The Case of Expletives, and Related Mysteries
Howard Lasnik
University of Connecticut

Part I
1. What is the Case Filter?
2. There are well-known difficulties for a morphological interpretation.
3. *It seems (John to be here)
4. *I tried (John to be here)
5. *Who does it seem [to be here]
6a. The man ((who) [it seems [it is here]])
6b. The man ((who) [it seems [it to be here]])
7. Wh-trace, though non-lexical, apparently requires Case.
8a. John, I like him
8b. John, I like his new book
8c. *John's, I like his new book
9. Topics, though lexical, apparently are not assigned Case.
10. 'LF Visibility': A CHAIN is Case-marked if it contains exactly one Case-marked position; a position in a Case-marked CHAIN is visible for θ-marking. K of L p.135
11. I tried [PRO to be here] cf. 4.
12. *It seems [there to be a man here]
13. *I tried [there to be a man here]
14. Case "transmission" via a CHAIN: There is a man here

Part II
15. Someone is likely [to be here]
16. There is likely [to be someone here]
17. *There is likely [someone to be here]
18. *We consider [there a man in the room] K of L p.92
19. We consider [there to be a man in the room]
20. We consider [there, likely [to be a man in the room]]
21. There is no Case transmission. Case assignment is always direct. Be is a Case assigner.
22. There is usually a car here
23. *I heard usually a car (cf. I usually heard a car)
24. A car is not here

Part III
47. A verb with a complement assigns Case if and only if it θ-marks its subject. K of L p.135
48. Bailetti proposes that 47. only holds for structural Case and that the Case assigned by unaccusatives and be is partitive, an inherent Case (in the sense of K of L).
49. There is a car /the car here
50. There arrived a man /the man etc.
51. There is [a car here] (This sort of 'small clause' analysis would be precluded.)
Part IV
52. So why do expletives need Case?
53. At LF, all expletives must have been replaced, in conformity with 'Full Interpretation'. The expletive-argument S-structure CHAIN becomes an LF chain.
54. 'Visibility' constrains theta-assignment at both S-structure and LF (roughly in line with the Projection Principle). The S-structure requirement entails that arguments will be Case marked at S-structure. The LF requirement (almost) entails that expletives will be Case marked at S-structure.
55. There is certain [t to be someone here]
56. *There is certain [there to be someone here]
57. To be visible as the target of NP movement, a position must have Case.
58. John is likely [t to be arrested]
59. *was arrested John (A problem for 54?)
60. Case is relevant for visibility only where it could be relevant, i.e., S-structure or later, assuming S-structure assignment of Case
61. *I tried [it to be likely [that Mary is a genius]]
62. I am happy [that Mary is a genius]
63. *I tried [[that Mary is a genius] to be likely]
64. I believe [[that Mary is a genius] to be likely]
Part V
65. There arrived a man
66a. LF: A man arrived t
   a. Nominative Partitive
   b. Nominative -Case Partitive
   c. Nominative -Case
67a. *NP-t cf. 10.
   a. Case
   b. Must Case assignment be stipulated as obligatory?
68a. *John is believed [t, is intelligent]
   b. *Mary is believed [Harry to like t,]
   c. *Mary is believed [that Harry likes t,]
   d. *Mary is believed [that she, likes t,]
69a. It strikes John that Mary is clever
   b. Mary strikes John as clever
   c. *John stikes t that Mary is clever