

## Philosophy 190: David Lewis

### Short Writing Assignment 4

Due Thurs., May 1.

#### Instructions

**Note:** this assignment is for students in Group IV *only* (see syllabus for a list of group assignments).

Please respond to the following question in two pages or less (double spaced). (Needless to say this should be your own original work.)

In his reply to Quine in the Schilpp volume (note this is not a direct reply to the Quine piece we read, but it is clearly relevant), Carnap writes as follows:

I should make a distinction between two kinds of readjustment in the case of a conflict with experience, namely, between a change in the language, and a mere change in or addition of, a truth-value ascribed to an indeterminate statement, (i.e., a statement whose truth value it not fixed by the rules of language, say by the postulates of logic, mathematics, and physics). (p. 921)

Suppose that, in response to experience, we begin to accept a new type of entity which we did not accept before (e.g., the curvature of spacetime). Which of the two types of changes should Carnap say this is? Or should he say that it is neither, that there is a third type he forgot to mention here? Explain how the answer might depend on whether it was possible to say, in the old language, that no such thing as the new entities exists. Based on that, then, explain how the answer might depend on whether the change involves the introduction of a new “style of bound variables” (as Quine puts it), i.e. on whether the change seems to answer what Quine calls a “category question” or what he calls a “subclass question.”

Is this trouble for Carnap?