

FREGE@STIRLING WORKSHOP III

*Sense–Identity and the Status of Definitions in Frege*

June 10–11, 2015  
University of Stirling  
**Pathfoot Building, Room C1**

**Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup>**

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|----------------|--|
| 11–11:30       | Welcome Coffee   |
| <b>11:30–1</b> | <b>Colin Johnston</b> (Stirling)<br><i>Syntax, Ontology and the Priority of Truth</i>          |
| 1–2:30         | Lunch  |
| <b>2:30–4</b>  | <b>Mike Beaney</b> (York)<br><i>On Sense and Translation</i>                                   |
| 4–4:30         | Coffee Break   |
| <b>4:30–6</b>  | <b>Robin Jeshion</b> (University of Southern California)<br><i>What Good is Self–Evidence?</i> |
| 6:30           | Drinks & Dinner @ <i>The Meadowpark Hotel</i>  |

## Thursday 11<sup>th</sup>

- 9:45–10                      Morning Coffee
- 10–11.30**                      **Marcus Rossberg** (UConn)  
*Frege on Definition and Explanation*
- 11:30–11:45                      Coffee Break
- 11.45–1:15**                      **Mark Textor** (King's College)  
*Some Reflections on Frege's Equipollence-  
Criterion of Thought Identity*
- 1:15–2:30                      Lunch
- 2:30–4**                      **William Taschek** (Ohio)  
*Frege on Sense and the Normativity of Logic*



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## ABSTRACTS

JUNE 10

**COLIN JOHNSTON**

*Frege's Ontological Linguistic Categories*

This paper seeks to understand the alignment in Frege between his exclusive syntactic categories and his exclusive ontological categories. First it is argued that this alignment is not any kind of philosophical thesis; rather, being of a certain syntactic type is *equated* with referring to—or perhaps more loosely with being suited to refer to—an entity of a corresponding ontological type. Second I press that the key to understanding this equation is the pride of place Frege assigns to the notion of truth. The ontological categories are nothing other than the categories of the determination of truth, the linguistic categories are nothing other than the categories of the expression of truth, and given how these categories are together to be understood it is incoherent to suppose that they might not align.

**MIKE BEANEY**

*On Sense and Translation*

Frege's conception of sense has proved one of the most controversial elements of his philosophy, and arguably, there is no single criterion for sameness of sense that can be specified that does justice to all the main views that Frege holds. The tension in Frege's conception comes out, not least, in the problem of indexicality. In this talk I shall attempt to shed some light on the issues here by coming at them from a new direction – from the central ideas in Herder's and Schleiermacher's philosophy of translation.

**ROBIN JESHION**

*What Good is Self-Evidence?*

Frege claimed that the axioms of a foundation for arithmetic must be self-evident. On one account to which Frege appears to have subscribed, self-evident propositions might not seem self-evident to us. And what is not self-evident may well seem self-evident. But then, what good is self-evidence at all? Stewart Shapiro has argued forcefully that, in fact, it has little epistemic value: any epistemological approach to foundations ought to embrace holism and holism undermines the epistemic value of self-evidence. In this paper, I will explore what, if any, epistemic value self-evidence may have for Frege and anyone else who embraces holism.

**JUNE 11**

**MARCUS ROSSBERG**

*Frege on Definition and Explanation*

For Frege, the principal way of establishing sameness of sense is by way of stipulative definition. Primitive vocabulary, on the other hand, cannot be defined. Instead, Frege here speaks of explanations [Erklärungen] of the expressions. This paper investigates whether explanations of primitive expressions specify the sense of the expression in question or its reference. The textual evidence speaks for the latter. This answer bears on the question whether the two sides of Basic Law V are supposed to have the same sense, as is often argued. If the target of Frege's explanations is indeed reference, as it is argued here, rather than sense, then the claim that Basic Law V states the sameness of sense for its two sides cannot be upheld. This sameness of reference is meant to obtain as a matter of logic, but that is not to say that the sense is the same.

**MARK TEXTOR**

*Some Reflections on Frege's Equipollence-Criterion of Thought Identity*

Frege stated that one needs an 'objective criterion' of thought identity because without such a criterion logical analysis is impossible. I will discuss whether Frege's final offering, the Equipollence-Criterion, fits the bill. Frege carefully hedged this criterion with several provisos that limit, I will argue, its usefulness for logical analysis significantly. I will end by (tentatively) suggesting that Frege did not need a criterion of sense-identity to arrive at what he took to be his main logical insight.

**WILLIAM TASCHEK**

*Frege on Sense and the Normativity of Logic*

It is important to appreciate that, for Frege, nothing is relevant to the individuation of thoughts—and so, likewise, to the individuation of the senses of subsentential expressions—except what is “of concern to logic”. But to properly appreciate the significance of this feature of Frege's understanding of sense, we also need have a proper understanding of Frege's conception of logic—specifically of demonstrative inference. Though there is no denying that Frege viewed logic as a descriptive science—albeit a maximally general descriptive science—it is essential to a proper understanding of Frege's conception of logic to see that he also thought of it as a fundamentally normative science. I will argue that appreciating this latter fact helps us better to see what Frege took to be “of concern to logic” in a way that sheds helpful light on how he understood the individuation of thoughts. I hope also to explore how this might shed light both on Frege's notion of “equipollent” propositions and on his understanding of the self-evidence of the basic laws of logic.