

# DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY COLLOQUIUM SERIES

## ROSS CAMERON

### BIOGRAPHY



Ross Cameron is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Virginia. His main interests are in logic and metaphysics. His recent book 'The Moving Spotlight' argues that the passage of time is a genuine feature of reality. Other claims he has been known to argue for include: Reality is both indeterminate and sometimes lacks a fact of the matter, and this is not the same thing; There is nothing but atoms in the void, but this is just a contingent fact about our world; There are no such things as musical works; Possibility is just something we made up, like fashion; The future is open, but we can know what's going to happen; Fundamentally, there is only one thing; and probably most controversially, you can quantify into predicate position. His mom still wonders if he's going to get a real job. He is currently working on a book on infinite regress, and circularity, and dependence and explanation, and things like that.

### METAPHYSICAL EXPLANATION FOR ONTOLOGICAL INFINITISTS

Can there be an infinite regress of ontological dependence, where each thing in the chain is dependent on a further thing in the chain, and so on without end? Many have thought not. Jonathan Schaffer says that in such a situation being would be "infinitely deferred, never achieved". Others have argued that infinite regresses of dependence are perfectly possible: for every thing, there is an explanation as to its existence - it's just that each explanation raises a new question: where does the next thing come from? I begin by bolstering the anti-infinetist argument. There is something explanatorily amiss when you have an infinite regress of dependence. However, I come to praise regress, not to bury it. Infinite regresses of dependence are possible, but we must sever the link between dependence and explanation -which I will argue we have independent reason to do in any case.

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