in which such a statement is literally false... It is not the kind of speech act that *has* a literal truth-value, in the sense that the fictionalist intends.[232]

The traditional fictionalist, as described in section V, regards the language in question as being literally False due to the non-existence of the entities it aims to refer to (or fails to refer to), and as such provides a fictional everyday use for the language. This is not something that the traditional fictionalist and my Neo-Carnapian Quietist have in common, since the Neo-Carnapian does not take the discourse to be False. Rather, the discourse is truth-evaluable internally to the fiction, such that sentences can be true or false relative to the fiction, and also will be cognitive. However, the discourse as a whole is not Truth-evaluable *externally* to the fiction, since it is just adopted as being helpful, and so is non-cognitive like Price's expressivism. For the Neo-Carnapian, frameworks are non-cognitive (yet internal language usage is cognitive), and for Price's expressivism, the language used is non-cognitive. This shows a difference to be that Price is thoroughly non-cognitive, yet it also shows a similarity: the Neo-Carnapian Quietist makes a distinction between language as internally factual and externally non-Factual, and likewise Price makes a distinction between language as internally representational and externally non-representational.[233] It is therefore not such a difference for Price to call himself a non-cognitivist whilst the Neo-Carnapian calls themself only a non-cognitivist *externally*, as both agree that internally we get a new role for the language which allows for it to be representational in an internal way for Price and factual in an internal way for the Neo-Carnapian.

---

[232] Price (2011) p8
[233] Price (2011) p20

Price defends a *global* expressivism, which provides a significant similarity between his position and my own global Neo-Carnapian Quietism. For Price there is no barrier to extending the normally local expressivism to being global, since he considers no language as being representational, and as such it is all non-cognitive in the expressivist way. Similarly, I extend what is normally a local fictionalism about particular entities or discourses to a global fictionalism. Furthermore, the Neo-Carnapian is quiet with regard to how language fits or represents the world, for *all* language usage, and so defends a global position by attacking representationalism. As Price clearly explains:

> Local versions of expressivism accept Representationalism in some domains. I want to go a stage further… The right thing to do, as theorists, is not to say that it turns out that none of our statements is a genuine representation; it is to stop talking about representation altogether, to abandon the project of theorizing about word-world relations in these terms.[234]

Such an abandonment is what I have called 'quietism' – to abandon the project of how our language *Truly* describes the world is to abandon the metaphysical implications of our language usage. Price insists that it is not that our language is *mis*representing the world, but rather that this is the wrong way to think about the *role* of our language. Likewise, Carnap insists that it is not that our frameworks are *False* if their terms do not refer to a metaphysical realm. For Carnap, our choice of language is pragmatic, rather than to represent the world. And for Price, our use of language is non-cognitive, rather than to represent the world. Price considers his position to be a form of global (and quiet) pragmatism, since he emphasizes the pragmatic utility of language and what the practical role for language is, without such roles being metaphysically loaded in some way.[235] Price links pragmatism to quietism as such:

---

[234] Price (2011) p10
[235] Price (2011) p231

> The relevant contrast is between views that reject the
> metaphysical issues altogether, and the views that allow
> antirealist, existence denying metaphysics. Orthodox
> fictionalism is the latter view, the pragmatism we have in mind
> is the former. Pragmatism in our sense is thus a 'no metaphysics'
> view rather than an antirealist view, in the metaphysical sense.
> Pragmatists are metaphysical *quietists.*[236]

Here we can see that Price construes the traditional ('orthodox') fictionalist as an antirealist, as I argued in section III. Yet I construe fictionalism in a quietist fashion to avoid the antirealist foundations that are meaningless for a Carnapian in formulating the Neo-Carnapian Quietist position. Much like Price takes pragmatism in a quietist fashion, so do I take fictionalism in a quietist fashion, thus providing a strong similarity between Price's version of naturalism and Neo-Carnapian Quietism. However, as we saw in the opening of this section, Price also strangely considers his position to be a defensible type of realism, which is not very quiet, and is certainly not very Carnapian. As such, we get a terminological dispute with regard to what realism can plausibly, and un-misleadingly, be said to be. Otherwise, there is significant similarity between Price's naturalism without mirrors and my Neo-Carnapian Quietism with regard to the global, pragmatist, and non-cognitivist elements, along with the distinction between being internally factual/representational and externally non-Factual/non-representational. It is plausible that Carnap (and the Neo-Carnapian) could adopt the anti-representationalism and naturalism of Price too. The larger differences between Price's naturalism and Neo-Carnapian Quietism lie with Price's expressivism at the internal level where language is *non-cognitive yet representational* in an internal sense, whereas for Carnap language is *cognitive* at the internal level. But overall, Neo-Carnapian Quietism finds an ally in some sense with Price, and shares Carnapian motivations and foundations with Thomasson.

---

[236] Price (2011) p234

X. Conclusion.

In this chapter I have described my Neo-Carnapian Quietist position. After demonstrating in the Introduction chapter how a Neo-Carnapian study of 'ontology' would be pursued and the resulting realist and antirealist positions that would come out of it, here I showed the effects of quietism on fictionalism to show that it required being divorced from antirealist foundations. Then I provided a fictionalist picture of the Neo-Carnapian position, married to quietism instead. The aim of this chapter was to present why I consider the Neo-Carnapian position under the fictionalist umbrella. The Neo-Carnapian is quiet with regard to metaphysics, and fictional with regard to linguistic frameworks. To construe the frameworks as fictions is to say they have value by being useful to adopt, and that they are to be treated similar to how we treat fictions – presupposing them in order to engage in them and assess claims relative to them, and accepting what we presuppose in order to believe the claims that are true relative to them. The account is typically fictionalist in its escape from ontological commitment whilst maintaining the discourse that may *seem* to sound realist; and in its attribution of error to the discourse users in thinking it is realist; and of course its citing value in the discourse by being useful to adopt independent of its Truth. Furthermore I have argued that the Neo-Carnapian is *hermeneutic* with regard to their quietism, holding that we *are* quiet, but is *revolutionary* with regard to their fictionalism, holding that we *ought* to treat frameworks as fictions (even though we may not have done so thus far). This concludes my description of my global Neo-Carnapian Quietism, which has important similarities yet crucial differences from Thomasson's simple realism and Price's naturalism. The next and final chapter 4 addresses the self-reference problem for a Neo-Carnapian Quietist which leads the Carnapian into contradictory realms and thus towards dialetheism. The upshot will be that in order to meta-theorize globally, in a Carnapian way, we need to be dialetheist.

CHAPTER 4:

QUIET DIALETHEISM

In this final main chapter I reflect on metametaphysics and as such I develop a *metametameta*physical view: that metametaphysics requires dialetheism. I show this using Carnap's metametaphysics as an example, with regard to how it encounters the paradox of self-reference. I argue that a common location for self-referential paradoxes is within meta-theories with global scope, as the 'meta' approach aims to transcend the scope of that which it is theorizing about, whilst the 'global' nature will place itself back within the scope of that which it is theorizing about, which together result in the theory referring to itself whilst refuting itself. I aim to show that any sceptical global meta-theory, like Carnap's quietism and other metametaphysical positions, will face such problems leading to contradictory realms. It appears that if we want to meta-philosophize in such a way, then we will need to be dialetheist.

The paradox of self-reference occurs for Carnap when we question the status of his own position and ask whether he considers his theory of frameworks itself to be presented as internal or external to frameworks. I structure this problem in the form of a dilemma, where both horns result in contradiction. In section I, I show how self-reference problems occur for global meta-theories. Section II explores the internal horn, and section III the external horn, of Carnap's dilemma, both exhibiting paradoxes of the self-referential kind. I follow Priest in his formalisation of self-referential paradoxes exhibiting contradictions in theories that draw a limit to thought in section IV. Finally I show how the Carnapian can bite the contradictory bullet in the form of dialetheism to escape the dilemma. I conclude by explaining why dialetheism is a plausible move for the Carnapian, and I will construe Carnap as an 'implicit' dialetheist and the Neo-Carnapian Quietist as an 'explicit' dialetheist.

I. The self-reference problem.

I.i. For global meta-theories.

The problem of self-reference is encountered by global scale positions such as Carnap's quietism. For example, global relativism: If everything is relative, then the sentence 'everything is relative' will be relative too. And global scepticism[237]: If we cannot know anything, then we cannot know 'we cannot know anything'. And likewise for global quietism: If we should be quiet about metaphysics, then we should be quiet *about being quiet* about metaphysics. A theory that references itself often refutes itself, and so the general structure of such a theory encounters a Liar-style paradox – if what the theory says is correct, then the theory turns out to be false, or at least is undermined in some way. So, if we hold that everything is relative then this undermines the absolute truth of relativism itself, and if we hold that we cannot know anything then this undermines our knowledge of scepticism itself. Likewise, if we hold that we are metaphysically quiet then this undermines the metaphysical significance and assertability of quietism itself.

Meta-theories aim to speak *about* a theory or way of theorizing, from above. Metametaphysical positions are a prime example, as they aim to speak about metaphysics from a higher-order metametaphysical point of view. Some metametaphysical positions speak about metaphysics in

---

[237] There are different forms of scepticism that I do not consider here. A 'pyrrhonian' sceptic about Y suspends judgment about whether or not anyone knows anything about Y, while an 'academic' sceptic about Y claims that nobody ever knows anything about Y. (This pyrrhonian/academic distinction is borrowed from Sinnott-Armstrong (2006) p10-11). A global pyrrhonian scepticism may be less problematic than a global academic scepticism. A global academic scepticism would seem to involve saying 'I know that no one knows anything,' which is paradoxical and self-defeating. But the pyrrhonian can say 'I suspend judgment on whether anyone knows anything.' If this is just the claim that one does not know whether anyone knows anything, it seems to be internally coherent. I thank Stephen Ingram for this point.

a negative way and as such are 'anti-metaphysical'. Anti-metaphysical positions such as Carnap's quietism in his paper 'Empiricism, Semantics and Ontology' (hereon 'ESO') encounter self-reference problems as they can be accused of *doing* metaphysics whilst *rejecting* metaphysics, and so appear to be metaphysically *loud* when prescribing being *quiet*. It seems that one cannot do metametaphysics without doing metaphysics, which is a problem if one's metametaphysical view is anti-metaphysical. As Bradley famously claimed, the anti-metaphysician is simply "a brother metaphysician with a rival theory."[238] Classic examples of such anti-metaphysical positions are Kant's transcendental doctrine, the Vienna Circle's Verificationism, and Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*. The common factor among these is that they aim to spell out a *limit* – a limit to what we can experience or a limit to what is meaningful, and then place metaphysics outside this limit. The aim of this chapter is to show that when metametaphysical theories draw such limits they are led to contradictory realms via self-referential paradoxes. First I will describe Verificationism's self-reference problem to get clear on its similarities to Carnap's problem and to show that ESO is not a Verificationist theory.

I.ii. For Verificationism.

Verificationism is associated with the Vienna Circle, which of course included Carnap.[239] Yet it is not due to Verificationism that Carnap's ESO experiences self-reference problems. However, looking to the parallel issues in Verificationism can help us understand Carnap's self-reference problem and his possible responses, since Verificationism

---

[238] Bradley (1897) p1

[239] Burgess explains that Carnap's negative association with Verificationism probably contributed to the dismissal of the Carnapian quietism from ESO: "I suspect the reason Carnap's presentation of the [quietist] case failed to convince was largely that he was too much identified with the infamous 'empiricist criterion of meaningfulness' [Verificationism], which certainly has by now been consigned, if not to the rubbish bin, then at least to archives, where it may be studied by historians of philosophy, but where it no longer influences current philosophical debate." (2004 p34)

and ESO are both anti-metaphysical in that both argue that metaphysics is meaningless. It is important to note that Carnap's criterion for being meaningful is different to that of the Verification principle, and as such it is *not* the case that Carnap in ESO need be taken as a Verificationist as he is often accused of being. For Carnap in ESO all language must be utilized internal to frameworks to be meaningful. For Verificationists a sentence is meaningful if it is verifiable, either in practice or in principle, by being empirically testable or logically necessary. For Carnap internal sentences are made *true* by similar empirical or logical means, but it is not the case that such sentences are made *meaningful* in this way. Thus, the problems of Verificationism need not carry over to Carnap's ESO, as they give different, independent criterions for meaningfulness. But their self-reference problems are parallel and are therefore worth comparing.

Verificationism has largely been rejected, in part due to self-reference. When we apply the Verification principle to itself it turns out that the principle does not meet its own criterion: it is not itself empirically testable or logically necessary. Verificationism thus fails its own test for meaningfulness, and so encounters the self-reference problem. As we will see, the Carnapian will end up in a similar situation where their own theory does not meet their own standards for meaningfulness, yet this is not because the Carnapian has the *same* standards for meaningfulness as the Verificationists, but rather because both the Carnapian and the Verificationist attempts to *draw a limit* to what is meaningful and thus they encounter similar limitation problems. The Vienna Circle eventually saw a way out of their problem by altering what the Verification principle was *doing*. If the Verification principle judges propositions, then the principle itself cannot be a proposition fit to be judged. Instead of proposing the principle then, the Vienna Circle simply *recommended* it. The principle is thus un-asserted as it ceases to be a proposition fit for assertion or judgment. A Carnapian may respond similarly, discussed in section III. But next I describe Carnap's problem.

I.iii. For Carnap.

The paradox of self-reference occurs for Carnap when we question the status of his own position in ESO and apply it to itself. Given Carnap's distinction between the internal question (IQ) and the external question (EQ), we may ask whether Carnap is utilizing language internally or externally when putting forward his theory in ESO. The main point of ESO is that *all* language usage has to be internal to a framework in order to be meaningful, so *all* external propositions are meaningless. ESO thus has global scope and can be summarized in the following way: 'all external propositions are meaningless' (name this <ESO>). Now is *this* sentence <ESO> *internal or external* to frameworks? I present this as a dilemma for Carnap, the internal and external horns both resulting in a contradiction. I detail the possibilities for each horn in sections II-III to show how Carnap's theory ends up in contradiction. But before detailing these possibilities I will note them briefly here now.

Firstly, if <ESO> is correct and meaningful, and if Carnap is to be consistent, then <ESO> must itself be internal (because <ESO> states that if it were external then it would be meaningless). But if <ESO> is internal then it is true *only* relative to *that* framework that it is internal to. We may then ask which framework(s) <ESO> is true internally to, as there may be some framework(s) where <ESO> is false or not even mentioned. This denies the intended global scope of ESO, and denies that <ESO> is universally true about *all* frameworks. In order to retain the global scope so that <ESO> is true about all frameworks, we can say that <ESO> is internal to an all-encompassing global framework that describes all others. Here we get a semantically closed framework-of-all-frameworks (much like the set-of-all-sets) and hence a set-theoretic kind of paradox, Russell's Paradox (see section II.i), leading towards contradiction. The alternative to avoid Russell's Paradox is to allow for

a hierarchy of frameworks, much like a hierarchy of Tarski's meta-languages (see section II.ii), each with their own version of <ESO> and a hierarchy of truth so as to not be problematically semantically closed. However this leads to a regress where there is no one notion of truth and no one global version of <ESO>, which would lead to contradiction as <ESO> is never fully globally asserted yet Carnap asserts it fully globally in ESO. This is horn 1 of the dilemma: by taking <ESO> to be internal we deny the intended global scope of ESO or end up attempting to globalise the scope internally which results in contradiction.

On the other hand, horn 2 takes <ESO> as external. Then, if <ESO> were correct, <ESO> itself would be meaningless, since it would not conform to the criterion that <ESO> spells out for something to be meaningful. This clearly self-references directly, and then self-refutes, since <ESO> states that external sentences are meaningless which includes <ESO> itself. Given the intended global scope of ESO, to show that *all* meaningful language usage must be internal to frameworks, it seems Carnap attempts to say something *about* all of language usage, and to do so he is attempting to transcend such usage in describing it. His position is metametaphysical since it aims to talk about metaphysics from above, yet is is also intended to be global, and so applies to all sentences including <ESO> itself. So it turns out that if <ESO> is meaningful and true, then <ESO> is meaningless and false – this is structurally similar to the Liar Paradox. Here Carnap either ends up in contradiction, or could respond that he is not really *saying* something at all by not asserting <ESO> but merely recommending it,[240] or putting it forward as a pragmatic statement (see section III). So, the four main options for <ESO> are that it is: (i) internal to a global framework; (ii) internal to each individual framework; (iii) external as a recommendation; (iv) external without assertion. I will go through each option showing how they lead to contradiction, hence Carnap's route towards dialetheism.

---

[240] This is parallel to the Verificationist self-reference solution (sections I.ii and III.i).

II. Horn 1 – Internal.

When Carnap gave his views in ESO, he meant to convey that external language *is* meaningless, not just according to his framework, but *really is* meaningless. If <ESO> is correct and meaningful, and if Carnap is to be consistent, then <ESO> must be internal. But if <ESO> were made internal to a framework then Carnap's message in ESO seems to lose its power somewhat. This is because <ESO>'s truth will then be relative to the particular framework rules of the framework to which it belongs. Another framework could be created for talking about frameworks, within which <ESO> is false. This entails that <ESO>, if internal to a framework, may not be true in all frameworks, as other frameworks may have rules that regard <ESO> as false, or just do not say anything about <ESO> at all. If <ESO> is only relatively true, it seems plausible that it is also not universally true, as it may only be true relative to *some* frameworks and not all of them (yet <ESO> was *meant* to describe *all* of them). There also may be frameworks in which <ESO> is absolutely true, or more problematically absolutely false, which is bad for Carnap because not only does this count against relativity, it also says that <ESO> is false. Moreover, frameworks according to which <ESO> is relatively true are frameworks that are selected as being *useful*, not *true*. So Carnap's position is reduced to being usefully adopted as relatively true – a much weaker conclusion than what he actually proposes in ESO.

This certainly seems to misrepresent Carnap's views in ESO, as he meant that for *all* frameworks it is the case that language usage external to them is meaningless, not just *some.* If it were only the case that for some frameworks external language is meaningless then there is some framework for which external language is meaning*ful*, and so why could this framework not be the framework for metaphysical ontology? How would one make the divide between those frameworks whose external

language is meaningless and those whose is meaningful? Taking <ESO>
as internal in this way thus crucially denies the global scope of ESO, and
in order to retain such scope <ESO> would need to be internal to an all-
encompassing global framework so that <ESO> is true universally.[241] If
we are to treat <ESO> as being internal, then it will be true relative to
the framework that it is internal to, and this framework needs to be
global. Such a global framework would need to say of itself that
language external to it is meaningless, and thus the framework would
be said to be semantically closed, as described in the next section II.i
and attacked by Tarski in section II.ii. This global semantically closed
framework preserves the global scope of ESO and the universal truth of
<ESO> and is the first option for horn 1, discussed in the next section.

II.i. A global framework.

In order to retain the global scope of ESO whilst treating <ESO> as
internal, the framework that <ESO> is internal to must be a framework
with global scope. This global framework is an all-encompassing
framework that is the framework containing and describing all other
frameworks.[242] It is therefore a higher-order framework that is utilized
for talking about frameworks themselves. This global framework would
be fully semantically closed as it would have the capability of talking
about itself from within itself, making true claims about the truth of its
own claims from within itself. Tarski considers all semantically closed
languages to be inconsistent, as it is these languages that contain their

---

[241] The other option is for <ESO> to be true in each and every framework, discussed in
section II.iii, which collapses into the global framework option. This global framework
however may not be a good option for Carnap as it would be plausibly the framework
where we actually *do* metaphysics. We would therefore have to choose whether the
metaphysics we do internally to this global framework is to be taken seriously – if it is
taken seriously then it trivializes Carnap's position which was meant to show that we
cannot do metaphysics. So the internal horn just never seems to do justice to ESO.

[242] This global framework is similar to Eklund's maximalism (2009 p153), in so far as
it is a maximal theory, however what it is to exist is different on the two approaches.

own 'truth' predicate and can talk about sentences of themselves in the same language, which gives rise to the Liar Paradox.[243] It is in response to this that Tarski put forward his meta-languages as described in the next section II.ii. Yet having a theory that is within the scope of that very same theory need not be problematic in all cases. Some circular justifications are acceptable, and some theories are self-reflexive. The question is whether ESO is like this, and whether this is problematic.

This closed global framework is similar to Carnap's approach to the syntax of language, where a language can speak of its own syntax, and as such it seems plausible that Carnap himself would be sympathetic to this global option. Plus Carnap believes there is no inconsistency in it:

> Up to the present, we have differentiated between the object-language and the syntax-language in which the syntax of the object-language is formulated. Are these necessarily two separate languages? If this question is answered in the affirmative (as it is by Herbrand in connection with metamathematics), then a third language will be necessary for the formulation of the syntax of the syntax-language, and so on to infinity. According to another opinion (that of Wittgenstein), there exists only one language, and what we call syntax cannot be expressed at all – it can only 'be shown'. As opposed to these views, we intend to show that, actually, it is possible to manage with one language only; not, however, by renouncing syntax, but by demonstrating that without the emergence of any contradictions the syntax of this language can be formulated within this language itself.[244]

---

[243] Against Tarski, there are some philosophers such as Kripke (1975) and Field (2008) who think that a theory *can* contain its own truth predicate consistently if one gives up the law of excluded middle, for example. I do not have space to discuss these.
[244] Carnap (1934a) p53

The first thing to note about this quote is the way in which Carnap disagrees with Wittgenstein's approach to self-reference problems – this will be discussed in section III.ii. The second thing to note is that he recognizes that closed languages experience contradictions that emerge from Liar-style paradoxes yet believes his version will avoid it. Without assessing his proposal of the logical syntax of language, we can still see whether this is a viable option with regard to ESO's self-reference problem, by taking note thirdly of the emphasis on *syntax* – it is only the syntax that can be expressed in the language itself for Carnap. Where, then, do the other things about the language get expressed? And is it the syntax of <ESO> that we are interested in? When a syntactical sentence speaks of itself, what is it able to say about itself? Carnap clarifies this:

> If the syntax of a language is formulated in that language itself, then a syntactical sentence may sometimes speak about itself, or more exactly, it may speak about its own design – for pure syntax, of course, cannot speak of individual sentences as physical things, but only of designs and forms.[245]

But are we interested in only the design and form of <ESO>? If not, then having syntax in the same language as the object language will be of no help. With syntax only, <ESO> applies to itself with regard to its form rather than meaning, and frameworks will be able to talk about their own well-formed formulas. Yet <ESO> gets its meaning from within a framework, and it is this meaning and the relative truth of <ESO> that we are interested in deriving from the framework, which requires the framework to speak of *semantics* rather than syntax. <ESO> states that external propositions are meaningless, and thus it is invoking the semantic notion of meaning. <ESO> is thus required to talk about its own semantics and so we cannot understand <ESO> only syntactically. Being internal to a framework is equivalent to being true (and having meaning) in a framework and so, for <ESO> to talk meaningfully about

---

[245] Carnap (1934a) p129

meaning within a framework, the framework must contain its own 'truth' (and 'meaningful') predicate and be semantically, not just syntactically, closed. If we take the frameworks to be fully closed,[246] and not just limited to the syntax, then I will show that we end up in contradiction. This is due to the framework-of-all-frameworks being like the set-of-all-sets, which Russell has shown leads to a paradox. It is in this way that the global framework derives a contradiction.

An analogue of Russell's Paradox will derive a contradiction from the global framework as such: If you can talk within this global framework about all frameworks then it must be possible for a framework to talk about itself. This is because, as a framework of all frameworks, it includes itself in its global scope over all frameworks. Since it is a framework that talks about frameworks, it therefore talks about itself. Plausibly, there will be some frameworks that this global framework ranges over which do not talk about themselves – we can talk about these frameworks in a sub-framework F of our global framework. The sub-framework F will not be empty, as there will surely be frameworks that do not talk of themselves which we can speak of from within others. F therefore talks about all and only frameworks that do not talk about themselves. The paradoxical question is: does F talk about itself? If F talks about itself then F does not talk about itself. This is by virtue of the definition of F's scope disqualifying F from its scope – if F talks about itself then it is not one of those frameworks that fall under its scope. However, if F does not talk about itself then F does talk about itself. This is by virtue of the definition of F's scope including F in its scope – if F does not talk about itself then it qualifies to be one of those frameworks that F talks about. We thus have a paradoxical situation involving F, such that considering a global framework derives a contradiction.[247]

---

[246] Can a *fictional* framework be fully semantically closed? If not then this option is unavailable to the Neo-Carnapian who treats frameworks as fictions even if it may be an option to Carnap. This need not be pursued as the option is contradictory anyway.
[247] Special thanks to Mary Leng for this suggestion of a parallel to Russell's Paradox.

This is structurally similar to Russell's Paradox, where the set of all sets is taken to be a member of itself, and then we consider the subset of those sets that are not members of themselves and question whether that subset is a member of itself. Set theorists have taken the lesson to be to rid of the set of all sets, and instead have an infinite hierarchy of sets that is never completed, thus avoiding the totality of sets entirely. This ends up in a regress, described in the next section II.ii, that instead of a framework to encompass all frameworks, we have a hierarchy of meta-frameworks to encompass lower level frameworks *at every level of the hierarchy*. This may avoid the paradox that results from the global framework, however as we will see this in unsatisfactory for Carnap since it denies the global scope of ESO. Thus Carnap cannot respond to Russell's Paradox in the same way that set theorists do (by denying the totality) and so must either embrace the paradoxical global framework or find another way of retaining ESO's global scope internally. Such an option will be to have a global *sentence* rather than a global *framework*, discussed in section II.iii, but first I will address the hierarchy option.

II.ii. A hierarchy of meta-languages.

If we are to treat <ESO> as being internal, then it will be meaningful relative to the framework that it is internal to, and this framework will now not be considered to be global in order to avoid the paradox. The regress of higher-order frameworks can go on infinitely, each statement about other statements being internal to frameworks being made internal to higher-order frameworks. The frameworks will each require their own 'meaningful' predicate, since <ESO> speaks of meaning. The picture is similar to that of meta-languages, described by Tarski in his avoidance of the Liar Paradox, and similar to that of a hierarchy of sets, like set theory's avoidance of Russell's Paradox. I now discuss Tarski's hierarchy as an option for Carnap to avoid ESO's self-reference problem.

Tarski[248] puts forward his 'convention T' or 'T schema' as the truth conditions for a sentence: 'snow is white' (x) is true iff snow is white (p). The 'p' replaces any sentence of the language to which 'true' refers to, and 'x' stands for the name of the sentence. The predicate 'is true', when applied to sentences of a language L, cannot be considered part of the language L. Instead we have a proliferation of truth predicates 'is true in L', one for each language L, where each truth predicate belongs to a meta-language L* whose role is to talk about sentences of L. Semantically closed languages are thus rejected by Tarski, as these languages contain not only expressions but also names for those expressions, as well as semantic terms like 'true' referring to sentences of the language where all true sentences can be asserted in that language. So, convention T will not be formulated in a semantically closed language, but rather will include elements of two independent languages (one for the expressions and one for the truth predicate).

Tarski calls these languages the 'object language' which is the language talked *about*, and the 'meta-language' which is the language we talk *within* in order to talk about the object language. So, the meta-language is used to assert truth for the object language, and as such convention T is formulated in the meta-language, and 'p' is in the object language. 'Object' and 'meta' are relative and can apply at higher levels, which will involve embarking on a regress of a hierarchy of languages. One can say what is true of the object language in the meta-language, and then to say whether *that* is true they will resort to a higher-order meta-language for that meta-language (which will now become the object language). The reason this helps with the Liar Paradox is by applying the meta-linguistic trick of having the Liar sentence itself in the object language, and its being true or false in the meta-language. The Liar sentence then seems ungrammatical, as it is not *in* the object language since it applies the truth predicate to a sentence *of* the object language.

---

[248] Tarski (1944)

The Carnapian could use a similar meta-linguistic trick in legitimizing its own regress of higher-order frameworks. To question the truth or usefulness of a framework will have to be formulated in a language from a higher-order framework, and its truth or usefulness will be relative to that higher-order framework. In utilizing Tarski's theory, the Carnapian could construe the framework in question as the object language, and the framework doing the question*ing* as the meta-language. In the same way that truth becomes relativized to a language in Tarski's theory, so for Carnapian truth (and meaning, including the meaning of 'usefulness') becomes relativized to linguistic frameworks.

For Tarski the problematic element of a semantically closed language was that it contained its own truth predicate, and Tarski's solution was to relativize truth, which we can likewise propose for the Carnapian. But furthermore for the Carnapian, meaning also becomes relativized as the frameworks will not contain their own 'meaningful' predicate. This allows for the meta-framework to talk about the meaningfulness of a sentence in the object-framework, in order to be able to put forward <ESO> sentences without leading to paradoxical situations. This retains the Carnapian's quietism by not stating anything genuinely external (as any attempt will be to just shift up to a meta-language and be internal to that meta-language), and will also retain ESO's rejection of absoluteness. The question of whether Carnap's ESO is *really* correct will be just as nonsensical as asking if Tarski's T schema is *really* true. The point is that such '*really*' statements are meaningless as they attempt ascent into an absolute realm. To demand absolute truth from the Carnapian is to beg the question against them, as that is precisely what they deny.[249]

---

[249] Benningson (1999) makes a similar claim: "The most remarkable feature of many anti-relativist arguments is their brevity; they often consist of little more than announcing that to assert global relativism is implicitly to claim absolute truth for one's assertion, resulting in immediate self-contradiction. Certainly, the relativist is claiming truth for her assertion. But the absolutist begs the question by assuming that truth simpliciter equals absolute truth - precisely what the relativist should be understood to be denying." (p215)

So in opting for an infinite regress of internal assertions, perhaps this is just what the Carnapian is prescribing – full scale relativity. We will always be trapped inside language to the extent that even our theories like ESO will be stated internal to a framework. And perhaps ESO is not absolutely true, since if it were then it would be a metaphysical theory about the external world, which the quietist rejects. Rather the Carnapian should say their theory is not to be regarded as absolutely true, and thus is not to be believed, but it is the most useful theory and as such should be accepted.[250] Such an option based on the acceptance of a useful theory rather than belief in a true theory is described further in section III.i. Without being able to get to absolute truth, as ESO describes, perhaps the Carnapian position construed as an internal infinite regress may be the best we can do in order to show this.

With this hierarchy regress option the theory ESO is never fully stated, or at least there is no simple statement of the theory, as it would be expressed by an infinite series of relative statements at each order in the hierarchy. Does this infinite chain mean the theory is not stateable? Even though Carnap clearly had stated it in ESO? This will be explored further in section III. It seems to be contradictory that <ESO> becomes un-stateable aside from an infinite chain of relative statements, and it further seems unfaithful to Carnap's position that <ESO> be internal to such a regressive picture when it was intended as a singular global statement. A *vertical* regress of the meta-framework hierarchy where <ESO> is true relative to a higher-order framework does not account for the *horizontal* global truth of <ESO> in all of the hierarchies. <ESO> needs to have *horizontally* global scope *across* all frameworks, not just to be true *vertically up* through all of the meta-languages of one framework. I thus move on to the final option on the internal horn: a global sentence that retains global scope without a global framework.

---

[250] Bentham (1932) similarly states that his global fictionalism *is* a useful fiction. The commitment to fictionalism is at the meta-level as the theory isn't put forward as true.

II.iii. A global sentence.

If we wish to treat <ESO> as internal, then the two options we have addressed so far for doing so were to treat it as internal to a semantically closed global framework or internal to an infinitely regressive hierarchy of meta-level frameworks. The hierarchy did not retain global scope and so is to be rejected, leaving us with the global framework. This global framework is semantically closed and so does not experience regress problems as it does not make a distinction between object and meta-language, by containing its own truth predicate. Yet this global framework suffered from Russell's Paradox. So the next option is to deny a global framework and instead aim to retain ESO's global scope in a non-paradoxical way with a global sentence.

We will take <ESO> as our global sentence by being schematic for instances that are true individually in each and every framework. Rather than having one global framework there are now a multitude of frameworks, and in each and every one of these frameworks that framework's version of <ESO> comes out as true. This global sentence retains global scope in a slightly different, weaker sense than a global framework, by having a sentence form that has instances that are true in all frameworks.[251] We acknowledged earlier, at the start of section II, the possibility of frameworks that do not mention <ESO> or whose rules entail that <ESO> is false. What we are considering now stipulates (or assumes) that there are no such frameworks, and that for *every* framework, a framework relative instance of <ESO> is true. <ESO> is therefore true in every framework by treating frameworks as languages, and we generate <ESO> axiomatically in all languages that have a predicate for being meaningful and a predicate for being a language.

---

[251] Hales (2006) defends global scale relativism in a similar way – that it is true relative to all perspectives, so globally true in relativistically kosher way.

All propositions that are not rendered meaningful in a language are meaningless (as the predicate of meaningfulness does not apply to them). This itself is an internal proposition, and an analytic, trivial truth. With the predicate of being a language we can conceive of the language used *as a language,* and furthermore as a language among many. From a language that contains both the predicate for meaningfulness and the predicate for being a language, we can generate the following claim: 'in any language with a predicate of meaningfulness I can generate <ESO> in that language as an internal truth'. That is also an internal statement, within the language talking about any language. Using the predicate of being a language with the universal quantifier gives the Carnapian the global scope to talk of all languages from within one language, such that each language can truthfully assert a framework-relative version of <ESO>. And therefore <ESO> becomes global in an internal way.[252]

We have ended up retaining global scope with an internal <ESO> by having multiple <ESO> sentences, one coming out true for each and every language. The problem with this option is that Carnap presents himself as saying *one* thing *about all* frameworks, rather than *many* things (one thing *in each* framework). Do each of the individual <ESO> sentences capture what is being said in ESO? It seems not as ESO puts forward a global claim about *all sentences*. We would want to know what is common to all of the individual <ESO> sentences and we cannot do that without appeal to a global framework. We seem to be able to say meaningfully that <ESO> is true in all frameworks so we end up saying something about the totality of those frameworks again. We recognize the truth of this global statement about all frameworks but cannot assert it here as we only can assert each individual <ESO>. If we are willing to assert each individual <ESO> then we should be willing to assert the universal statement that describes how <ESO> is true in all frameworks, otherwise we unnecessarily restrict what we can assert.

[252] Special thanks goes to Tom Stoneham for this suggestion of individual <ESO>'s.

In acknowledging that in every framework we have got this framework relative <ESO> sentence, we should be able to say that <ESO> is true in all of them. We have all the particular <ESO> sentences, which together entail the universal claim, but we cannot assert the universal claim as it needs a global framework to assert it within. The sum of all the <ESO> sentences just gives you the statement that <ESO> is true in every framework. Given that <ESO> is the same sentence in all of the frameworks, we have *one* sentence that is true for all of them, but we cannot assert this sentence as it would be global, requiring a global framework. We want to assert that <ESO> is true for all of them but we cannot talk about all of them without totalizing and speaking of all of them from within a global framework. We do not escape the totalisation problem that we saw with the global framework as we still talk about the totality of all the frameworks – the framework of all frameworks. If we take all the individual <ESO> sentences, and quantify over them, then that quantificational sentence must belong to some framework. But it cannot belong to any of the individual frameworks and so has to belong to the global framework, which encounters Russell's Paradox.

An interesting parallel can be made here with regard to axioms and an axiom schema. Arguably, we only accept the schema because we accept the general claim, as we only believe individual instances of the schema because we believe the generalizations from which they follow. Therefore, the analogy is that once we have accepted all the individual instances, much like we accept all the individual <ESO> sentences, we ought to accept the general schema, much like we ought to accept the global <ESO>. Having recognized the truth of all the individual instances we thus recognize the truth of the global generalization, and if we do not then we could not have derived all of the individual instances. This is made clear in the debate between first order and second order logicians, where Hilbert (as a first order logician) does not assert the general claim even when he asserts the instances, and Kreisel and

Shapiro (as second order logicians) argue that we have to accept the generalization with its instances.[253] When in first order logic, we can only accept every instance of an induction schema but not the generalization (due to the limitations in the language of first order logic), whereas in second order logic, we can also accept the global general claim as the language is richer. Shapiro describes this situation:

> In the theory itself, as formulated in the object-language, each instance of the scheme is a (separate) axiom. Kreisel argued that this is an un-natural way to codify a mathematical theory like that of arithmetic of real analysis. Suppose, for example, that someone is asked why he believes that each instance of the completeness scheme of first-order real analysis is true of the real numbers. It is, of course, out of the question to give a separate justification for each of the axioms. Nor can one claim that the scheme characterizes the real numbers since, as we have seen, no first-order axiomatization can characterize any infinite structure. Kreisel argued that the reason mathematicians believe the instances of the axiom scheme is that each instance follows from the single second-order completeness *axiom*.[254]

This second order axiom is the generalization, the global statement, and it is required (and entailed) by the totality of the individual instances. From all of our individual <ESO>'s then, we derive the one global <ESO>.

We should thus be able to make the global statement (if we were willing to make all of the individual statements), and so should resort back to having a global framework (in order to make the global statement within it). It does not make sense to deny the global statement just for the sake of avoiding the paradoxical situation we end up in with the

---

[253] Shapiro (2005) p776, Kreisel (1967), Hilbert (1928)
[254] Shapiro (2005) p776

global framework. In holding that paradoxical contradictions are completely unacceptable one then rejects the global sentence <ESO> and the global framework it is made within. But in acknowledging that the global sentence is completely acceptable (by accepting all of the individual instances), we must also accept the paradoxical global framework and the contradiction that is derived from it. The debate then becomes over which starting point is more plausible – whether we accept contradictions or reject globally true statements. It simply comes down to what is more palatable to accept, a true contradiction (from the paradoxical global framework) or the (unmotivated) rejection of a true global statement. Since I believe that the truth of the individual <ESO> sentences in each and every framework entails the universal <ESO> sentence in the global framework, I argue that the option of looking to this global sentence does not escape the paradox.

What I have shown, therefore, is that the internal horn has two options (which collapse into one) if we want to preserve the global scope of ESO – with a global framework, or with a global sentence that then entails a global framework. Otherwise, we deny the global scope of ESO with an infinite regressive hierarchy of frameworks. All these options resulted in a contradiction, since the hierarchy results in <ESO> never being fully asserted (yet it is asserted in ESO), and a global sentence entails the global framework which encounters Russell's Paradox. Since Carnap put forward ESO as having global scope, the most faithful solution to do justice to his position so far would be that of a global framework. This is in line with his views on languages being closed, and preserves the intended universal truth of <ESO>. Since this results in a paradoxical state that led to contradiction, Carnap would then need to embrace such a contradiction – hence his route towards dialetheism. I now explore the second horn of Carnap's dilemma, taking <ESO> as external, which also presents two options: a Verificationist and a Wittgensteinian approach. In the next section I show that these too lead to contradiction.

III. Horn 2 – External.

III.i. Verificationist's recommendation.

Given that Carnap seemed to put forward his theory in ESO as describing what *all* frameworks are like, then it seems that <ESO> must be framework independent, and as such external. In order to capture the point that <ESO> is making, it needs to be true not relative to only some frameworks. However, if <ESO> is itself external, and if <ESO> is correct, then <ESO> becomes meaningless, and we are involved in a contradictory or paradoxical situation when <ESO> self-references and self-refutes. Similarly to how we saw that Verificationism encounters self-reference, due to the standards set in <ESO>, <ESO> itself fails to meet such standards. The standards are that in order to be meaningful it must be internal, yet if <ESO> is external then it must be meaningless *according to <ESO> itself.* As we saw with the Verificationists in section I.ii, their way out of their self-reference problem was to argue that their position was not in fact asserted as a proposition, but rather merely as a recommendation, so as a suggestion as such it was not held to the same standards as it prescribed for propositions. The Carnapian can make a parallel move to the Verificationists stating that <ESO> is not a sentence to be asserted and so need not meet the conditions for meaningful sentences. As Carnap describes, some things are just not assertable:

> The thesis of the reality of the thing world cannot be among these [assertable] statements, because it cannot be formulated in the thing language or, it seems, in any other theoretical language.[255]

---

[255] Carnap (1950) p 23. However the parallel cannot be exactly made, as in the case of Carnap's quote he concludes that there is no such thesis, not that it is somehow true but un-assertable. Since there is such a thesis as ESO, and <ESO> is asserted, it seems that this route is not available to the Carnapian without contradiction.

So, there are just some ideas that are inexpressible in a language, and perhaps <ESO> is one of those things. More likely, Carnap may have thought that his whole theory in ESO as a theory is not an assertable statement since it is not a matter of theoretical questioning, and as such would be rendered (in the same way as other EQ's or external statements) as simply the pragmatic choosing and acceptance of ESO. To try and assert this theory is like trying to assert the thesis of the reality of the thing world – it cannot be done meaningfully. So it seems like his own theory too cannot be formulated in any theoretical language. To be reduced to this sort of external statement about practicality is a concession that <ESO> cannot be up for truth evaluation as the theory ESO is non-cognitive in an external way. On the external horn in this way, Carnap could simply adopt a non-cognitive attitude towards <ESO>, and suggest that we should accept it because it is useful. Carnap would then have to put forward ESO only as *practical* to do so, in that there are other theories but ESO should be chosen on pragmatic grounds, as a recommendation much like the Verificationist response. However, ESO claimed to tell us what meaningful language *is*, not how it is *useful* to conceive of language, as it was meant to show metaphysics to *be* meaningless rather than it just be helpful to describe metaphysics that way. In terms of truth, we may ask if <ESO> is externally True or relatively true internal to a framework, and if <ESO> is external then it would be appear to be True, and it seemed Carnap put it forward as being True rather than just a practical way of thinking.

If we take acceptance of theories (like ESO) as similar to acceptance of frameworks then we could take <ESO> as external but not assertable:

> The acceptance [of a framework] cannot be judged as being either true or false because it is not an assertion.[256]

---

[256] Carnap (1950) p29

This may prevent <ESO> from being asserted and hence prevent it from being something that is *said* either internal or external to a framework, and as such is a technical solution to the self-reference problem. ESO can no longer apply to itself if ESO is not something that can be true or false. However, if ESO is non-cognitive in this way then ESO is not true, whereas Carnap appeared to be putting forward a theory in ESO that he believed to be true. The concession here would again be that ESO is a merely pragmatic theory. This is in line with a Verificationist response:

> The use of the material mode of speech leads, on the other hand, to a disregard of the relativity to language of philosophical sentences; it is responsible for an erroneous conception of philosophical sentences as absolute. It is especially to be noted that the statement of a philosophical thesis sometimes represents not an assertion but a suggestion. Any dispute about the truth or falsehood of such a thesis is quite mistaken, a mere empty battle of words; we can at most discuss the utility of the proposal or investigate its consequences.[257]

In order to accept ESO we need to be able to account for its usefulness. The problem with this solution is that it appears to be in tension with what Carnap actually put forward in ESO. As discussed above, he seemed to intend to show that ESO was true. Furthermore, he did *assert* <ESO>, he asserted it within the ESO paper! In this sense Carnap ends up in contradiction with himself, with regard to the assertion and non-assertion of <ESO>. In trying to prevent <ESO> from being both meaningful and meaningless (by avoiding the Liar Paradox that arises from taking <ESO> as external and correct), <ESO> becomes both assertable and non-assertable (by being claimed to be un-asserted but is asserted by Carnap). So in trying to escape one contradiction Carnap

---

[257] Carnap (1934a) p299

ends up in another.[258] If this is to be the preferred solution to the self-reference problem then Carnap needs to adopt this contradictory conclusion. Such contradictions lead him to dialetheism, which is the topic of section V. Next I move onto the Wittgensteinian response to self-reference which is the alternative, but related, option for horn 2.

III.ii. Wittgenstein's non-assertion.

We saw in section II.i that Carnap rejected Wittgenstein's account of language – that there should be only one language (no meta-language) and that there is no language of syntax. Wittgenstein holds that we only 'show' syntax as it cannot be 'said', so there is similarity between Wittgenstein's 'showing' with the external option of 'non-assertion' and the Verificationist's 'recommendation'. They all prescribe to not assert (say) the theory but rather to do something less than assertion (to show, suggest, or recommend) in order to avoid self-reference. Wittgenstein resorts to showing since he conceded that any saying, including his own, is meaningless. But Carnap explicitly rejects this Wittgensteinian move:

> Wittgenstein's second negative thesis states that the logic of science ('philosophy') cannot be formulated... According to this, the investigations of the logic of science contain no sentences, but merely more of less vague explanations which the reader must subsequently recognise as pseudo-sentences and abandon. Such an interpretation of the logic of science is certainly very unsatisfactory.[259]

> Wittgenstein has represented with especial emphasis the thesis of the meaninglessness of metaphysical propositions and of the

---

[258] This is described by Priest as the 'persistence of contradiction' (2002 p229).
[259] Carnap (1934a) p283

identity of philosophy and the logic of science; especially through him has the Vienna Circle been developed on this point. How now does Wittgenstein dispose of the objection that his own propositions are also meaningless? He doesn't at all; he agrees with it! He is of the opinion that the non-metaphysical philosophy also has no propositions; it operates with words, the meaninglessness of which in the end it itself must recognise… We shall try in the following to give in place of this radically negative answer a positive answer to the question of the character of the propositions of the logic of science and thereby of philosophy.[260]

So from these quotes it seems we cannot take the option of treating <ESO> as meaningless as a plausible option for Carnap since he rejects it as being very unsatisfactory in Wittgenstein's case. His positive answer in place of Wittgenstein's negative answer was simply the other Wittgensteinian move of 'showing' not 'saying' the theory, rather than further stating that it is meaningless. It is not meaningless if it is reframed as the non-cognitive suggestion of adopting ESO, so there is no need to take the extra step of treating ESO as itself meaningless. The strategy, then, is to take <ESO> as external, but to reframe it in the same way as EQ's are reframed, and to pose them as being the pragmatic question as to whether to adopt the framework at hand. So, <ESO> being external is simply the pragmatic issue of whether ESO is useful to adopt. <ESO> continues not to be asserted as it is not a theoretical matter fit for assertion, but this is *not* because <ESO> is conceded as meaningless in the Wittgensteinian way. <ESO> is meaningful but only on the pragmatic grounds that ESO is useful. Yet this also leads to contradiction, since Carnap *does* assert <ESO> in ESO, so to claim that the theory is beyond the limits of assertion is to lead Carnap once more back to contradiction. Contradictions thus occurred on both horns, and I recommend that Carnap embrace them in a dialetheist fashion.

---

[260] Carnap (1934b) p7-8

IV. Priest and the Limits of Thought.

For Carnap's ESO, and other meta-theoretical positions, such as the Vienna Circle's Verificationism, Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*, and Kant's transcendental dialectic, the main point is to draw a limit by providing a boundary to legitimate thought. Carnap's IQ/EQ distinction in ESO draws a limit to thought, namely a limit to meaningful language usage, with linguistic frameworks providing the boundaries. When language is used internal to frameworks it is meaningful, when we attempt to use it external to frameworks it is meaningless, so the framework boundary between the internal and external is the limit. Carnap argues that the limit to meaningful language is bound by frameworks, and this leaves him in a dilemma of whether his own theory is within or without those limits. This dilemma is produced from the self-reference problem, but this has its own roots in something deeper, and that is to do with the aim of drawing a limit to thought ('thought' construed very widely here to include language, concepts, iteration, expression, etc.).

As Wittgenstein describes: "in order to be able to draw a limit to thought, we should have to find both sides of the limit thinkable."[261] So when Carnap attempts to draw a limit to meaningful language he is required to transcend that limit in order to place it. He then goes on to use language to describe where that limit is, and in so doing has gone beyond the limit that he placed. For Carnap to say what cannot be expressed meaningfully he has to express that very thing: "whereof one cannot speak, thereof one has just contradicted oneself."[262] This idea of going beyond the limits of thought is described at length in Priest's (2002) book *Beyond the Limits of Thought* (hereon 'BLT'). Priest argues that the limits of thought are boundaries beyond which certain

---

[261] Found in Pears and McGuinness (trans.) (1961) introduction
[262] Priest (2002) p233

conceptual processes cannot go, and are subject to true contradictions by simultaneously going beyond the boundary, so boundaries are the sites of dialetheias. BLT shows a necessary relationship between limits and contradiction, and I hope to show a relationship between sceptical global meta-theories and self-reference, so metametaphysical theories like ESO result in contradiction. Carnap's views fit a pattern established by Priest in BLT, and this is problematic for other metametaphysical views (as views that are sceptical and have global scope) since unless they adopt dialetheism they wont be able to meta-theorize globally.

Contradictions that arise at the limits of thought are generated by the 'Inclosure Schema'[263] (outlined on the next page). For Priest in BLT, the limits of thought come together in the shape of self-reference paradoxes, each instantiating this Inclosure Schema. The contradictions that follow from the Schema are generated by creating totalising sets of properties and breaking out of the totalities with a diagonaliser. This diagonaliser is of the sort in Cantor's Theorem.[264] The purpose of diagonalisation is to break through boundaries of totalities, sets, or lists. Priest describes the process in the following way: Given a list of objects of a certain kind we have a construction which defines a new object of this kind by systematically destroying the possibility of its identity with each object on the list. The new object may be said to 'diagonalise out' of the list.[265]

The nature of a diagonaliser gives it the power to transcend totalities. When we consider a totality, there is nowhere consistent for the diagonaliser to go. Once given a totality we can then use the totality to

---

[263] Priest (2002) p276. There have been many papers challenging this Inclosure Schema as not encompassing all such paradoxes, which I do not have space to address.
[264] Cantor (1892) clarified that contradictions occur by giving a formal understanding of boundary transcendence with diagonalisation. His theorem states that for any collection there is a bigger one. His paradox states for any set x there is no 1-1 mapping between x and the power set of x.
[265] Priest (2002) p119

define a new element, which then can be shown by diagonalisation to be both inside and outside that totality. A contradiction arises when the diagonalisation operation generates an object that it is both *in* and *not in* that totality in this way. There will always be a thing that is both within the totality (a state called 'Closure') and without it (a state called 'Transcendence') - this thing is produced by the diagonaliser. Whenever there is a totality, or a global scope, there will always be something that is both included and not included in the totality and so included and not included in the global scope. As Priest describes "an immovable force [the diagonaliser] meets an irresistible object [the totality]."[266] Due to diagonalisation, then, all global theories will have problems with the object produced by the diagonaliser, and will be left in contradiction.

The Inclosure Schema is formulated as such, where φ is a property, δ is a diagonaliser, Ω is the totality, and ψ is a condition:

(1) $\Omega = \{y : \varphi(y)\}$ exists, and $\psi(\Omega)$

(2) if x is a subset of Ω, and $\psi(x)$:

　　(a) $\delta(x) \notin x$; (b) $\delta(x) \in \Omega$

Therefore, $\delta(\Omega) \notin \Omega$ and $\delta(\Omega) \in \Omega$

Clause 1 states that there exists a totality of things of a certain kind that meet a certain condition, whilst 2a provides us with Transcendence and 2b with Closure for every subset of the totality. The very nature of the diagonaliser ensures that the value the diagonaliser assigns to a subset x of Ω does not belong to the subset x, as it goes beyond the subset x by diagonalising out of it, giving Transcendence. Simultaneously, the nature of the totality that is guaranteed in clause 1 ensures that this diagonalised value remains a member of that totality. When we apply this schema to itself, when subset x *is* Ω, a contradiction is generated.

---

[266] Priest (2002) p233

The problematic element here is the totality. Given that global theories wish to theorize about a totality, they will encounter a diagonalised object that destroys that totality. For Carnap, his problematic totality was the framework of all frameworks, or the set of all meaningful sentences, with a global scope encompassing that totality. On the external horn, considering the totality of all sentences, we found a sentence that came out both meaningful and meaningless (<ESO>).[267] On the internal horn, considering the totality of all frameworks, we found a framework that both spoke about itself and did not speak about itself (F). Thus, when we considered a totality, we found something that was both within (Closure) and without (Transcendent) it. This destroys the global nature of the theory. The lesson is that if we want to theorize globally, the totality that the global scope ranges over will be open to diagonalisation and contradiction, hence leading towards dialetheism.

Usually, when a contradiction is derived from a theory it is taken as a reductio ad absurdum for that theory, since contradictions are treated as bad things.[268] But, if we have good reasons for accepting a position and can see its virtues, like I have tried to show in this thesis with regard to Neo-Carnapian Quietism, then why should a contradiction spoil it all and lead to its rejection? I have not aimed to defend dialetheism, but rather to show that contradictions may be inevitable in metametaphysics. Priest argues in BLT that to use the contradiction as a

---

[267] Given that Carnap allows for the same set of words to be interpreted as internal or external, perhaps <ESO> coming out as both meaningful and meaningless is just due to two different interpretations of the one sentenece <ESO> - one as internal and one as external. However, this does not defuse the paradoxical situation since we derived the contradiction even when holding *one* interpretation fixed: when we interpreted <ESO> as external, we derived that it was meaningful *and* meaningless.

[268] We tend to use Russell's Paradox to show the totality of the set of all sets is not tenable. And we tend to use the Liar Paradox to show that a universal semantically closed language is not tenable. But here I have used the paradoxes to show that the standard intuition to use them as reductios is not tenable, as we need not deny the totality or the universal language (as doing so is rejecting too much). So what is needed is a general criterion of when to treat contradictions as reductios and when they are acceptable. Here I have just given an example of when it is acceptable (in Carnap's case). The value in Carnap's theory makes it worth keeping the contradiction.

reductio may only misplace the contradiction elsewhere rather than removing the problem altogether, as a contradiction from one limit of thought may simply reappear as a contradiction at another limit of thought, and so rejecting one may just lead to another. We have seen that contradictions result from positions that discuss totalities or limits, such as global meta-theories, and so rejecting one position on the basis of the contradiction is futile when all the other positions of that type (which we do not want to reject) will encounter similar contradictions.

As Priest has shown, we cannot simply reject this result by rejecting the idea that there are limits or totalities.[269] He states: "it is without doubt that there are limits"; "given notions like set or ordinal, reason forces us to conceive of the totality of things satisfying it"; and even cites Kant as stating that "totalisation is conceptually unavoidable."[270] Furthermore, we seem to be happy with quantification, yet quantifying presupposes a corresponding totality of what to quantify over, namely a domain. The standard model theoretic account of quantification says that we quantify over domains as sets, and as soon as we start talking about sets we start to think of these sets as having boundaries and as being totalities. Limits and totalities therefore are integral to the way that we talk and do philosophy, and cannot so easily be dispensed of. Consequently, theories that discuss limits and totalities ought not be rejected on this basis. Since these theories lead to contradiction, we end up having to bite some dialethic bullets, and having to concede to Priest that "there are contradictory statements about limits that are true."[271]

---

[269] Other responses to the problem are: Zermelo-Frankel set theory which states that the totality does not exist; parameterisation to prevent the paradox; Russell's vicious circle principle which states that whatever involves all of a collection must not be one of that collection. Priest argues that the latter responses do not cease to result in contradiction. And with regard to denying the existence of the totality, this goes against Cantor's Domain Principle which states that whenever there are things of a certain kind there are all of those things, and for every potential infinity there is a corresponding actual infinity. Priest (2002 p280) finds the Domain Principle patent.

[270] Priest (2002) p3, p162, and p86

[271] Priest (2002) p295

It seems that if we want to theorize globally about totalities and limits at all, like ESO does, then we must expect to encounter contradictions. Any theory with global scope that tries to place limits will encounter diagonalisation issues, as the diagonaliser destroys the global totality. The *metametameta*physical contribution that I am making here is that if we want to accept *metameta*physical theories, then we need to also accept contradictions, and as such we need dialetheism. If we accept a theory and a contradiction that comes with it, then we need to consider ourselves dialetheist, since this is the position that allows for such true contradictions. I will spend the next section V defending dialetheism and true contradictions in the case of the Neo-Carnapian Quietist.

<div align="center">

V. Dialetheism.

</div>

It is worth noting a few important aspects of dialetheism which may help to reduce the knee-jerk reaction against it. First, dialetheism is about negation, and does not interfere with our account of predication. A contradiction may be true not because of the predicate involved but because of the notion of negation involved, and this notion of negation need not be considered as objectionable.[272] Second, dialetheism is committed to the truth of *some* contradictions, and not all of them, and may in fact not be committed to any more than one. So if a theory that is worth holding exhibits a contradiction, we may hold on to the theory and the contradiction with dialetheism, and this does not mean that we then believe *all* contradictions are true. Third, dialetheism has a paraconsistent logic where 'explosion' fails and as such when a contradiction is said to be true this does not entail everything. Nothing more follows from the contradiction being true other than *that one* contradiction being true. Fourth, dialetheism does not just accept any old contradiction, only the ones worth accepting, and so each is taken

---

[272] This objection from predication was found in Priest (2002 p272-273) from Zalta.

on its own merits and assessed accordingly. So, the Carnapian need not commit themselves to a weird account of predication, nor to the truth of all contradictions, nor to the entailment of everything from a true contradiction, and also may choose not to hold any other contradictions as being true except for the one that they need to be true – the contradiction that arises from their drawing of a limit to thought.

So is there anything objectionable about these contradictions found at the limits of thought?[273] Well, these are contradictory *statements about limits*, they do not state that there are existing contradictory objects, the only thing that is contradictory in these cases is the statement itself. It cannot be objected then that there cannot *exist* contradictory objects, since the contradictions associated with the limits of thought do not entail the existence of such contradictory objects. Furthermore, for the Carnapian, existence is not even metaphysical due to quietism, so contradictory objects cannot be said to be metaphysically objectionable when metaphysically quiet. Many objections to true contradictions have stemmed from a metaphysical realism and the thought that reality cannot contain such things, but in not having such a reality then this objection does not hold. Bearing in mind that the law of non-contradiction originates from metaphysics, and then the logical law was made to fit, without the metaphysical considerations there is no need to hold on to such a logical law, and without the metaphysical objections, there is nothing wrong with *not* having such a logical law. Not all contradictions need to be said to be false when you are a quietist, as the original reasons for saying they are false were *metaphysically* motivated.

If dialetheism is accepted, then a paraconsistent logic must be subscribed to, as Priest states: "One does not have to be a dialetheist to subscribe to the correctness of a paraconsistent logic, though if one is,

---

[273] See Priest (1987) (1998) (2006) where he argues against contradictions being bad.

one will."[274] Paraconsistent logic is a logic very much like classical logic, with only a few modifications. Firstly, negation is not explosive, and so Boolean negation is rejected. This is because if some and *only some* contradictions are said to be true then these contradictions cannot imply *everything* else including other contradictions. Secondly, a truth evaluation is a relation and not a function, and there will be four truth values instead of two, namely T, F, TF, and neither T nor F. Truth and falsity are therefore not exclusive and exhaustive which is what allows for some contradictions to be true. Since paraconsistent logic allows for some contradictions to be true, then a dialetheist (who is committed to the truth of some contradictions) requires a paraconsistent logic to make sense of their dialetheism in a formal way. As Carnap employed a principle of tolerance towards logic he allowed one to accept whichever logic they felt was useful to their cause, and as such he may have been tolerant to the adoption of a paraconsistent logic. This is one way in which Carnap may be shown to be open to the possibility of dialetheism.

Carnap never considers a nonclassical logic like that of paraconsistency however he does seem to embrace a logical pluralism that would allow for the adoption of nonclassical logics. His logical pluralism is derived from his principle of tolerance, as he famously stated: "In logic there are no morals. Everyone can construct his logic, i.e. his language form, however he wants."[275] So there is no restriction on which logic you may adopt, and in the same way as linguistic frameworks we may just select the one we find to be most useful to us without having to consider if it is the 'correct' one or not, as there are no 'morals'. So, there is nothing stopping someone from adopting a paraconsistent framework or a dialetheist framework. And, there is nothing to suggest that one could not hold inconsistent frameworks (especially since they are fictions)[276], and so the overarching logic must be paraconsistent in order to account

---

[274] Priest (1998) p416
[275] Carnap (1934a) p52
[276] Currie (1990 p55) explains that fictions can be inconsistent and even impossible.

for the inconsistency. The only rejection that Carnap may have made to such a picture would be that it was not practical to adopt, but that still ought not get in the way of his tolerance for the *possibility* of adopting them. With such tolerance towards linguistic frameworks and logics, it seems like Carnap needs to be dialetheist in order to allow for these possibilities and need not be opposed to endorsing dialetheism.[277]

Dialetheism allows for Carnap's quietism to not extend to his theory ESO itself, so that Carnap can state the theory about quietism in a meaningful way whilst everything else remains quiet. This is the way to overcome the Wittgensteinian quietist concession that the theory itself is meaningless. Since we saw that Carnap explicitly rejects the Wittgensteinian move, he automatically flips to the dialetheist alternative. We saw that in taking the first horn of the dilemma and treating <ESO> as internal also would lead to an acceptance of dialetheism, since if we embarked on a hierarchy regress then the position would become un-assertable (yet Carnap asserts it), and if we rejected the regress in favor of a global semantically closed framework then we encounter Russell's Paradox (and we saw that a global sentence led to this too). In taking the second horn of the dilemma and treating <ESO> as external, we were again led to contradiction from encountering a Liar-style paradox or by again claiming the position to be un-assertable whilst asserting it. So, any option that Carnap takes forces him into one contradiction or another, as Priest expects would happen, since contradictions at one limit can show up at another limit. Therefore, Carnap *ought* to be interpreted in a dialetheist way in order to accommodate for such contradictions that derive from his ESO when the theory references itself. I should emphasize that I am not attempting to put forward a more accurate historical reading of Carnap, but rather I am attempting to put forward a new interpretation that I believe is inevitable due to his ESO aiming to draw a limit to thought.

---

[277] But there is the issue as to whether the dialetheism is internal or/and external.

In order to help clarify that I am not trying to rewrite the history books, I look to Priest, Routley, and Norman who distinguish between those who *explicitly* embrace contradictions and those who do so *implicitly*:

> An author may not explicitly say that both A and ~A hold, or hold in a given theory, but what is said obviously implies that they do, and the author can be assumed to be aware that they do, or a case can be made that the author is aware of this. In such cases the approach is still *explicitly* paraconsistent. But an author may not be (clearly) apprised of what his or her position (obviously) implies, in which event the position will be either *implicitly* paraconsistent or else trivial, depending on the underlying logic adopted.[278]

We could therefore reinterpret Carnap as being implicitly dialetheist (or paraconsistent), since he does not openly endorse such a view yet his position *requires* him to do so. On the other hand, I can put forward and stipulate the Neo-Carnapian Quietist position as being explicitly dialetheist (or paraconsistent) by showing the contradictions that arise and how this can be accounted for. This need not be a reductio of the position since such an issue would occur for any position that draws a limit to thought, and we (or at least I) have good reasons to otherwise believe Carnap's position is plausible in the form of Neo-Carnapian Quietism. And also it seems plausible that a Carnapian need not object to such a reading of this position as being dialetheist, given Carnap's principle of tolerance. The self-referential paradox inherent in Carnap's theory thus need not lead someone to reject it, as in the words of Quine:

> One man's antinomy can be another man's veridical paradox, and one man's veridical paradox can be another man's platitude.[279]

---

[278] Priest, Routley, and Norman (1989) p1

[279] Quine (1976) p14

VI. Conclusion.

In this chapter I hope to have shown that Carnap's theory encounters the self-reference problem which leads him into contradictions that are typical of those found at the limits of thought. I explored different ways of formulating Carnap's position suggesting the most faithful one as one that derives a contradiction at these typical places. In Carnap's attempt to draw a limit to the meaningfully expressible, he finds himself straddling both sides of this limit in expressing it in ESO. Metaphysics is argued to be beyond those limits, and as such is described as Transcendent, but in describing it meaningfully as such it is automatically placed back in the Closure. <ESO> therefore experiences both Transcendence and Closure, by being both within and without the totality of meaningful sentences of the framework. So, Carnap's theory goes beyond the limits of thought, leading to contradiction. The self-reference problem presented itself as a dilemma to Carnap – for him to treat <ESO> itself as an internal or external statement. I explained this dilemma as generating contradictions in the same way as described in Priest's BLT, showing that Carnap's theory fits the self-referential paradoxical structure of theories that draw a limit to thought. Since both of these options result in contradiction, I have concluded that Carnap ought to be considered as an 'implicit' dialetheist and the Neo-Carnapian Quietist as an 'explicit' dialetheist. I have shown how global meta-theories encounter Transcendence and Closure, which together are contradictory and typical of self-referential paradoxes found in theories that aim to draw a limit to thought. (However, this general metametametaphysical conclusion, being global and meta-theoretical, will also be contradictory if it applies to itself!) With the recent surge of interest in Carnap and metametaphysical inquiry from *Metametaphysics* (2009), it is important to understand the self-referential problems they may encounter and the dialetheist solutions that may be offered.

CONCLUSION

In this thesis I have put forward a new metaontological position that I have called 'Neo-Carnapian Quietism'. This Neo-Carnapian view rejects ontology unless it is seen as a matter of pragmatic decision rather than metaphysical discovery. In chapter 1, I set the scene for this position by outlining the Quine-Carnap debate, defending Carnap against Quine's critiques with the help of Yablo in order to motivate Carnapian quietism as a live metaontological position. In chapter 2, I applied this quietism to natural and formal languages, taking insight from Meinongianism to show quantification to be ontologically neutral, and attacking Quinean metaontology that requires otherwise. In chapter 3, I described the Neo-Carnapian position in detail with regard to how fictionalism can be construed in a quietist manner that is suitable for the Neo-Carnapian. Chapter 4 focused on one of the main problems for a Carnapian, namely the self-reference problem, which is due to the Carnapian aim of drawing a limit to meaningful metaphysics whilst simultaneously going beyond such a limit. I suggested at the end of this thesis that the self-reference problem could be solved by an appeal to dialetheism. This opens up a new route for metametaphysics as dialetheist and metaphysics as quietist, which I hope to develop in my future research.

In this thesis I aimed to resolve some historically mistaken assumptions – that Quine and Carnap are rivals, and that Quine's criticisms defeat Carnap's position, resulting in Quine being hailed as the reviver of ontology. Quine, having conceded that ontology is metaphysical, and further argued that it is meaningless unless relative, is thus in all important respects on the same team as Carnap, and what I have argued is that this team should be construed as a quietist relativist team. Ultimately, they are both anti-metaphysics, and with ontology being

located as within the domain of metaphysics as either absolute and meaningless or relative and meaningful, the difference between Quinean I-realism and Carnapian quietism simply becomes one of terminology. Having shown that Quine's attacks on Carnap's quietism fail, I hope to have shown that Carnap's position is not to be ignored or standardly assumed as defeated. The Carnapian position is therefore still on the table, ready to be reframed as my 'Neo-Carnapian Quietism'.

The Neo-Carnapian is quietist, because serious ontology read from our metaphysical external questions cannot be done. The Neo-Carnapian is neither realist nor antirealist, as statements of reality are external and meaningless, and therefore so must be statements of irreality. The Neo-Carnapian says the existence of things cannot be meaningfully questioned externally, and that things only exist relative to frameworks in as much as the framework is useful. Therefore, the Neo-Carnapian is also a type of relativist: existence questions are answerable only relative to frameworks that are chosen pragmatically. The Neo-Carnapian is *externally* non-cognitive: external existence questions are non-cognitive because pragmatic considerations are not evidential for any external truth and as such are not truth-apt and do not have any metaphysical implications. On the other hand, the Neo-Carnapian is *internally* cognitive because a framework can provide right and wrong answers to questions, giving propositions truth-values against the backdrop of the framework's presuppositions. And finally, since Carnap's linguistic frameworks are construed as fictions, ultimately the Neo-Carnapian position is fictionalist. This quietist fictionalist position redirects metaphysical debates about ontology towards pragmatism, and has bearing on any area of philosophy that discusses realism or antirealism about a certain entity or discourse. Thus the impact of this reframing is far reaching, from moral realism to modal realism and Platonism, for example, which will now be said to revolve around the utility of a discourse rather than the metaphysical existence of its posits.

I argue that Neo-Carnapian Quietism trumps Quinean I-realism. I have shown that not only do Quine's attacks on Carnap fail, but also that Quinean methodology for realism fails, by showing that quantification in both natural and formal languages are ontologically neutral and metaphysically quiet. Quantificational terms in natural language like 'some', and quantifiers in formal language like 'Ǝ', are ontologically neutral, and thus domains need not be restricted to include only existent things. Rather the domain can contain all sorts of things, and those that exist are those in the domain that instantiate the predicate for 'exists'. Therefore Quine's method for I-realism fails to get to the ontological commitments of natural language via regimenting into quantified first order logic, as quantification is not a sign of ontological commitment. And so, regardless of the translation from English to logic, Quine cannot derive ontology directly or indirectly from language use.

For Quine's I-realism to be a tenable ontological position, either internal quantificational use of English can provide us with our ontological commitments, or it can be translated into quantificational first order logic to manifest the ontological commitments, in order to derive an ontology for us to be a realist about. I have argued that neither of these options are possible, and as such I-realism is not a form of realism and Quine ought not to be considered a realist at all. The only tenable position left is quietism, and Carnap therefore triumphs in the alleged dispute with Quine. External existential claims are impossible for the Neo-Carnapian as a quietist, and only internal ones are meaningful, but these are *not* to be understood as *ontological*. Rather I put forward two ways to understand Neo-Carnapian *internal* claims of 'existence': (1) by the rules of the fictional framework implying existence, or; (2) by the instantiation of the existence predicate (which is metaphysically quiet) that makes the claim true. With ontologically neutral quantification and a predicate for the metaphysically quiet 'exists', the Neo-Carnapian can be said to be taking insight from a basic form of Meinongianism.

Having motivated quietism by showing quantification to be ontologically neutral, I have shown that we *can* talk about things meaningfully and truthfully *without* ontological commitment or the requirement of existence. Many have assumed otherwise, as in classical logic and standard philosophical theories of language one cannot refer to or speak truthfully of non-existent things, so non-existents have no place in domains of quantification. The impact of rejecting this is huge, since debates in scientific realism, between Nominalists and Platonists for example, rest on and are motivated by the 'predicament' that we are realist about what our scientific theories refer to which problematically includes abstract entities. Once we accept that we can refer truthfully to non-existents then the predicament vanishes: there is no need to say that our theories are false, or that we are committed to abstract entities, or to try to dispense of the entities. By taking a Meinongian perspective, we can see that the debates in the philosophy of science and others rest on the mistaken predicament that truth and reference require existence.

This predicament has also been the main motivation for fictionalism, which traditionally explains how we can avoid ontological commitment to unwanted entities whilst retaining a useful theory or way of talking. I reframe fictionalism under quietism by divorcing fictionalism from its traditional antirealist roots. This new quietist fictionalism has global scope as opposed to traditionally being fictionalist only for specific entities or discourses only. In order to understand the fictionalist aspect of this position I have argued that the 'meta' takes priority. This is my methodological contribution. The Neo-Carnapian does not look to the metaphysics of fiction for clarification on their fictionalism, because as a quietist the Neo-Carnapian denies metaphysics. I therefore argue that we should do metametaphysics before metaphysics, and put a metaontological theory in place before ontological questions are answered. The quietism of the Neo-Carnapian will thus inform their fictionalism and ontology of fiction in turn, not the other way around.

I have described the Neo-Carnapian as quiet with regard to metaphysics, and fictional with regard to linguistic frameworks. To construe the frameworks as fictions is to say that they have value by being useful to adopt, and that they are to be treated similar to how we treat fictions – presupposing them in order to engage with them and assess claims relative to them, and accepting what we presuppose in order to believe the claims that are true relative to them. Fictional frameworks are adopted based on which are most useful, yet this usefulness is not evidential for truth. Usefulness will mean how fruitful and conducive the fiction is to the aim for which the language within that framework is intended. There will be no single fiction that is privileged, because as a quietist, the Neo-Carnapian will deny the very idea of there being a 'right one' due to all the fictional frameworks being as 'correct' as each other (in that none are up for being true due to their non-cognitivism). The only way frameworks are chosen is on pragmatic considerations, so they can be 'better' than each other but the 'best' will not be the 'right one'. The account is typically fictionalist in its escape from ontological commitment whilst maintaining the discourse that may seem to sound realist, and in citing value in the discourse by it being useful to adopt. I have argued that the Neo-Carnapian is *hermeneutic* with regard to its quietism such that we *are* quiet and are in error if we think we are not, but is *revolutionary* with regard to its fictionalism such that we *ought* to treat frameworks as fictions and are in error by not doing so already.

This Neo-Carnapian position thus incorporates elements from Quietism, Meinongianism, and Fictionalism, which may seem at first sight to be incompatible. It is therefore worth emphasizing here that the quietism is the key to understanding the coherency of the position, in particular how it adapts insights from traditional Meinongianism and traditional fictionalism without being identical with either. It is the quietist foundation of the Neo-Carnapian position that allows for seemingly incompatible elements to be reconciled and consistently held together.

Putting the quietism at the centre of the position results in the Meinongianism and fictionalism becoming rather deflated and as such compatible with each other. Therefore Neo-Carnapian Quietism is first and foremost a quietist position, and under quietism it can draw upon ideas from both Meinongianism and fictionalism without inconsistency.

In taking quantification to be ontologically neutral in the Meinongian way, the predicament over how to avoid ontological commitment to the unwanted things we quantify over becomes dissolved. Therefore the main motivation for fictionalism also becomes dissolved. There is no need to talk as if the unwanted things are merely fictional to avoid commitment, when talking of things does not bring commitment in the first place. It is here that Meinongianism and fictionalism seem to be in tension with each other. However, I utilize fictionalism not simply to avoid ontological commitment, but rather to explain *what* our linguistic frameworks are (fictions) and to show that we adopt certain ways of talking for their practical utility rather than their external truth. The Meinongian aspect does the work in allowing us to talk truthfully of things that we *do not* take to exist, whilst the quietism does the work in allowing us to talk without ontological commitment of things that we *do* take to exist. The fictionalism then does the work in explaining what it is that we are talking about by interpreting frameworks as fictions, and justifies our adoption of such frameworks due to their pragmatic utility.

The fictionalist element is thus not an attempt to say our ordinary theories are *false* but useful, since the position is *quiet* about external Truth. What the fictions are doing are replacing Carnap's frameworks as ways of talking with internal standards of truthfulness, that are (unlike Carnap's frameworks) not characterized by analytic framework rules (so as to escape Quine's critique). So the Neo-Carnapian position is fictionalist as it sees frameworks as analogous with fictions in the

sense that their standards of truthfulness are internal and by judging ways of talking on usefulness, rather than appealing to external Truth. Meinongianism becomes relevant because *within* some frameworks we seem to distinguish between the things we quantify over that we take to exist and those that we take not to exist. An internal understanding of the ontology of those frameworks (what it is those frameworks claim to exist) would seem to misread them if it was to take all quantification as being committing. The quiet Meinongian can respect these features of our discourses by separating quantification from internal ontological commitment, and allowing that some discourse may have internal standards of existence that do not track quantifications. This is *quiet* Meinongianism – the things that an internal existence predicate apply to do not have any substantial metaphysical existence, as they are just things that a framework finds useful to single out for special treatment. Fictionalism is thus about viewing frameworks as analogous to fictions in having their own internal standards of correctness even if these are not given by analytic meaning postulates, and Meinongianism is about recognising a distinction *within* frameworks between that framework's internal ontology and its quantified commitments. The Neo-Carnapian thus retains the truth of our talk of all sorts of things in a Meinongian way, whilst judging the talk on its usefulness in a fictionalist way, with the quietist basis of the Neo-Carnapian position creating consistency.

The biggest problem for Neo-Carnapian Quietism has been that of self-reference. This leads the Carnapian (and thus the Neo-Carnapian) into contradictions that are typical of those found at the limits of thought. The self-reference problem presented itself as a dilemma to Carnap – for him to treat his theory itself as being proposed internally or externally. I formalized this dilemma as generating contradictions in the typical ways described by Priest, showing that Carnap's theory fits the self-referential paradoxical structure of theories that draw a limit to thought. On both horns of the dilemma, we end up in contradiction,

derived from analogues of the Liar Paradox and Russell's Paradox – i.e. paradoxes of self-reference. In Carnap's attempt to draw a limit to the meaningfully expressible, he finds himself straddling both sides of this limit in expressing it. Metaphysics is argued to be beyond those limits, and as such is described as Transcendent, but in describing it as such it is automatically placed back in the Closure. The Carnapian theory therefore experiences both Transcendence and Closure, by being both within and without the totality of meaningful sentences. As a result, Carnap's attempt to put forward an anti-metaphysical view ends up in such contradictory realms that are typical of other anti-metaphysical views that also aim to draw a limit to thought. I therefore concluded that Carnap be considered as an 'implicit' dialetheist and the Neo-Carnapian Quietist as an 'explicit' dialetheist where the dialetheism speaks of truth and reality in a way that is acceptable to a quietist.

By the end of this thesis, I hope to have shown how global metatheories, such as the metametaphysical theory of Carnap's quietism, encounter Transcendence and Closure, which together are contradictory and typical of self-referential paradoxes found in theories that aim to draw a limit to thought. Dialetheism is thus inevitable in metametaphysics, since metametaphysical views aim to draw a limit to thought, particularly to metaphysics. This is my *metametameta*physical result – that metametaphysics is dialetheist. I therefore end my thesis on this bombshell: in redirecting metaphysics towards quietism, metametaphysics is redirected towards dialetheism. In order to do metametaphysics and be quiet, we need to be dialetheist. With the recent surge in global positions and metametaphysical inquiry, and therefore in anti-metaphysical views such as Carnap's quietism, it is important to understand the self-referential problems that they may encounter and the dialetheist solutions that may be offered. I hope that in future work I can research these aspects of Carnapian theories, and look further into the consequences of dialetheism for metametaphysics.

GLOSSARY

X, F, T, S, P, L	An entity X, a fiction or framework F, a theory T, a sentence S, a predicate P, and a language L
∃, ∀, Σ, Λ, ℭ	Existential, Universal, Meinongian 'Existential', Meinongian 'Universal', and Particular Quantifiers
E!, φ, Ω, δ, ψ	The existence predicate, a property, the totality, the diagonaliser function, and a condition
true/false	true or false internally and relative to frameworks
True/False	True or False externally and independently
E-realism	External Realism (realism in a metaphysical way)
I-realism	Internal Realism (realism derived internally)
IQ/EQ	Internal Question/External Question
SET	Domains are sets (set-theoretic model theory)
NE	No entity without identity (Quine)
TB	To be is to be a value of a bound variable (Quine)
POC	Principle of Comprehension (Meinongianism)
CP	Characterisation Principle (Meinongianism)
HF	Hermeneutic Fictionalism (descriptive)
RF	Revolutionary Fictionalism (prescriptive)
ESO	Carnap's paper 'Empiricism, Semantics & Ontology'
<ESO>	'All external propositions are meaningless'
BLT	Priest's book *Beyond the Limits of Thought*

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Alspector-Kelly, M. (2001) 'On Quine on Carnap on Ontology', *Philosophical Studies: An International Journal for Philosophy in the Analytic Tradition*, 102.1, 93-122.

Ayer, A. J. (1952) *Language, Truth and Logic,* Dover Publications Inc: New York.

Azzouni, J. (1997) 'Applied mathematics, existential commitment, and the Quine-Putnam indispensability thesis', *Philosophia Mathematica,* 5.3, 193-209.

Azzouni, J. (1998) 'On "On What There Is"', *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly*, 79, 1-18.

Azzouni, J. (2004) *Deflating Existential Consequence: A case for Nominalism,* Oxford University Press.

Azzouni, J. (2007) 'Ontological Commitment in the Vernacular', *Nous*, 41.2, 204-226.

Azzouni, J. (2010) *Talking About Nothing: Numbers, Hallucinations, and Fictions,* Oxford University Press.

Benaceraff, P. (1965) 'What numbers could not be', *Philosophical Review,* 74, 47-73.

Benningson, T. (1999) 'Is Relativism Really Self-Refuting?', *Philosophical Studies,* 94, 211-236.

Bentham, J. (1932) *The Theory of Fictions*, found in Ogden, C. K. (ed.) (2001) *Bentham's Theory of Fictions*, New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company.

Berto, F. (2008) 'Modal Meinongianism for Fictional Objects', *Metaphysica*, 9, 205–218.

Berto, F. (2012) *Existence as a Real Property,* Synthese Library, Springer.

Berto, F. (forthcoming) 'There is an 'Is' in 'There Is': Meinongian Quantification and Existence' found in Torza, A. (ed.) (forthcoming), *Quantifiers, Quantifiers, and Quantifiers,* Synthèse Library, Springer.

Bird, G. H. (1995) 'Carnap and Quine: Internal and External Questions', *Erkenntnis*, 42.1, 41-64.

Boghossian, P. (1997) 'Analyticity' found in Hale, B. and Wright, C. (eds.) (1997) *A Companion to the Philosophy of Language,* 331-368, Oxford, Blackwell.

Bourne, E. C. (2012) 'Fictionalism', *Analysis Advance Access*, 0.0, 1-16.

Bradley, F. H. (1897) *Appearance and Reality,* 2nd edition, Swan Sonnenschein: London.

Brock, S. (2002) 'Fictionalism about Fictional Characters', *Nous*, 36.1, 1-21.

Bueno, O. (2009) 'Mathematical fictionalism' in Bueno. O. and Linnebo, Ø. (eds.) (2009) *New Waves in the Philosophy of Mathematics*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 59–79.

Burgess, J. P. and Rosen, G. (1997) *A Subject with No Object,* Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Burgess, J. P. (2004) 'Mathematics and *Bleak House*', *Philosophia Mathematica,* 12, 18-36.

Byrne, A. (1993) 'Truth in Fiction: The story continued', *Australasian Journal of Philosophy,* 71.1, 24-35.

Cameron, R. P. (2008) 'Truthmakers and Ontological Commitment: Or How to Deal with Complex Objects and Mathematical Ontology without Getting into Trouble', *Philosophical Studies,* 141, 1-18.

Cantor, G. (1892) 'Ueber eine elementare Frage der Mannigfaltigkeitslehre', *Jahresbericht der Deutschen Mathematiker-Vereinigung 1890–1891,* 1, 75–78.

Carnap, R. (1934a) *Logical Syntax of Language,* Routledge Press.

Carnap, R. (1934b) 'On the character of philosophical problems' *Philosophy of Science*, 1.1, 5-19.

Carnap, R. (1950) 'Empiricism, Semantics, and Ontology', *Revue Internationale de Philosophie* 4, 20-40; revised and reprinted in Carnap, R. (1956) *Meaning and Necessity*, 2nd edition, 205-221.

Carnap, R. (1956) *Meaning and Necessity: A Study in Semantics and Modal Logic*, 2nd edition, University of Chicago Press.

Cei, A. and Stoneham, T. (2009) '"Let the occult quality go": Interpreting Berkeley's Metaphysics of Science', *European Journal of Analytic Philosophy,* 5.1, 73-91.

Chalmers, D., Manley, D. and Wasserman, R. (eds.) (2009) *Metametaphysics: New Essays on the Foundations of Ontology,* Oxford University Press.

Chalmers, D. (2011) 'Revisability and Conceptual Change in "Two Dogmas of Empiricism"', *Journal of Philosophy,* 108.8, 387-415.

Cohen, L. J. (1989) *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Induction and Probability,* Oxford Clarendon Press.

Creath, R. (1990) *Dear Carnap, Dear Van: The Quine-Carnap Correspondance and Related Work,* University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles.

Currie, G. (1990) *The Nature of Fiction,* Cambridge University Press.

Currie, G. (1998) 'Realism of character and the value of fiction', in Levinson, J. (ed.) (2001) *Aesthetics and Ethics: Essays at the Intersection,* Cambride University Press, 161-182.

Currie, G. (2010) *Narratives and Narrators: A Philosophy of Stories,* Oxford University Press.

Currie, G. (2012) 'Literature and Truthfulness', in Maclaurin, J. (ed.) (2012) *Rationis Defensor: Essays in Honour of Colin Cheyne*, Springer, 23-31.

Daly, C. J. (2008) 'Fictionalism and the Attitudes', *Philosophical Studies*, 139, 423-440.

Davidson, D. (1973) 'On the very idea of a Conceptual Scheme', *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association,* 47, 5-20.

Eklund, M. (2005) 'Fiction, Indifference, and Ontology', *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 71.3, 557-579.

Eklund, M. (2006a) 'Metaontology', *Philosophy Compass*, 1.3, 317-334.

Eklund, M. (2006b) 'Neo-Fregean Ontology', *Philosophical Perspectives*, 20, 95-121.

Eklund, M. (2009) 'The Frege-Geach Problem and Kalderon's Moral Fictionalism', *The Philosophical Quarterly*, 59.237, 705-712.

Eklund, M. (2011) 'Carnap's Metaontology', *Nous*, 0.0, 1-23.

Field, H. (1980) *Science without Numbers: A Defense of Nominalism*, Oxford: Blackwell.

Field, H. (2008) *Saving Truth from Paradox*, Oxford University Press.

Fine, A. (1993) 'Fictionalism', *Midwest Studies in Philosophy*, XVIII, 1-18.

Fine, A. (1984) 'The Natural Ontological Attitude', found in Boyd, R., Gasper, P. and Trout, J. D. (eds.) (1991) *The Philosophy of Science,* MIT, 261-277.

Fine, K. (1991) 'The Study of Ontology', *Nous*, 25.3, 263-294.

Fine, K. (2001) 'The Question of Realism', *Philosophers' Imprint*, 1.1,1-30.

Fine, K. (2009) 'The Question of Ontology' in Chalmers, D. et al. (eds.) (2009) *Metametaphysics: New Essays on the Foundations of Ontology,* 157-177.

Frege, G. (1884) *Die Grundlagen der Arithmetik: eine logisch-mathematische Untersuchung uber den Begriff der Zahl,* Breslau: W. Koebner. Translated by Austin, J. L. (1974) *The Foundations of Arithmetic: A logico-mathematical enquiry into the concept of number,* 2nd edition, Oxford: Blackwell.

Frege, G. (1892) 'Über Sinn und Bedeutung', in *Zeitschrift für Philosophie und philosophische Kritik*, 100: 25–50. Translated as 'On Sense and Reference' by Black, M. in Geach, P. and Black, M. (eds. and trans.) (1980) *Translations from the Philosophical Writings of Gottlob Frege*, Oxford: Blackwell, 3rd edition.

Gamut, L. (1991) *Logic, Language, and Meaning*, volume II, University of Chicago Press.

Garner, R. (1993) 'Are Convenient Fictions Harmful to Your Health?', *Philosophy East and West*, 43.1, 87-106.

Garner, R. (2007) 'Abolishing Morality', *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice*, 10, 499-513.

Gibson, R. F. (2004) *The Cambridge Companion to Quine*, Cambridge University Press.

Grice, H. P. and Strawson, P. F. (1956) 'In Defense of a Dogma', *The Philosophical Review*, 65.2, 141-158.

Hales, S. (2006) *Relativism and the Foundations of Philosophy,* MIT Press.

Hilbert, D. and Ackermann, W. (1928) *Grundzuge der theoretischen Logik*, Berlin, Springer; translated by Hammond, L., Leckie, G. and Steinhardt, F. (1950) *Principles of mathematical logic,* New York.

Hirsch, E. (2002) 'Quantifier Variance and Realism', *Realism and Relativism*, 12, 51-73.

Hirsch, E. (2005) 'Physical-Object Ontology, Verbal Disputes, and Common Sense', *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 70.1, 67-97.

Hirsch, E. (2008) 'Language, Ontology, and Structure', *Nous*, 42.3, 509-528.

Hirsch, E. (2011) *Quantifier Variance and Realism,* Oxford University Press.

Hofweber, T. (2005) 'A Puzzle About Ontology', *Nous*, 39.2, 256-283.

Hofweber, T. (2007) 'Innocent Statements and Their Metaphysically Loaded Counterparts', *Philosophers' Imprint*, 7.1, 1-33.

Horwich, P. (2004) *From a Deflationary Point of View,* Oxford University Press.

Horwich, P. (2007) 'The Quest For Reality', *Dialectica*, 61.1, 5-16.

Jay, C. (2011) *Realistic Fictionalism*, PhD Thesis found at discovery.ucl.ac.uk/1356103/1/Realistic%20Fictionalism.pdf

Jenkins, C. S. (2006) 'Lewis and Blackburn on quasi-realism and fictionalism', *Analysis*, 66.4, 315-319.

Joyce, R. (2001) *The Myth of Morality*, Cambridge: CUP.

Joyce, R. (2005) 'Moral Fictionalism' in Kalderon, M. (ed.) (2005b) *Fictionalism in Metaphysics,* Oxford University Press, 287-313.

Kalderon, M. E. (2005a) *Moral Fictionalism,* Oxford University Press.

Kalderon, M. E. (ed.) (2005b) *Fictionalism in Metaphysics,* Oxford University Press.

Kalderon, M. E. (2008) 'Moral fictionalism, the Frege-Geach problem, and reasonable inference', *Analysis*, 68.2, 133-143.

Kant, I. (1772) *Prolegomena to any future Metaphysics,* translated and edited by Ellington, J. (1977), Hackett Publishing Company Inc.

Kant, I. (1781) *Critique of Pure Reason*, translated and edited by Guyer, P. and Wood, A. (1997), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kim, J. and Sosa, E. (eds.) (1999) *Metaphysics: An Anthology,* Blackwell Publishers Ltd.

Kreisel, G. (1967) 'Informal rigour and completeness proofs', in Lakatos, I. (ed.) *Problems in the philosophy of mathematics*, Amsterdam, 138-186.

Kripke, S. (1975) 'Outline of a Theory of Truth', *The Journal of Philosophy*, 72, 690–716.

Kroon, F. (2001) 'The Semantics of 'Things in Themselves': A Deflationary Account', *The Philosophical Quarterly*, 51.203.

Lamarque, P. and Olsen, S. (1994) *Truth, Fiction, and Literature: A Philosophical Perspective,* New York: Oxford University Press.

Lejewski, C. (1954) 'Logic and Existence', *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science,* 5, 104–119.

Leng, M. (2005) 'Revolutionary Fictionalism: A call to arms, *Philosophia Mathematica,* 13.3, 277-293.

Leng, M., Paseau, A., and Potter, M. (2007) *Mathematical Knowledge,* Oxford University Press.

Leng, M. (2010) *Mathematics and Reality,* Oxford University Press.

Lewis, D. (1990) 'Noneism or Allism?', *Mind*, 99.393, 23-31.

Łukasiewicz, J. (1921) 'Logika dwuwartościowa' *Przegląd Filozoficzny* 23, 189–205. Translated as 'Two-valued logic', in Borkowski, L. (ed.) (1970) *Selected Works*, Amsterdam: North-Holland, 89–109.

Meinong, A. (1904) 'Uber Gegenstandstheorie' Translated as 'On the Theory of Objects' in Chisholm, R. (ed.) (1981) *Realism and the Background of Phenomenology*, Glencoe, Ill: Free Press, 76–117.

Melia, J. (1995) 'On What There's Not', *Analysis*, 55.4, 223-229.

Musgrave, A. (1989) 'Noa's Ark – Fine for Realism', *The Philosophical Quarterly*, 39.157, 383-398.

Nolan, D., Restall, G. and West, C. (2005) 'Moral Fictionalism versus the rest', *Australasian Journal of Philosophy,* 83.3, 307-330.

Parsons, T. (1980) *Nonexistent Objects*, Yale University Press.

Pears, D. F. and McGuinness, B. F. (trans.) (1961) Wittgenstein, L. *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Potter, M. (2007) 'What is the problem of mathematical knowledge?', found in Leng, M. et al. (2007) *Mathematical Knowledge,* Oxford University Press, 16-32.

Price, H. (1992) 'Metaphysical Pluralism', *The Journal of Philosophy*, 89.8, 387-409.

Price, H. (2006) 'Quining Naturalism', *The Journal of Philosophy*, 104.8, 375-402.

Price, H. (2011) *Naturalism Without Mirrors,* Oxford University Press.

Priest, G. (1987) *In Contradiction,* Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff.

Priest, G., Routley, R. and Norman, J. (eds.) (1989) *Paraconsistent Logic: Essays on the Inconsistent,* Philosophia Verlag: Munich.

Priest, G. (1998) 'What's So Bad About Contradictions?', *Journal of Philosophy,* 95, 410-426.

Priest, G. (2002) *Beyond the Limits of Thought,* 2nd ed., Clarendon Press.

Priest, G. (2005) *Towards Non-Being. The Logic and Metaphysics of Intentionality,* Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Priest, G. (2006) *Doubt Truth to Be a Liar,* Oxford University Press.

Priest, G. (2008) 'The Closing of the Mind: How the particular quantifier became existentially loaded behind our backs', *The Review of Symbolic Logic,* 1.1, 42-54.

Putnam, H. (1971) *Philosophy of Logic*, New York: Harper.

Putnam, H. (1979) 'Philosophy of Logic', reprinted in *Mathematics Matter and Method: Philosophical Papers, Volume 1,* 2nd edition, Cambridge University Press, 323-357.

Quine, W. V. O. (1948) Appendix: 'On What There Is', reprinted from the *Review of Metaphysics*, 2.5, in *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, Volume 25, 'Freedom, Language, and Reality' (1951) 217-234.

Quine, W. V. O. (1951a) 'On Carnap's views on ontology', *Philosophical Studies,* 2.5, 65-73, reprinted in Quine, W. V. O. (1976) *The Ways of Paradox & Other Essays,* revised edition, New York: Columbia University Press, 203-11.

Quine, W. V. O. (1951b) 'Two Dogmas of Empiricism', *The Philosophical Review*, 60.1, 20-43.

Quine, W. V. O. (1957) 'Speaking of Objects', *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association*, 31, 5-22.

Quine, W. V. O. (1960), *Word and Object*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Quine, W. V. O. (1961) *From A Logical Point Of View,* second edition, Harvard University Press.

Quine, W. V. O. (1964) 'Ontological Reduction and the World of Numbers', *The Journal of Philosophy*, 61.7, 209-216.

Quine, W. V. O. (1968) 'Ontological Relativity', *The Journal of Philosophy*, 65.7, 185-212, reprinted in Quine. W. V. (1969) *Ontological Relativity and other essays,* New York: Columbia University Press, 26-68.

Quine. W. V. O. (1969) *Ontological Relativity and other essays,* New York: Columbia University Press, 26-68.

Quine, W. V. O. (1975) 'On Empirically Equivalent Systems of the World', *Erkenntnis*, 9: 313-328.

Quine, W. V. O. (1976) *The Ways of Paradox and Other Essays,* Revised ed, Harvard University Press.

Quine, W. V. O. (1981) *Theories and Things,* Harvard University Press.

Quine, W. V. O. (1986) *Philosophy of Logic,* Harvard University Press.

Quine, W. V. O. (1992) *Pursuit of Truth,* revised edition, Harvard University Press.

Quine, W. V. O. (2013) *Word and Object*, New Edition, MA: MIT Press.

Reicher, M. (2014) 'Nonexistent Objects', *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), found at http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2014/entries/nonexistent-objects/ accessed May 2015.

Rosen, G. (1990) 'Modal Fictionalism', *Mind,* 99.395, 327-354.

Rosen, G. (1995) 'Modal Fictionalism Fixed', *Analysis*, 55.2, 67-73.

Routley, R. (1982) 'On What There Is Not', *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 43.2, 151-177.

Russell, B. (1903) *Principles of Mathematics,* Cambridge University Press.

Russell, B. (1905) 'On Denoting', *Mind*, New Series, 14.56, 479-493.

Sainsbury, R. M. (2010) *Fiction and Fictionalism,* Routledge.

Shapiro, S. (ed.) (2005) *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Mathematics and Logic,* Oxford University Press.

Sider, T. (2007) 'NeoFregeanism and Quantifier Variance', *Aristotelian Society,* Supplementary Volume 81, 201-232.

Sinnott-Armstrong, W. (2006) *Moral Skepticisms,* New York: Oxford University Press.

Soames, S. (2007) 'The Quine-Carnap Debate on Ontology and Analyticity', *Soochow Journal of Philosophical Studies,* 16, 17-32.

Stalnaker, R. (1973) 'Presuppositions', *The Journal of Philosophical Logic*, 2, 447-457.

Stalnaker, R. (1974) 'Pragmatic presuppositions', in Munitz, M. and Unger, P. (eds.), (1980) *Semantics and Philosophy*, New York University Press, 197–214.

Strawson, P. F. (1967) 'Is Existence Never a Predicate?' *Critica,* 1, 5-15.

Stroud, B. (1984) *The Significance of Philosophical Scepticism,* Oxford University Press.

Tarski, A. (1944) 'The semantic conception of truth: And the foundations of semantics', *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 4.3, 341-376.

Thomasson, A. (2007) *Ordinary Objects,* Oxford University Press.

Thomasson, A. (2008) 'Existence Questions', *Philosophical Studies,* 141, 63-78.

Thomasson, A. (2009) 'The Easy Approach to Ontology', *Axiomathes,* 19, 1-15.

Thomasson, A. (2015) *Ontology Made Easy,* Oxford University Press.

Van Fraassen, B. (1980) *The Scientific Image*, Oxford: OUP.

Van Inwagen, P. (1998) 'Meta-Ontology', *Erkenntnis,* 48, 233-250.

Van Inwagen, P. (2000) 'Quantification and Fictional Discourse' found in Everett, A. and Hofweber, T. (eds.) (2000) *Empty Names, Fiction, and the Puzzles of Nonexistence,* CSLI Publications, 235-247.

Van Inwagen, P. (2001) *Ontology, Identity, and Modality: Essays in Metaphysics,* Cambridge University Press.

Van Inwagen, P. (2003) 'Existence, Ontological Commitment, and Fictional Entities', found in Loux, M. and Zimmerman, D. (eds.) (2003) *The Oxford Handbook of Metaphysics,* Oxford University Press, 131-157.

Walton, K. L. (1990) *Mimesis as Make-Believe*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Wilson, J. (2011) 'Much Ado About Something', *Analysis,* 71.1, 172-188.

Wittgenstein, L. (1922) *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus,* originally published as 'Logisch-Philosophische Abhandlung', in *Annalen der Naturphilosophische*, XIV (3/4), 1921.

Woodward, R. (2008) 'Why Modal Fictionalism is not Self-Defeating', *Philosophical Studies*, 139.2, 273-288.

Woodward, R. (2011) 'Truth In Fiction' *Philosophy Compass*,6.3,158-167

Woodward, R. (2012) 'Fictionalism and Incompleteness', *Nous,* 46.4, 781-790.

Wright, C. (1993) *Realism, Meaning, and Truth,* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Yablo, S. (1998) 'Does Ontology Rest On A Mistake?', *Aristotelian Society Supplementary Volume,* 72.1, 229-262.

Yablo, S. (2000) 'Apriority and Existence' in Boghossian, P. and Peacocke, C. (eds.) (2000) *New Essays on the A Priori*, Oxford: OUP.

Yablo, S. (2001) 'Go Figure: A Path Through Fictionalism', *Midwest Studies in Philosophy,* XXV, 72-102.

Yablo, S. (2005) 'The Myth of the Seven', in Kalderon, M. (ed.) (2005b) *Fictionalism in Metaphysics,* 88-115.

Yablo, S. (2006) 'Non-Catastrophic Presupposition Failure', in Thomson, J. and Byrne, A. (eds.) (2006) *Content and Modality: Themes from the Philosophy of Robert Stalnaker,* Oxford University Press.

Yablo, S. (2009) 'Must Existence Questions Have Answers?' in Chalmers, D. et al. (eds.) (2009) *Metametaphysics: New Essays on the Foundations of Ontology,* 507-526.

Yablo, S. (2010) *Things: Papers on Objects, Events, and Properties*, Philosophical Papers, Volume II, Oxford University Press.

Yablo, S. (2014) *Aboutness,* Princeton University Press.

Zalta, E. N. (1983) *Abstract Objects. An Introduction to Axiomatic Metaphysics*, Dordrecht: Reidel

Thanks for reading ☺