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Games acts, language, truth and the co-construction of social reality

Alan C. Oldham

Western University, aoldham2@uwo.ca

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Games acts, language, truth and the co-construction of social reality

Social ontology has a turtle problem. While there are various theories of social ontology, John Searle's is the most famous, holding that reality contains two sorts of stuff: *brute facts*, 'observer independent' things that exist with or without us (e.g. trees, hydrogen atoms); and social facts ('observer dependent' things or 'institutions' that exist only because we say they should (e.g. money, sports, university professors). What allows us to create social institutions? Language. But what creates language? Well, just as the response to the proverbial question 'what's below the turtle holding up the world?' ('turtles all the way down'), for Searl, it's language 'all the way down'. My research focuses on resolving this infinite regress by investigating game playing—specifically physical games (i.e. sport) as pre-linguistic social institutions—and complex language as evolutionarily entangled phenomena, whose socially cohesive roles can be biologically rooted in the brute facts of observer independent reality.