The Syntax of (In)Dependence - to appear from MIT Press
Ken Safir - Rutgers University

The fact that the distribution of anaphoric readings is regulated by the geometry of syntactic form was one of the great discoveries of generative grammar, and even today the nuances of this relationship between form and possible meanings remains a source of new, more subtle discoveries. Perhaps the fundamental property of anaphoric readings is that one form depends on another for its reference. This monograph explores the idea that the fundamental factor determining the distribution of anaphoric dependencies is a simple syntax-dependent principle, but one that comes in the form of a prohibition, rather than a licensing condition. By rejecting the licensing approach, the dominant theory of the last 25 years, important consequences are established for the nature of form-to-meaning relations and the architecture of formal grammar. In addition, some ancillary principles are explored and a variety of anaphoric phenomena are studied in great detail, especially the distribution of bound readings in crossover environments and reconstruction contexts, although the distribution of anaphors, scrambling and ellipsis constructions are also brought to bear on the issues explored.