

# Spandrels of Truth

Jc Beall

University of Connecticut

"Spandrel" is an architectural term for something created as a side effect of another design, for instance the wall space enclosed between two arches. The leading idea of Jc Beall's very rewarding study is that the semantic paradoxes should be seen analogously as spandrels of a deflationary truth predicate, one fashioned purely for purposes of generalisation. It is in this spirit, rather than that of an Hegelian metaphysics of contradictory reality, that Beall's dialetheist treatment, articulated with great clarity and a minimum of technicality in this short book, is to be understood. The account offered is unique among recent treatments of the paradoxes for saving a perfectly transparent truth predicate, whereby  $x$  and  $x$  is true are fully intersubstitutable. This feature, and its stabilisation within a bivalent framework, give the book considerable specialist interest. But the informality of the treatment, achieved without significant compromise of rigour, provides in addition for a remarkably effective and readable introduction to the contemporary debate about the paradoxes.

**Crispin Wright, New York University**

Liar sentences directly or indirectly assert their own untruth. From the minimalist view that  $True(\langle p \rangle)$  is always equivalent to  $p$ , plus very minimal principles of logic, it follows that if a Liar sentence is either true or not true, then it is both. Minimalists must therefore either reject some instances of excluded middle or accept some contradictions. Dialetheists choose the latter course, in a logic designed to prevent the spread of contradiction. But although paradoxes such as the Liar have provided the main motivation for dialetheism, it is remarkable that previous dialethic theories do not preserve the minimalist view of truth. *Spandrels of Truth* is the first dialethic attempt to do so, and it addresses the main problems (e.g. the conditional) that a dialethic minimalist must face. It is a very welcome addition to the literature.

**Hartry Field, New York University**

Paradox, for Beall, is the unintended by-product of adding a transparent truth predicate to our language. If we are to gain the expressive advantages of transparent truth, there look to be compelling arguments that some sentences are both true and false. In this excellent book, Beall defends this combination of dialethism and transparency, drawing out its consequences with clarity and verve. The book also serves as an introduction to transparent theories of truth more generally, by including a valuable discussion of the leading rival: Field's transparent but non-dialethic account. It adds up to an attractive package: if I were a dialethist, I'd be Beall's kind of dialethist!

**Robert Williams, University of Leeds**

Among the various conceptions of truth is one according to which 'is true' is a transparent, entirely see-through device introduced only for practical (expressive) reasons. This device, when introduced into the language, brings about truth-theoretic paradoxes (particularly, the notorious Liar and Curry paradoxes). The options for dealing with the paradoxes while preserving the full transparency of 'true' are limited. In *Spandrels of Truth*, Beall concisely presents and defends a modest, so-called dialethic theory of transparent truth.

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- Clearly and concisely presented
- Jc Beall is well known for his work in this field
- Essential reading for advanced students and scholars of philosophy

Jc Beall is a Professor of Philosophy at the University of Connecticut, a member of the UConn Group in Logic, and an Associate Fellow of Arché, the AHRC Research Centre for the Philosophy of Logic, Language, Mathematics, and Epistemology. Though having wide philosophical interests, Beall has published mainly in philosophical logic and the philosophy of logic.

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
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