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**Sean D Lawton\*** ([slawton3@gmu.edu](mailto:slawton3@gmu.edu)), 4400 University Dr, Exploratory Hall, L106, Fairfax, VA 22030. *Varieties of Characters*.

Let  $G$  be a connected reductive affine algebraic group. We define the variety of  $G$ -characters of a finitely generated group  $\Gamma$  and show that the quotient of the  $G$ -character variety of  $\Gamma$  by the action of the trace preserving outer automorphisms of  $G$  normalizes the variety of  $G$ -characters when  $\Gamma$  is a free group, free abelian group, or a surface group. This is joint work with Adam Sikora. (Received July 18, 2016)