

**Quill R. Kukla** (Georgetown University, US)

### ***Uptake and Consent***

Different kinds of speech acts have different felicity and success conditions, and often these are quite elaborate: a marriage pronouncement requires specific speaker authority, a ritualized setting, and the support of various kinds of paperwork to be successful, for example. I argue that sexual consent and refusal also have complex (and contextually variable) success conditions, and that unpacking some of the details of those conditions helps us understand the ethics, politics, and linguistic pragmatics of sexual negotiation. Moreover, we are not powerless when it comes to establishing the success conditions for speech acts. Just as we can change the laws and norms around who can be a marriage officiant and what is involved in pronouncing a marriage, we can take an active, critical political stance on what it takes to successfully consent to or refuse sex. Philosophers of language can contribute to the understanding of rape culture and sexual agency in ways that we have not, so far, by critically analyzing the social conditions and conventions that give consent and refusal their performative force.

**Leo Townsend** (University of Reading, UK)

### ***Accommodating Spokesperson Authority***

To be a group spokesperson is to be in a position to perform speech acts in a group's name, such that those acts and their associated normative consequences are properly attributable to the group. Acting as the group spokesperson in this sense can be distinguished from other forms of "group representation", including speaking knowledgeably about the group, speaking as a group member, speaking in behalf of the group, and speaking as the group's messenger.

In order to be a group spokesperson, one must be authorized by the group in whose name one speaks. Sometimes this authorization is a formal, institutionalized matter, but often it is bestowed informally and on the fly, through processes of accommodation and negotiation. In this talk, I explore these informal processes through which the authority to speak for a group can be attained. I focus in particular on the interplay between speech acts that function (in part) to claim spokesperson authority, such as uses of the plural first-person version of the performative formula ("We apologise", "We promise", etc), and speech acts that function to disclaim spokesperson authority, such as expressions of dissent or protest on the part of the group purportedly spoken for ("You don't speak for us", "Not in our name", etc). I suggest that the feasibility of the group disclaiming spokesperson authority is a pre-condition for any felicitous act of claiming spokesperson authority. So, in order for a group to be spoken for, they must be able, without undue cost or risk, to reject the authority of those who purport to speak in their name.

**Nat Hansen** (University of Reading, UK)

***Passionate Metalinguistic Utterances***

A “passionate utterance” is a type of non-conventionalized perlocutionary act in which the speaker has and expresses a feeling (“passion”) and demands from the audience a response “in kind”, that is that the audience come to have the same feeling. In his later work, Stanley Cavell says that aesthetic judgment and the claims of ordinary language philosophers about the way we ordinarily use language are passionate utterances. While it’s straightforward to apply the notion of passionate utterances to Cavell’s notion of aesthetic judgment, why claims about ordinary language should be understood as passionate utterances is more mysterious: what passion is expressed by J.L. Austin’s claim that the meaning of “hexagonal” is “perfectly precise”, or G.E.M Anscombe’s claim that “we should reject a fashionable view of the terms ‘voluntary’ and ‘involuntary’ [according to which] they are appropriately used only when a person has done something untoward” or when P.F. Strawson says that “I think you would be inclined, with some hesitation, to say that...the question of whether [the statement ‘The king of France is wise’] was true or false simply *didn’t arise*”? Drawing on remarks made by Bernard Williams about the claims of ordinary language philosophy being like the demands of certain poets (including W.H. Auden), and by Auden about the nature of poetic language, I argue that the passion expressed in passionate utterances about ordinary language is the feeling of *aptness*. Aptness picks out the feeling of non-arbitrariness, of putting things in a way that is, as Eli Friedlander puts it, “not just right, merely correct, but is pitched *just right*.” The feeling of aptness that accompanies passionate metalinguistic utterances and the fact they try to bring about responses “in kind” in their audience is what distinguishes them from the dispassionate proposals of linguists and linguistic engineers.