

# Propuesta de seminario

Roberto Loss  
roberto.loss@filosoficas.unam.mx

**1. Nombre del profesor:** Roberto Loss

**2. Nombre del seminario:** *Presentism and the grounding objection*

**3. Campos de conocimiento en los que debe ser anunciado:** Filosofía de la Ciencia

**4. Breve descripción del curso:** The contemporary debate in metaphysics of time is divided in two main camps. *A-theorists* uphold the reality of temporal passage and the existence of a metaphysically privileged time (the present). Instead, *B-theorists* deny that time literally ‘passes’ and claim that past, present, and future all exist, with no time being privileged over the others. *Presentism* is often presented as being the most commonsensical and intuitive theory among the A-theories of time. According to presentists, only present entities exist and instantiate properties and relations. There are no past or future entities, although there *were* entities that do not exist now, and, most likely, there *will be* entities that still do not exist. The idea that past and future do not exist does appear to have a certain pre-theoretical pull. However, it is also cause for some important and resilient theoretical problems. One of the most important objection to presentism is, in fact, represented by the so-called *grounding objection*. Truth, we intuitively feel, cannot ‘float on the void’, but must—somehow—*depend* on how reality is, that is, either on what entities exist, or on what pattern of properties and relations they instantiate. Truth, in other words, must be *grounded* in reality. If, however, only present entities exist, as presentists claim, what can *systematically* ground truths about the *past*?

The aim of this seminar is to thoroughly discuss the grounding objection to presentism, and to understand its import within the contemporary debate about the reality of temporal passage. Different grounding theories for presentism will be examined and discussed. In the process it will be investigated when and how a specific ontological posit might constitute an ‘ontological cheat’. Particular attention will be devoted to the question about whether modal principles (such as the *truth-maker principle* and the *supervenience principle*) are sufficient to capture the notion of grounding, or whether such a notion requires a finer-grained analysis.

## 5. Bibliografia

- Armstrong, D. 2004. *Truth and Truthmakers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Baia, A. forthcoming. Presentism and the Grounding of Truth. *Philosophical Studies*.
- Baron, S. 2013. Presentism, Truth and Supervenience. *Ratio*, 26(1), 3–18
- . forthcoming. Tensed Supervenience: a No-Go for Presentism. *Southern Journal of Philosophy*
- Bourne, C. 2006. *A Future for Presentism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Bigelow, J. 1996. Presentism and properties. *Philosophical Perspectives* 10: 35–52.
- Cameron, R. 2011. Truthmaking for presentists. In *Oxford Studies in Metaphysics*, vol. 6, eds. K. Bennett and D. Zimmerman, 55–100. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Crisp, T. 2007. Presentism and the grounding objection. *Nous* 41: 90–109.
- . 2005. Review of L. Nathan Oaklander, *The Ontology of Time*. *Notre Dame Philosophical Reviews*. 3. <<http://ndpr.nd.edu/news/24544/?id=2201>>.
- Davidson, M. 2003. Presentism and the Non-Present. *Philosophical Studies* 113.1: 77–92.
- . 2004. Critical notice of Sider 2001. *Philosophical Books* 45.1: 17–33.
- . forthcoming. Presentism and Grounding Past Truths.
- Dodd, J. 2001. Is Truth Supervenient on Being?. *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 102.1: 69–86.
- Keller, S. 2004. Presentism and Truthmaking. In *Oxford Studies in Metaphysics* Vol. 1, edited by Dean Zimmerman, 83–107. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kierland, J. and B. Monton. 2007. Presentism and the objection from being-supervenience. *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 85: 485–97.
- Kramer, S. 2010. How Not To Defend Ontological Cheats. *Analysis* 70.2: 290–6.
- Lewis, D. 2001. Truth-making and difference-making. *Noûs* 35, 4: 602–615.
- Markosian, N. 2010. Time. In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. E. N. Zalta. <<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2010/entries/time/>>
- Markosian, Ned. 2004. A Defense of Presentism. In Dean W. Zimmerman, ed., *Oxford Studies in Metaphysics*, vol. 1, 47–82. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Merricks, T. 2007. *Truth and Ontology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- . 2008. Replies to Cameron, Schaffer and Soames. *Philosophical Books* Vol. 49 No. 4: 328–343.
- Oaklander, N. L. 2010. McTaggart's Paradox and Crisp's presentism. *Philosophia*. 38(2): 229–241
- Parsons, J. 2004. Distributional properties. In *Lewisian Themes*, eds. F. Jackson and G. Priest, 173–80. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- . (2005). Truthmakers, the past, and the future. In H. Beebe & J. Dodd (Eds.), *Truthmakers: The contemporary debate* (pp. 161–174). Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Rhoda, A. 2009. Presentism, truthmakers and God. *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* 90: 41–62.

Sanson, D. and B. Caplan. 2010. The way things were. *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 81: 24–39.

Sanson D. and B. Caplan 2011. Presentism and Truth-making. *Philosophy compass* 6(3): 196-208.

Schaffer, J. 2008. Truth and fundamentality: On Merricks’s truth and ontology. *Philosophical Books* Vol. 49 No. 4 October: 302–316

Sider, T. 2001. *Four Dimensionalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Tallant, J. 2009. Ontological cheats might just prosper. *Analysis* 69: 422–30.

——— 2009b. Presentism and Truth-Making. *Erkenntnis* 71, 3: 407–416.

———. 2010a. Still cheating, still prospering. *Analysis* 70: 502–6.

———. J. 2013. Recent work on time. *Analysis* 73: 369–79

Tallant, J. and D. Ingram. 2012a. Time for distribution? *Analysis* 72: 264–70.

Tallant, J. and D. Ingram. 2012b. Presentism and distributional properties. *Oxford Studies in Metaphysics* 7: 305–14.

Torrenço, G. forthcoming. The Grounding Problem and Presentist Explanations. *Synthese*,

Westphal, J. 2006. The Future and the Truth-Value Links: A Common Sense View. *Analysis* 66(1): 1–9.

Zimmerman, D. 2008. The privileged present: defending an ‘A-theory’ of time. In *Contemporary Debates in Metaphysics*, eds. H. Sider and D.W. Zimmerman, 211–25. Oxford: Blackwell.

## 6. Criterios de evaluación:

The students will be evaluated by means of (a) their active participation to the seminar [10%], (b) a small presentation [20%], and (c) a final essay [70%].

## 7. Propuesta de día y horario: Lunes 12-16