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Truly Normative Matters: An Essay on the Value of Truth

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TRULY NORMATIVE MATTERS: AN ESSAY ON THE VALUE OF TRUTH

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DISSERTATION
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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the
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ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

TRULY NORMATIVE MATTERS: AN ESSAY ON THE VALUE OF TRUTH

Is truth valuable? In addressing this question, one must parse it into questions that are more manageable. Is the property of truth only instrumentally valuable, or is it both instrumentally valuable and noninstrumentally valuable? Is the normativity of the concept of truth an intrinsic or extrinsic property of the concept? In addressing the first of these questions, I show that certain arguments are flawed, arguments that purport to show that truth is not valuable in any kind of way. After establishing that it is reasonable to think that the property of truth is valuable, I show how inflationists and deflationists can agree that the property of truth is noninstrumentally valuable. In addressing the second question, I rely on the distinction between semantics and pragmatics and the resources of moral semantics to claim that the normativity of the concept of truth is an extrinsic feature of the concept. I conclude that the property of truth is both instrumentally and noninstrumentally valuable and that the normativity associated with the concept of truth is an extrinsic property of the concept. In doing so, I suggest that beginning with an investigation about the value and normativity of truth has important ramifications for theories of truth in general.

KEYWORDS: Truth, Semantics/Pragmatics Distinction, Moral Semantics
                Normativity and Value

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November 13, 2012

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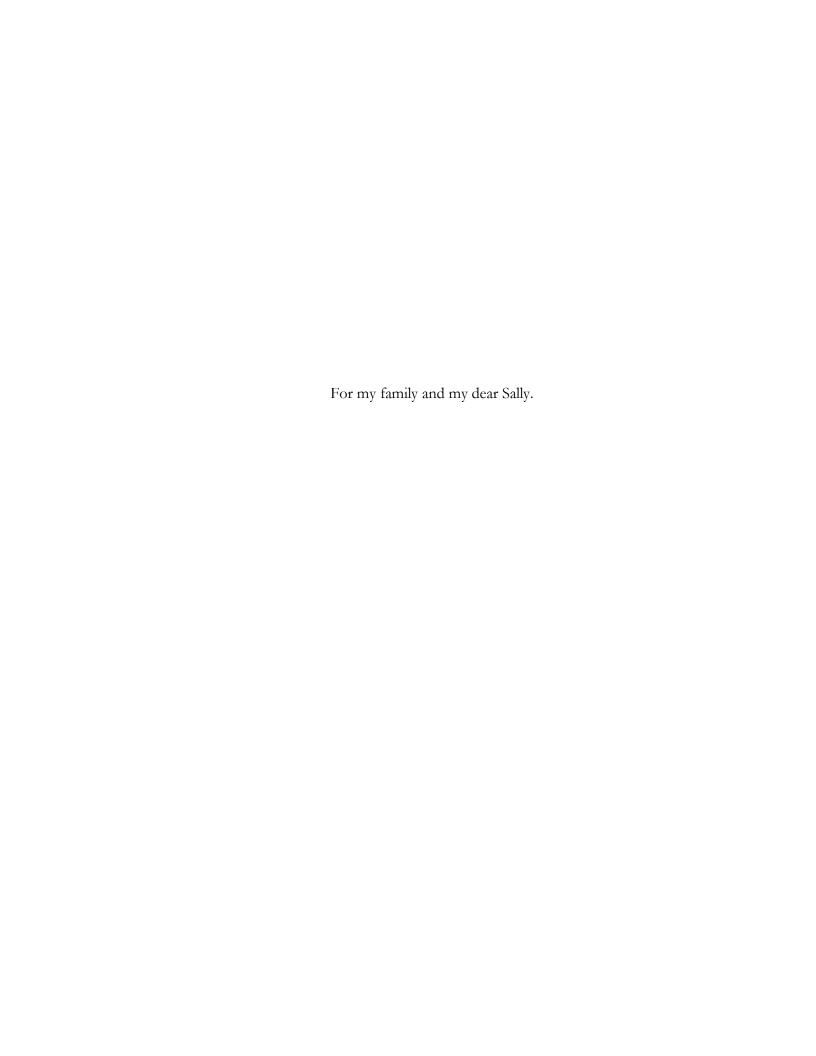Director of Graduate Studies

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For my family and my dear Sally.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter One: Introduction

Is truth valuable? If so, in just what way is it valuable? How is the value of truth best accounted for? There are some philosophers who think that truth is not valuable in any kind of way. Philosophers like Richard Rorty would be happy to do away with truth-talk as much as possible. Yet other philosophers, like Michael Lynch, claim that truth is valuable for its own sake, and some of them, like Adam Kovach, even discuss the normativity associated with the value of truth.[1] I do think that truth is valuable, and I think that it is noninstrumentally valuable. Furthermore, the normativity associated with its value, I argue, is a pragmatic feature of the concept of truth. The point of this dissertation is address these two points. In this introduction, I briefly say what I take these claims to mean. I introduce important distinctions, clarify some critical concepts, and make some bold assertions that I hope will be vindicated in the main portions of the dissertation. Then, I say a few things about why this project is important and what contribution this dissertation makes to the philosophical literature.

First, take note of some terminology.[2] I use the phrase "more than instrumentally valuable" and "noninstrumentally valuable" to mean that truth is valuable as an end. This claim is different from saying that truth is intrinsically valuable.[3] The difference between

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[1] I discuss the difference between value and normativity later in this introduction.

[2] Strictly speaking, the class of noninstrumental things includes all those things outside of, so to speak, the class of instrumental things. The class of more than instrumental things includes the class of instrumental things and noninstrumental things. The two classes are not equivalent extensionally; one is clearly larger than the other. Why do I use both terms above? A person can value truth instrumentally or noninstrumentally OR both instrumentally and more than instrumentally. If my arguments are correct, either way of valuing truth is a possibility. So, in some sense, it doesn't matter which term I use. To show this, I use the terms synonymously throughout the dissertation.

[3] This distinction originates with Korsgaard (1983). Many philosophers who work on value issues take the distinction for granted, though it is not an uncontroversial distinction. I do not intend to defend explicitly the

instrumental value and noninstrumental value is the difference between valuing something as a means to some end that one values and valuing something as an end in itself. Intrinsic value is the value a thing has in virtue of its own properties. Extrinsic value is the value a thing has in virtue of properties other than its own. Following Korsgaard, it is plausible to think that these values are conceptually distinct. One way to describe the difference between the kinds of value is to say that instrumental and noninstrumental value has to do with the *way* that things are valued and intrinsic and extrinsic value has to do with *what* it is about things that are valued. There are 4 combinations possible with regard to these values: instrumentally intrinsic value, instrumentally extrinsic value, noninstrumentally intrinsic value, noninstrumentally extrinsic value. The first category is empty; if something is intrinsically valuable, then there is reason to regard it as a *final* value. It's easy to find examples of the next two categories, e.g., currency and Kant's notion of goodwill. However, the last category strikes many as a counter-intuitive one. An example helps here. The typical example of something that is noninstrumentally extrinsically valuable is Princess Diana's wedding dress. It is noninstrumentally valuable because those who value it value it for its own sake. It is extrinsically valuable because its value depends on it having belonged to Princess Diana, a property that is not part of the dress itself.

Why is this distinction important in the discussion of truth? Many philosophers who work on truth seem to take for granted the intrinsic-instrumental distinction. Those who think that truth is only instrumentally valuable think so, in part, because they think that truth cannot be intrinsically valuable. There is good reason to think the intrinsic-instrumental distinction is confused. If so, then there is a way to think that truth is noninstrumentally

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plausibility of the distinction in the dissertation. I, too, take it for granted. However, I will take up the issue in a cursory way, as needed for explication and argumentative purposes.

valuable without inheriting the problems associated with thinking that it is intrinsically valuable. Lynch shows that there is a plausible way to apply this distinction in the discussion of truth, and he does so by employing the last category mentioned above. Truth is like Princess Diana's dress. It is valuable as an end in itself, but this is consistent with claiming that valuing truth in this way is a constituent part of living a life with integrity. For those who are suspicious of the notion of intrinsic value but think that truth is valuable as an end in itself, this is an important development in the discussion.

Taking into account Korsgaard's distinctions in goodness, one can disambiguate the question posed at the beginning of the dissertation, namely,

Is truth valuable?

One can ask questions like these instead

How ought one to value truth?

What is the source of truth's value?

Disambiguating the question in this way doesn't quite go far enough, I'm afraid. Almost every philosopher who works on truth recognizes a distinction that originates with Alston, i.e., the distinction between the concept of truth and the property of truth.[4]

Before I say how this distinction matters, take note of more matters of terminology. Roughly and noncontroversially, concepts are constituents of thought. Properties are those things that are expressed by predicates. 'Truth' expresses the concept of truth. The truth predicate refers to the property of truth. Above, I say that one of the things I am interested

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[4] See Alston, "A Realist Conception of Truth" (1996). Note that my use of the "property of truth" is not intended to be metaphysically loaded. Deflationists like Horwich concede that truth is a property, but claim that it is merely a logical property. My use of the "property of truth" is consistent with this view.

in addressing in this dissertation is the normativity of the concept of truth associated with the value of the property of truth. As I understand it, properties are valuable or can be valued. The property of truth might be instrumentally or noninstrumentally valuable (or both). I think it is strange to say that concepts can be valued in these kinds of ways. Concepts are things that people use. I might value having a particular concept, but I don't value the concept itself, at least not in the same way I value properties. However, the use of concepts is rule-governed; so, normativity is associated with the concept of truth, normativity that is importantly related to the value of the property of truth.

Considering these distinctions, these are the questions that matter when investigating the value of truth:

1.   Is the property of truth instrumentally or noninstrumentally valuable?

2.   Is the normativity of the concept of truth an intrinsic or extrinsic feature of the concept of truth?

These are the driving questions of the dissertation. In order to answer them, I have organized the essay in the following way.

PART I: ESTABLISHING THAT TRUTH IS NONINSTRUMENTALLY VALUABLE

In the first section I motivate the claim that truth is noninstrumentally valuable. I could simply make the assumption that truth is at least instrumentally valuable. There are enough philosophers who think that property of truth is at least instrumentally valuable that assuming as much would not be controversial. It is obvious that if truth is valuable, they

would say, it is at least instrumentally valuable. However, I don't think it is so obvious that truth is instrumentally valuable. Making the assumption that truth is at least instrumentally valuable doesn't give due credit to arguments which claim that truth is not valuable in any kind of way. If these arguments are correct, the property of truth can't be finally valuable. Moreover, showing why such arguments are interesting is instructive for seeing what's at stake in claiming that truth is more than instrumentally valuable. Rorty and Stich put forth the most influential and compelling arguments for the view that truth is not valuable. It is their arguments that I refute in the second chapter. In chapter 3, I present two very different views, both of which support the claim that truth is noninstrumentally valuable. I first discuss Lynch's view; then I discuss Horwich's view. I don't take either view to be conclusive. Given that each arrives at the same conclusion through drastically different viewpoints, however, I suggest that truth's noninstrumentally valuable status is not as controversial as it first seems.

Chapter Three: Arguments Against the Value of Truth

Rorty on the Value of Truth

Rorty does not give an explicit argument against the value of the property of truth, but he argues that truth is not a goal of inquiry. From what he does say, an argument can be formulated on his behalf for the claim that truth is not valuable. In this section, I formulate such an argument. I then defend this argument as a plausible reading of Rorty's position and show that it is the strongest sort of argument that can be given on his behalf. Many philosophers think that Rorty's arguments regarding truth fail. Their criticisms don't apply easily to the strengthened argument that I give on Rorty's behalf. Then, I outline my reasons

for thinking that Rorty is wrong about the value of truth. If the strengthened argument fails, then it is reasonable to tentatively conclude that truth is a kind of value.[5]

Stich on the Value of Truth

Unlike Rorty, Stich does give an explicit argument for the claim that truth is not intrinsically valuable. Keeping in mind the difference between intrinsic and noninstrumental value, I first show how his argument would apply to truth's noninstrumental status. If I am right, then Stich's argument shows more than he thinks it does, i.e., it shows that truth is not intrinsically valuable and that it is not noninstrumentally valuable. Unfortunately for Stich, his argument is too strong for its own good. If he is right, there is reason to think that his argument fails by its own lights. I show how his argument fails to prove that truth is not intrinsically or noninstrumentally valuable.

Where does this leave truth's status as instrumentally valuable? Stich claims that truth is not instrumentally valuable. However, Stich thinks that it is too difficult to argue for the strong claim that "truth *could not be* instrumentally valuable."[6] Instead, he argues for the more modest claim that it is not obvious that truth is instrumentally valuable. Like his argument against truth's intrinsic value, his argument against this obvious claim shows too much and too little. It shows too much because if it is taken seriously, it is self-refuting. It shows too little because it fails to explain why the obvious claim seems so obvious. Without explaining away this feature of the claim, his argument doesn't do what it is supposed to do.

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[5] It is not enough just to refute Rorty and Stich. Even if their arguments are wrong, it could still turn out that truth is not valuable; perhaps Rorty and Stich just need to give better arguments, and perhaps my strengthened version of Rorty's argument isn't creative enough. Once it is established that truth is noninstrumentally valuable, the tentative conclusion of the first two chapters can be solidified.
[6] Stich (1990), p. 121.

If Stich is wrong about the value of truth, then it is reasonable to tentatively conclude that truth is valuable.

Chapter Four: Establishing that Truth is Noninstrumentally Valuable.

The point of the third chapter is to motivate the claim that the property of truth is noninstrumentally valuable. I investigate two different arguments for the claim that truth is noninstrumentally valuable. First, I look at Lynch's argument in some detail. Then I turn my attention to Horwich's view. After outlining their views, I suggest that the real issue in the debate about the value of truth is about accounting for the normativity of the concept of truth. Note that I do not address arguments which claim that the property of truth is intrinsically valuable. If it turns out that truth is intrinsically valuable, then so much the better for my argument. If truth is intrinsically valuable, then surely it is worth regarding as an end. If truth is not intrinsically valuable, it might still be worth caring about as an end.

Lynch on Truth's Value

The most convincing arguments for the claim that truth is noninstrumentally valuable are given by Lynch. After explicating his arguments, I review the concerns raised by philosophers like McGrath and David. These concerns are compelling, but Lynch has the resources for responding. I review Lynch's responses, and where he doesn't give any, I respond on his behalf. Nevertheless, Lynch's arguments are problematic for reasons that other philosophers have failed to notice. I contend that Lynch's arguments for the claim that truth is noninstrumentally valuable are either flawed or depend on intuition. Insofar as

they depend on intuition, they are not convincing unless Lynch gives us reasons for trusting intuition. Lynch does try to give such reasons. However, they do not give the kind of support that Lynch needs in order to vindicate the claim that truth is noninstrumentally good. Lynch needs to show that intuitions about truth are trustworthy; this he does not do. One could shore up Lynch's view by developing reasons for thinking that intuitions about truth are trustworthy. While I am a friend of intuition, I think this route is not promising.

Horwich on the Value of Truth

Horwich's view of truth is much different from Lynch's view of truth. Lynch thinks that truth is a substantive property and that the normativity of truth is directly tied to this property. Horwich thinks that truth is a property, but it is merely a logical property. Lynch is an inflationist about truth. Horwich is a deflationist about truth.[7] Nevertheless, Horwich argues that truth is noninstrumentally valuable. For him, the value of truth is only indirectly tied to the property of truth; the noninstrumental value of truth lies in how people use truth. Horwich's writing on the value of truth is much less in volume than Lynch's. His arguments reflect this, insofar as they are not compelling. After indicating why I don't find his arguments compelling, I suggest that the persuasiveness of Horwich's arguments about the value of truth don't matter as much as his conclusion, i.e., that truth is noninstrumentally valuable. On this point, Horwich and Lynch both agree. This agreement shows that the interesting issues have something to do with the normativity of the concept of truth, not the value of the property of truth.

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[7] I define this term and other such terms in the following chapter.

PART II: THE NORMATIVITY OF THE CONCEPT OF TRUTH

In this section I address the question "Is the normativity of the concept of truth an intrinsic or extrinsic feature of the concept?" In order to answer this question, I turn to the resources of philosophy of language and metaethics. After canvassing the relevant literature on the semantic/pragmatic distinction, I show how the question about the source of truth's normativity is really about whether the concept of truth is a semantic or pragmatic feature of the concept of truth. I then use contemporary moral semantics to help gain some clarity about the normativity of truth.

Chapter Five: Normativity of the Concept of Truth

In this chapter, I give my argument for the claim that the normativity of truth is a pragmatic feature of the concept of truth. My argument draws on Kovach's work. Kovach claims that truth is a value concept. What does it mean for something to be a value concept? To say that truth is a value concept is to say that it has the following two features: truth is an evaluative concept and it is a normative concept. As an evaluative concept, truth plays a role in assessing the correctness of certain claims, whether one's own or others'. As a normative concept, truth gives one certain prima facie obligations. Kovach argues that these evaluative and normative aspects of truth are constitutive of the concept itself. That truth is a value concept, in other words, is a semantic feature of truth. The semantic nature of truth is distinguished from the weaker claim that the normative and evaluative aspects of truth are part of the pragmatics of the truth predicate. To say something is a matter of pragmatics is to claim that it is a matter of the way one uses words; it is not part of the meaning of the words themselves, but rather, it is part of the contexts in which one uses them. Here,

Kovach is merely employing the traditional distinction in the philosophy of language between pragmatics and semantics. In order to show that the normativity of truth is a semantic feature of the concept, Kovach employs tests developed by Grice, which are designed to show the difference between "pragmatic implicature" and "semantic entailment."[8]

After showing why there are good reasons to doubt the use of Grice's tests in the way that Kovach uses them, I suggest that moral semantics might be of use in determining whether the normativity of truth is a semantic or pragmatic feature of the concept. If the normativity of truth is a semantic feature of the concept of truth, as Kovach claims, then 'truth' ought to function semantically in ways that other, more obviously intrinsically normative terms do, terms like 'good'. Applying a prominent and influential theory of moral semantics, i.e., Wedgwood's conceptual role moral semantics, to 'truth' and 'true' I conclude that the normativity of truth is not a semantic feature of the concept.

Chapter Six: Concluding Remarks

In this last section I briefly put to work an assumption that underpins the dissertation. The assumption is that having an idea about the normativity of the concept of truth serves as a useful way to delimit the field of truth theories. This assumption might at first seem counter-intuitive: if one does not have a theory of truth to begin with, it is not possible to formulate an adequate view of truth's value or normativity. This view is mistaken. I follow Kovach in thinking that there is a difference between descriptive theories of truth and normative theories of truth. This is a claim that Williams also endorses; there is

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[8] Kovach refers the reader to H. P. Grice (1989) and Levinson (1983).

a conceptual difference between theories that explain the property of truth and those that explain truth's value.[9] Of course, a comprehensive theory of truth must contain both elements. Consequently, though there might be a conceptual difference between the two kinds of theories, I also assume that it is not the case that normative theories have no bearing on descriptive ones or vice versa. Given the number of theories of truth and the minimal progress that has been made in determining which of these theories is most adequate, I suggest that truth theorists should focus on developing theories of truth's normativity as a way to make progress in the debate on theories of truth more generally.

Beginning with such a starting point, it is clear that the implications for theories of truth are not insignificant. If the normativity of the concept of truth is a pragmatic feature of the concept, then whichever theory of truth cannot account for this fact about truth would be a theory that the philosophical community would do well to revise or dismiss. On the face of it, deflationary theories and monist theories seem to have difficulty accounting for truth's noninstrumental value. Deflationist theories have this difficulty precisely because these theories claim that truth is merely a logical property or plays no explanatory role in other areas of philosophy. Monist theories--theories that take truth to be one kind of relation, e.g., *a* correspondence relation--have the difficulty because they cannot account for the different ways in which truth can be valuable. I explore these issues in this last chapter, suggesting that a correct theory of truth will likely turn out to be a pluralistic theory. Examples of pluralistic theories include Lynch's alethic functionalism and Sher's or Horgan's pluralistic correspondence view. Functionalists claim that the property of truth is a higher order property of whatever it is that plays the truth role in a particular discourse. On this view, the concept of truth is a functional concept that remains stable across different

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[9] Williams (2002).

discourses, but the concept is realized by different lower order properties in different discourses. Proponents of pluralistic correspondence argue that truth is a correspondence relation. But, there is more than one kind of correspondence relations worth considering. If these kinds of view can account for truth's noninstrumental status more easily than can deflationary or monist theories of truth, then philosophers should pay more attention to developing these theories than they currently do.

The reader might notice a discrepancy between the table of contents and the organization of this introduction, namely, that I have said nothing about the chapter entitled "theories of truth." Indeed, before I can begin addressing issues about the value of the property of truth or the normativity of the concept of truth, I need to explain what theories of truth are, which ones there are, and what philosophical work they are supposed to do. Chapter Two is intended to give the reader the requisite background for understanding both what's at stake in the debate and necessary terminology that is used throughout the dissertation.

Chapter Two: Theories of Truth

Before I proceed to defending the claims mentioned previously, it is important to give the philosophical geography regarding theories of truth, to define key terms of these theories, and to make some preliminary distinctions that will be useful later. Giving this information upfront will make things easier in the end. In the course of the dissertation, I mention many of these theories, and I discuss some of them in detail. In the last chapter, I discuss the implications of my view regarding the normativity of truth for both theories of truth and the issue of truth bearers. After discussing the point of theories of truth, I classify and explain the theories. In doing so, I give the major motivations and objections to the views. I then discuss the issue of truth bearers.

Theories of Truth

In this chapter, I outline the different theories of truth that are currently on the market. My focus is on what are typically called "metaphysical" theories of truth—theories that explain the nature of truth. But, one shouldn't get caught up on whether a particular theory really counts as a metaphysical theory. There are many ways to classify the different theories, and some of these ways seem inconsistent with others. In giving a brief description of theories of truth, of course, one has to decide exactly which theories to include. I have simply chosen to focus on the theories that most philosophers seem to consider as important, given my knowledge of the literature. The purpose of this section is not to give the reader a detailed and comprehensive overview of each theory or to justify the way I have classified them. The purpose of this section is to give the reader enough of a background of the different theories of truth that one can understand and evaluate the claims I make throughout the dissertation, especially in the last chapter, where I discuss the implications of

the normativity of the concept truth and the value of the property of truth for comprehensive theories of truth. [10]

As with any rough outline, there are many details that are left out. I leave out particular details of the theories, e.g., how Armstrong's theory of truth makers handles the problem of falsehoods. I also don't address bigger matters, e.g., an overview of theories of truth from contemporary nonanalytic traditions. Their omission is not an indictment of their philosophical importance. Discussions of such theories are better left to people who actually understand them. For some readers, other things are conspicuously absent. For example, I make no mention of so called "logical theories of truth." I think these particular "theories" are better thought of as logical problems for theories of truth than logical theories of truth. Logical problems include paradoxes like the Liar's Paradox. The Liar's Paradox is one about how to treat certain self-referential sentences that give rise to a contradiction, e.g., the sentence 'This sentence is false.' If the sentence is taken as true, it is false. If the sentence is taken as false, it turns out to be true. The issues problems like these raise are rather technical and have no place in a rough outline of theories of truth. Moreover, this essay is about the value of truth, which has much more to do with the nature of truth than with the logical problems associated with theories of truth.

I do include things that other philosophers leave out of their discussions. For example, in his discussion of "metaphysical theories of truth," Kovach leaves out a discussion of "empirical truth theories" in the tradition of Davidsonian semantics. Because such theories treat truth as a primitive concept, Kovach claims that they don't count as metaphysical theories of truth; rather, they should be regarded as theories of meaning. I disagree, though I don't care to stake much on the disagreement. Claiming that truth is

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[10] This approach is not unlike the one that Horwich takes in (1990).

indefinable or primitive is taking a positive stand on the nature of truth. Unlike Kovach, I do discuss these kinds of theories, but I don't say much about them.

The Purpose of the Theories

What is the purpose of a theory of truth? The work of any theory is explanatory work. Good theories help one understand oneself and one's world by explaining its phenomena in comprehensive and consistent ways. The work of theories of truth is no different. Theories of truth are supposed to explain truth. But, truth is a complicated matter, and claims like 'theories of truth are supposed to explain truth' aren't too helpful for understanding just what theories of truth are supposed to do. To get at the heart of the matter, it may be helpful for the reader to know what counts as a theory of truth in the first place.

A theory of truth must do several things in order to count as a minimally adequate theory of truth. In my view, a minimally adequate theory of truth must at least account for certain, fundamental distinctions. As I mentioned in the introduction, Alston makes a distinction between the concept of truth and the property of truth.[11] This is a generally accepted distinction and one that plays a vital role in contemporary theorizing about truth. A theory of truth needs to say something about both the concept of truth and the property of truth. Of course, even though there is an obvious difference between the concept of truth and the property of truth, the two are not unrelated. Our concept of truth, as Lynch says, is a concept of a property.[12] Given the relation between the concept of truth and the property of truth, the stand one takes on one issue will have implications for the stand one takes on the other issue. Of course, there are qualifications here. If one does not think that

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[11] Alston (1996), p. 50.
[12] See Lynch (2009), p. 74.

there are things like properties, then one might deny this distinction, explaining it away, or one might analyze it differently than someone who thinks properties do exist. As I explain below, this is a key motivation for deflationary theories of truth. Nevertheless, this is not the only distinction that matters for theorizing about truth. The work of philosophers like Kovach shows that truth is descriptive in important ways and that it is normative in important ways.[13] If Kovach is right, then a comprehensive theory of truth needs to account for both of these aspects of truth.

There is no agreement among philosophers about just what a theory of truth should include.[14] I've suggested that a comprehensive theory of truth should have something to say about the distinctions noted above. However, I've given no argument for these claims, and I don't intend to give one. Nor am I going to show in my classification how each of the theories actually accounts for the distinctions I've noted. To do that would be too tangential to my task in the dissertation.

There are other proposed conditions for a minimally adequate theory of truth. Lynch suggests that theories of truth should account for "truisms" about truth. There are several "truisms" about truth, pretheoretical and intuitive truisms that mark our "folk concept" of truth.[15] Lynch gives the following examples of truisms:

Objectivity: The belief that p is true if and only if with respect to the
                   belief that p, things are as they are believed to be
Norm of Belief: it is prima facie correct to believe that p if and only if the
                   proposition that p is true

These are not the only truisms that Lynch discusses. They are indicative, though, of the kinds of truisms Lynch thinks marks our "folk concept" of truth. Of course, Lynch recognizes that the truisms which mark the folk concept of truth need not be recognized by

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[13] See Kovach (2000).
[14] Kirkham makes a similar point. See his (1992), p. 1.
[15] See Lynch (2009), Chapter 1.

the folk as being truisms about truth, at least prereflectively. He also recognizes that philosophers might disagree on which truisms count as "core truisms." Core truisms are the truisms about truth that "cannot be denied without significant theoretical consequence and loss of plausibility."[16] Whatever the core truisms, Lynch thinks that theorizing about truth should either explain them or explain them away. If a proposed theory does not do one of these two things, it does not count as an adequate theory of truth. Still others, like Kirkham, claim that what a philosopher thinks her theory is supposed to do is usually different from what it actually does.[17] Consequently, he claims, one can't solely rely on those things a particular philosopher says ought to be included in the fundamentals of a theory of truth. Kirkham thinks that by surveying the literature on truth, you can get a sense of several distinct "projects" about truth. What each project should include in order for it to count as minimally adequate theory of truth depends on the classification of the project. To make matters more complicated, some projects are consistent with others, while some are inconsistent with others.

What is my point with the forgoing discussion? My point is not to confuse the reader about what must be included in a theory in order to make it a theory. Nor is my point to make a claim about what ought to be included as basic elements, though I do make a proposal. My point is this: whatever a theory of truth is, there are elements that it ought to include in order for it to count as a minimally adequate theory. Just what these basics elements are is a matter of debate, and the debate is a complicated one. That doesn't mean there aren't any basic conditions; a fully articulated theory will stake a claim on what counts as these basic conditions.

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[16] Lynch (2009), p. 13.
[17] See Kirkham (1992), p. 1.

It should be clear that there are many different theories of truth and many different ways of cataloguing them.[18] At the most general level, there are 3 distinct categories of truth theories. Inflationists think that truth is a substantial property of some kind. Deflationists think that there is no substantial property of truth. And, there are those who think that truth is indefinable or primitive.[19] Of course, characterizations of theories of truth at this level leave much to be desired. These characterizations are much too general to be very meaningful. And, there are significant disagreements among inflationists on a variety of issues, just as there are disagreements among deflationists and those who think that truth is indefinable or primitive. General descriptions like these don't account for these differences. In what follows, I give more detail to the descriptions.

Inflationism

What unites inflationists is the claim that truth is a substantial property of some kind. There are two types of inflationists, i.e., monists and pluralists. Monists and pluralists disagree about whether there is just one property of truth. Monists claim that there is only one property of truth. Pluralists deny this claim.[20] I say more about pluralist views below. For now, note that there are many kinds of monist views—realist and antirealist theories, identity theories, and others.[21] Of these views, realist theories, especially the correspondence

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[18] For other examples, see Lynch (2001). In what follows, I classify the theories in a way that makes the most intuitive sense to me. I do not intend my classification to be controversial. However my classification differs from Lynch's, I owe him much for what follows.

[19] Lynch (2001) classifies these as "robust" theories of truth. I do not. If truth is indefinable or primitive, classifying it as robust commits these kinds of theorists to claims they would not accept. I say more about this in later sections.

[20] See Pedersen and Wright (2010) for more on this point.

[21] Interestingly, Lynch (2009) classifies monist theories as either "representational" or "antirepresentational." Correspondence theories count as representational. Epistemic theories count as antirepresentational. This way of classifying monist theories fits nicely with contemporary philosophy of mind and cognitive science and is

theory of truth, have been the most popular historically and still receive much attention

today. Given their historical prominence, I begin with them.

Inflationism--Monism

A hallmark of realist theories of truth is that the truth of a proposition, utterance,

statement, etc., depends on a mind-independent world. The most venerable realist theory is

the correspondence theory of truth.[22] All correspondence theories agree that the property of

truth is a relation between a mind-independent, objective reality and some proposition,

utterance, statement, etc. Other theories of truth also claim that the "correspondence

intuition" is an important one to accommodate. So, the mere claim that truth is a relation of

correspondence is insufficient to render a theory of truth a correspondence theory. Most

philosophers agree that in order for a correspondence view to count as a theory, it must at

least make claims about what counts as a truth-bearer, truth maker, and truth relation.[23] A

truth-bearer is that which expresses or bears the property of truth, i.e., it is that of which we

can say that it is true or false. A truth-maker is that which makes the truth-bearer true. The

truth relation is the relation between the truth-bearer and the truth-maker. What

distinguishes one correspondence theory from another comes down to the claims the

theories make about truth-bearers, truth-makers, and the truth relation. Candidate truth-

bearers include sentences, propositions, statements, beliefs, judgments, among others. I say

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suggestive about how theories of truth function in these other domains of inquiry. Here, I stick with the more
traditional way of classifying the theories, though I find his way of describing them attractive.
[22] The reader will notice that I sometimes say "the correspondence theory of truth" and "a correspondence
theory of truth." Do not be confused. There are many different kinds of correspondence theories. One of
these counts as "a correspondence theory of truth." All correspondence theories share certain features, as I
explain. These features are what I refer to when I say "the correspondence theory of truth."
[23] See David (2009), Lynch (2001), Kirkham (1992).

more about these in another section.[24] Candidate truth-makers include facts, states of affairs, situations, events, objects, sets, propositions, etc.[25] Candidate truth-relations include correspondence, conformity, congruence, agreement, representation, reference, picturing, etc.[26]

Above, I claim that the correspondence theory of truth is the most venerable of the realist theories. It is worth noting that it is also the most venerable theory of truth, realist or not. Why have so many philosophers endorsed some form of a correspondence theory of truth? Many philosophers think it is obvious that there is a mind-independent world and that truth, whatever it is, has something to do with it. The correspondence theory of truth accommodates this intuition quite easily, and it does so in a way that is simple. There is just one truth relation. This relation ties beliefs (or some other truth bearer) about the world to the world itself. The posits of the theory are few, and its explanatory power is great. The correspondence view of truth also preserves a distinction that many philosophers think is worth preserving, i.e., the distinction between truth and justification. It is one thing for a belief to be true. It is another thing for it to be justified. Truth has something to do with the mind-independent, objective world. Justification has something to do with one's reasons for thinking beliefs are true. Assuming truth and justification are different, it is possible for beliefs to be true and unjustified, false and unjustified, true and justified, and false and justified. This distinction allows philosophers to explain (among other things) why it is that beliefs change according to new evidence, what it is that is the goal of inquiry (truth), and how this goal regulates belief formation—all important things to explain.

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[24] Until I get to that section, I use several different truth-bearers in my discussion about the theories. I do this so as not to privilege any one truth-bearer over another.
[25] This is David's (2009) list. For interesting work on truth-makers, including brief historical notes, see Armstrong (2004).
[26] This, again, is David's (2009) list.

There are many well-known criticisms against correspondence theories. The very distinction that serves as a reason for many philosophers to embrace the correspondence theory engenders, for other philosophers, a reason to reject it. Putnam claims that correspondence theories of truth entail global skepticism, precisely because truth and justification are different.[27] In order to determine if a justified proposition is true, we would need an independent way to assess the proposition (apart from its justification). No "God's Eye point of view" is available to us in order to determine whether any justified belief is really true. Consequently, all of our justified beliefs might be false (Dummett and Rorty make similar points).[28] Other criticisms focus on attacking one or more of the three main components of all correspondence theories, i.e., the truth-bearers, truth-makers, and truth relations. Strawson, for example, criticizes Austin's view because it relies too much on facts when it is not clear what a fact really is.[29] Monist correspondence theories also face "the scope problem." Because truth is just one kind of property, its scope is restricted. There are statements that most people would agree are true, but their truth has nothing to do with some mind-independent, objective reality; such statements seem true in virtue of something other than correspondence. The typical sorts of examples include claims from morality, mathematics or law. Lynch notes that there are two conditions that correspondence theories must meet.[30] Correspondence theories must "map" beliefs to some mind-independent reality and must assume that this reality is one with which people can causally interact. Propositions like 'Torturing babies is wrong' apparently fail to meet both conditions. Such propositions are typically thought to be dependent on how people think, not on some mind-independent world. Even if one supposes that moral properties that actually exist and these

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[27] See Putnam (1981).
[28] See Dummett (1959) and Rorty (I discuss this in the next chapter).
[29] See Strawson (1949).
[30] See Lynch (2009), p. 34.

properties make such propositions true, these are not the kinds of properties with which we can causally interact, because they are, by definition, abstract objects. So, it seems that monist correspondence theories cannot account for the truth of all of the claims that many philosophers think are true.

Historically, the main rivals to correspondence theories have been antirealist theories of truth, which include coherence theories, verificationist theories, and pragmatic theories.[31] Antirealists claim that the truth of beliefs does not depend on some mind-independent, objective reality. Antirealists about truth think that it is possible to determine if any truth bearer is true, at least in principle. This is the main motivation for antirealist theories of truth. Although they all agree on this score, antirealist theories differ in their explanation of truth.

Coherence theories claim that the truth of a belief depends on its fit within a coherent body of beliefs. As Young notes, coherence theorists disagree about what counts as "fit" or "a coherent body of beliefs" and how to "specify" the body of beliefs.[32] For some, like Blanshard, a coherent body is comprehensive and one where each belief is supported by the mutual entailment of other beliefs.[33] For others, like Bradley, the support is one of mutual explanatory power. For some, like Young, the set that matters is the "largest consistent set of propositions believed by actual people." For others, like Putnam, the set is the one that is reached at the end of inquiry. It should be noted that the coherence theory of truth is separable from the coherence theory of justification, which claims that epistemic justification is a matter of a belief's coherence with some set of propositions.

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[31] One might think that "verificationism" names a theory of meaning, not a theory of truth. Both David (2009) and Lynch (2001) classify verificationism as a kind of theory of truth. I discuss the difference between a verificationist theory of truth and a verificationist theory of meaning below.
[32] See Young (2008).
[33] See Blanshard (1939).

Some philosophers think that the coherence theory of truth depends on the coherence theory of justification.[34] I do not care to gloss this debate here. Suffice it to say that even if this is the case, the two theories are conceptually distinct, given that their subject matters are different.

There are several objections to coherence theories of truth. I note three such objections. I mention two here and discuss the third later, as it applies to any monist antirealist theory of truth. First, consider the "many-systems objection" raised by Russell.[35] If the truth of a belief is determined by its fit in a coherent system of beliefs, any belief can be true because any belief can fit with some coherent body of beliefs. This is problematic because there are clearly beliefs that most people would agree are false. Coherence theorists have tried to reply to this worry by developing sophisticated accounts of what "fit with a coherent system" means. But, as Walker notes, this kind of objection is not easily dismissed. The truth of beliefs like "[belief] b is actually held" must be explained in terms of its fit within the system. Its fit within the system depends on whether the belief is actually held. Consequently, as Walker says, "A tenable coherence theory will have to leave room for certain truths whose nature does not consist in coherence. These will *have* to include truths about the beliefs that define the system and determine coherence. Otherwise, the theory cannot get going."[36] The second major objection to coherence theories of truth is the "transcendence objection."[37] According to this objection, there are some propositions that are true but that no one person is in a position to know if they are true, even in principle, because people are not by nature omniscient. As Young notes, any such coherence theory,

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[34] See Kirkham (1992) for a discussion.
[35] See Russell (1912).
[36] See Walker (1989), p. 157.
[37] See Young (2008).

i.e., ones that do not specify fit with a coherent system as that system which omniscient beings believe, has to deal with this objection.[38]

Verificationists claim that the truth of a proposition depends on whether the proposition can be verified by some kind of procedure. In other words, verificationists think that truth should be analyzed in terms of epistemic notions like verifiability. Accordingly, antirealists of this sort think that all truths are knowable, at least in principle. Some philosophers might think that verification is a theory of meaning instead of a theory of truth. The verification theory of meaning, most notably endorsed by Ayer, claims that a proposition is meaningful if and only if it is verifiable by some procedure.[39] There is no mention of truth here. In the formulation of the verification theory of truth that I described above, there is no mention of meaning. Insofar as 'truth' and 'meaning' express different concepts, the two theories are different. That doesn't mean, however, that there is not some important common thread that runs through both kinds of theories, both historically and conceptually. The main advocate of the verification theory of truth is Dummett, and there is some debate about how to classify his theory.[40] Some philosophers, like Lynch, classify his views on truth as a kind of theory of truth.[41] Others, like Kirkham, classify Dummett's views on truth as a theory of meaning.[42] According to Kirkham's exposition, the central issue for Dummett is about what role, if any, truth plays in a theory of meaning. I do not wish to cover this debate here; doing so would be tangential at best. What is important to note is that verificationism is a kind of antirealism about truth, and one that places emphasis on the notion of verification.

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[38] See Young (2008).
[39] See Ayer (1952)
[40] See Dummett (1959).
[41] See Lynch (2001).
[42] See Kirkham (1992).

As such, verificationism leads to consequences that many philosophers find problematic. According to Dummett, endorsing his brand of antirealism means giving up on some laws of classical logic. It means giving up on the law of excluded middle and the principle of bivalence. The law of excluded middle says that any proposition that has the form '*p* or not *p*' is necessarily true. The principle of bivalence claims that any proposition must be either true or false. His position has these consequences precisely because of the emphasis he places on the notion of verification. Because there are some propositions that cannot be verified, even in principle, and because verifiability supplants truth conditions in his theory of meaning, not being in a position to verify a proposition means that the proposition cannot be true or false and that there are some propositions that have the form '*p* or not *p*' yet are not true or false.

Just as there are different kinds of coherentists, there are different kinds of pragmatists about truth. Whatever their differences, they all emphasis the practical role the concept of truth plays in our lives, and they all seem to be motivated to formulate their views because they think realism about truth is too problematic to endorse. Many people who survey theories of truth focus on four pragmatists, dividing them up into two camps—the classical pragmatists include Peirce and James and contemporary pragmatists include Putnam and Rorty. What's the defining difference between them? Peirce's definition of truth is this: "the opinion which is fated to be ultimately agreed to by all who investigate."[43] Two qualifications are important here. First, Peirce is concerned with scientific practices. Second, he is concerned with what is fated to be agreed to at the end of scientific inquiry. Although James admits that he is attempting to explain the correspondence intuition, he comes to a very different conclusion than do traditional correspondence theorists. James

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[43] See Peirce (1878).

claims that "truth is what is expedient to believe" and focuses on the practical effects the role of truth plays in our lives as determined by our attitudes and interests.[44] Putnam claims that truth is "idealized rational acceptability." Putnam recognizes that this is a condition that is never actually obtained; it's a counterfactual condition. As such, Putnam thinks that one advantage to his theory of truth is that it is able to preserve the distinction between truth and justification. This is an advantage over other theories antirealist theories, including other brands of pragmatism. I discuss Rorty's version of pragmatism in detail in the next chapter. There is a debate about whether Rorty actually formulates a theory of truth. In some of his writing, he seems to do so. In other writing, he explicitly denies the use of theories of truth. Whatever one wants to say about Rorty's position, it is clear that if he were to formulate a theory of truth, it would be a form of pragmatism.

There are several well-known and obvious objections to pragmatism. All forms discussed above have difficulty handling certain kinds of propositions. There are some propositions that humans will never be in a position to know, given the finite nature of our minds. It seems like such propositions are either true or false. If so, pragmatism can't be the correct theory of truth. Other objections focus on the "end of inquiry" claim, which is either implicit or explicit in pragmatist theories.[45] If the notion is incoherent, the views that depend on them are undermined. Furthermore, some forms of pragmatism, like James' version, supposedly entail relativism. If the practical effects of the role of truth is determined by attitudes and interests and these things are dependent on individual persons, then truth is relative to individuals. This is a counterintuitive conclusion, and one that most truth theorists would quickly reject.

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[44] See James (1907).
[45] See Kirkham (1992).

It is important to note, at the risk of being redundant, that all antirealist positions are subject to the same objection, i.e., some form of the scope problem. These theories face the scope problem for different reasons than monist correspondence theories. Lynch notes the reasons why. All antirealist views of truth emphasize the need for some kind of epistemic access to truth. In this way, they imply that "truth is globally epistemically constrained."[46] However, there are some propositions whose truth is beyond our epistemic reach, so to speak. To say that these propositions have no truth value seems counterintuitive. Antirealists cannot account for how such propositions can be true or false, given that truth, on their view, is epistemically constrained.

There is another truth theory that might belong in the monist camp, namely, the identity theory. I say "might" because the identity theory of truth is difficult to classify. Identity theories claim that truth just is an identity relation between truth-bearers and truth-makers. As Candlish notes, not just any combination of truth-bearer and truth-maker can be accommodated by an identity theory of truth.[47] His example includes sentences as truth-bearers and nonlinguistic entities as truth-makers. Because sentences are linguistic entities, an identity theory that tries to identify them with nonlinguistic entities is a nonstarter. However, it's easy to see how the theory works if truth-bearers are propositions and truth-makers are metaphysically lightweight or even metaphysically neutral facts. Propositions are typically thought to be the contents of thought. If one regards facts just as things that are true, then claiming that a proposition is true just means that the proposition is identical with some fact. This description gives a sense of what it is that identity theorists are after. But, how they are classified depends on the kind of story they give for truth-bearers and truth makers. Candlish classifies Bradley as an identity theorist and one that has a metaphysically

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[46] See Lynch (2009).
[47] See Candlish (2006).

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weighty story about truth makers. Others classify Bradley as a coherence theorist.[48] Dodd thinks that his theory of truth is an identity theory, but Candlish suggests that it is better classified as a deflationary view.[49]

However the identity theory of truth is classified, there are some clear motivations for endorsing the theory, just as there are some obvious objections against it. Identity theorists seem to be motivated to formulate their theories because of a dissatisfaction with realist views like correspondence. Identity theorists often cite Frege as a historical motivation for their theory.[50] Frege claims that correspondence theories are problematic. On the correspondence view, there is a difference between a truth-bear and a truth-maker. Frege says that insofar as these two are different, they are not in "complete correspondence." But, to make them completely correspond, one must suppose that they are the same things. David develops a powerful objection to identity theories.[51] Identity theories, he claims, cannot account for false beliefs. Obvious answers like "x is a false proposition if and only if x is not a fact" fail because such answers imply that everything is a proposition. This implication is obviously false. To respond to the objection, David contends, identity theorists must give contentious accounts of what propositions and facts really are, begging the question against their objectors.

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[48] See Kirkham (1992).
[49] See Dodd (2000) and Candlish (2006).
[50] See Hornsby (1997). She quotes Frege (1918).
[51] See David (2002).

Inflationism--Pluralism

As indicated at the beginning of this section, monist theories of truth are not the only inflationary theories there are. There are also pluralist inflationary theories of truth, which currently receive much attention from philosophers. There are three main kinds of pluralism—functionalism, correspondence theories and epistemic theories. From the names alone, one can see that the categories of truth theories overlap. How do pluralist inflationary theories differ from their monist rivals? Pluralist theories are united in claiming that truth can be realized in multiple ways. Pluralists are also united in taking the scope problem as one of their primary motivations for developing their theories of truth.

Just as the scope problem is a problem for any monist inflationary theory of truth, there is a group of problems that all pluralist theories must deal with. The way each pluralist theory deals with these problems marks the way in which the three kinds of theories differ from one another. So, before I describe the theories, let me say something about the problems they all face. There are various formulations of the same basic problem, and they have different names: the problem of mixed inference, the problem of mixed conjunctions, and the radical disunity challenge.[52] The basic question that these objections raise is this—if there are many ways for something to be true, is it possible to formulate a single, unified theory of truth? For example, take the problem of mixed inferences. Some pluralists might say that the truth of a proposition depends on certain features of the discourse from which it derives its subject matter. The way in which propositions about humor are true is different from the way in which propositions about items in the world are true. Here's a mixed inference.

(1)   This cat is wet.

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[52] See Lynch (2009) and Tappolet (1997) for examples.

(2)   Wet cats are funny.

(3)   Therefore, this wet cat is funny.[53]

If the truth of a proposition depends on contextual features of some particular discourse, what makes (1) true is going to be different from what makes (2) true. The problem is that good arguments are supposed to be truth preserving. So, it's difficult to understand what exactly makes the conclusion in this argument true, assuming that the premises are true. The same sort of idea is evident in the problem of mixed conjunctions and the challenge of radical disunity.[54]

Two pluralist theories of truth take the distinction between the concept of truth and the property of truth to be a fundamental insight into how to create a pluralist theory that explains both the diversity of truth and the unity of truth. Wright's minimalism claims that there is a single concept of truth, but there are different properties of truth. The single concept is marked by certain "platitudes." These platitudes include the following:

> That to assert is to present as true
> That any truth-apt content has a significant negation which is likewise truth-apt
> That to be true is to correspond to the facts
> That a statement may be justified without being true, and vice versa[55]

These platitudes mark the "essential features" of truth and are general enough that the property of truth that fits the description of the concept marked by the platitudes may be different from one domain of discourse to another. Indeed, some discourse may have more platitudes to add to the list. For Wright, any additions are consistent with the claim that truth is at least minimally defined by these platitudes.

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[53] See Tappolet (1997).

[54] There is a debate about whether any pluralist theory actually solves or has the resources to solve these kinds of problems (see Pedersen (2010) and Lynch (2009) for examples). I do not canvass the debate here.

[55] See Wright (1992), p. 34.

If Wright's theory is pluralist, in what sense does it overlap with the other categories that I've discussed? Wright thinks that one fruitful way to "model" the platitudes is through his concept of superassertibility. Superassertibility is an antirealist, epistemic notion. A statement is true, on this view, if and only if it is justified and the justification is not defeasible no matter how much more information is gathered. In Wright's words, "A statement is superassertible. . . if and only if it is, or can be, warranted and some warrant for it would survive arbitrarily close scrutiny of its pedigree and arbitrarily extensive increments to or other forms of improvement of our information."[56] Most statements that are true are superassertible. Given that Wright is pluralist, though, he leaves it open as to whether superassertibility exhausts truth.[57]

Lynch's functionalism is the other view that depends on the distinction between the concept of truth and a property of truth. Functionalism claims that there is only one concept of truth and this concept is the same across various domains of discourse. Like Wright, Lynch uses certain "platitudes" to develop his pluralism. I've already mentioned these platitudes—the ones that Lynch thinks any theory of truth must be able to accommodate or explain away, i.e., objectivity, norm of belief, and end of inquiry. Instead of taking these platitudes as giving the "nominal essence" of truth, Lynch takes them as job descriptions for truth, as giving truth's "functional role." Here is the formula that gives the truth conditions for "the application of the truth concept"

(F)   For all x, x is true if, and only if, x has a property that plays the

truth-role.[58]

Here is how Lynch describes what it means for something to play the truth-role

[56] Wright (1992), p. 48.
[57] See Lynch (2009) on this point.
[58] See Lynch (2009), p. 72.

T plays the truth-role if, and only if: P is T if, and only if, where P is believed, things are as they are believed to be; other things being equal, it is a worthy goal of inquiry to believe P if P is T; it is correct to believe P if and only if P is T. . . [59]

So much for the application of the truth concept and the meaning of the truth-role; how does Lynch define the property of truth?

Lynch's position on the property of truth has changed over the years, in light of certain objections. On the old view, the property of truth is the higher order property of having a property that plays the truth-role. So, what realizes the truth-role is diverse, depending on context of discourse and other conditions. Truth still refers, though, to a single, higher order property. It is this property that is preserved in inference. This view might escape the kinds of problems noted above, but it does so at a significant cost, making truth "a property that is no longer described by our truisms."[60] His latest view is this. The truisms not only give truth's job description. They also define truth's "nominal essence." The nominal essence of truth is such that it can be "manifested" in various ways. So,

Necessarily, P [atomic proposition] is true if, and only if, P has the property that

manifests truth for propositions of D [domain].[61]

Obviously, much depends on the manifestation relation, and, of course, Lynch has much to say about how that relation functions. There is enough here, though, to understand the basic picture. There is a single concept of truth and a single property of truth, but the property is manifested in different ways in different domains. Thus, truth is one but many.

As noted above, functionalists and minimalists (in Wright's sense, which is different from Horwich's minimalism—see below), do not exhaust pluralism about truth. There are also correspondence theorists who think both that truth is a kind of correspondence and

[59] Lynch (2009), p. 72.
[60] Lynch (2009), p. 73.
[61] Lynch (2009), p. 77.

that there are many different kinds of correspondence relations. Horgan's theory of "mediated correspondence" is likely the most influential of these kinds of theories. [62] On this view, the correspondence relation between a sentence and reality is not direct; it is mediated by the semantic standards and practices that govern language usage. In Horgan's words, truth is "semantically correct affirmability, under contextually operative semantic standards."[63]

The standards that govern a sentence's correct affirmability vary from one domain of discourse to another. For example, the semantic standards that govern the correct affirmability of a scientific claim are stricter than the semantic standards that govern the correct affirmability of a claim of pure mathematics. Sentences that have "maximally strict" semantic standards are sentences whose truth depends on whether or not there exist items in the world that answer to the each of the singular constituents of the sentence, just as traditional correspondence views claim. Sentences governed by semantic standards of correct affirmability that are least strict are made true by virtue of the semantic standard itself. A sentence of pure mathematics (Horgan's example) is made true only by the semantic standards that govern the discourse of pure mathematics, no matter the way the world actually is. The semantic standards of correct affirmability of most sentences fall somewhere within this range; such sentences are made true by some mixture of the way the world is and the semantic standards that govern the correct affirmability of the sentences' utterances.

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[62] Horgan has several formulations of his theory of truth. In most formulations, he calls it "indirect correspondence." On Barnard's encouragement, Horgan has recently changed "indirect correspondence" to "mediated correspondence." I follow Horgan's latest formulation in our explication of his theory of truth. See Barnard and Horgan (2006).

[63] See Horgan and Potrc (2006), p. 1.

According to Horgan, mediated correspondence incorporates the useful insights of other theories of truth without inheriting their problems. It recognizes the realist insight that the truth of a sentence depends on the way the world is. Unlike direct correspondence realist views, mediated correspondence does not require the multiplication of entities answering to ultimate ontology: "Contextual semantics makes possible a substantial paring down of the ultimate ontological commitments of our discourse."[64] Mediated correspondence incorporates the antirealist insight that thoughts are "expressible in some specific mode of discourse involving certain ideological commitments."[65] Unlike antirealist theories of truth, mediated correspondence honors the distinction that there is a difference between truth and idealized warranted assertibility.

Deflationism

Just as there are many different kinds of inflationists, there are many different kinds of deflationists. Whatever their motivations, they all agree on a couple of points. As an introductory description of deflationism, I claim above that deflationists agree that truth is not a substantial property. Armour-Garb and Beall note that this kind of description is "too imprecise to be of much use."[66] "The heart of deflationism," as they see it, is that deflationists take an equivalence schema of the form

    (ES)   <P> is true iff *P*.

to be both "conceptually fundamental" and "explanatorily fundamental" with regard to the concept of truth. Armour-Garb and Beall note that deflationists disagree about which truth-

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[64] See Horgan (2001), p. 77.
[65] See Barnard and Horgan (2006), section 5.
[66] See Armour-Garb and Beall (2005), p. 2.

bearer is the primary one, or how to read '<P>' which stands for the name of the truth bearer. Some deflationists read <P> as 'the proposition *that P*' while others read it as 'P' (the sentence type). They also disagree about how to read the 'if and only if' clause, which is represented above by 'iff'. Armour-Garb and Beall note that both inflationists and deflationists agree that understanding the equivalence schema is important for understanding truth. What inflationists and deflationists disagree on is the place of the equivalence schema in a theory of truth. For deflationists, it's fundamental. For inflationists, it is not.

What does it mean to take the equivalence schema as fundamental, both conceptually and explanatorily? According to Armour-Garb and Beall, to take the equivalence schema as conceptually fundamental is to take its instances as necessary, a priori, and analytic: "To say that the instances are conceptually fundamental is to say that they do not follow from definitional relations holding among the concept of truth and more 'basic' concepts in terms of which 'true' can be defined."[67] To take the equivalence schema as explanatorily fundamental is to (1) take the instances of the equivalence schema as "fundamental explainers of truth-talk" and (2) to consider a "definitional analysis of truth" to be the only way to analyze the concept, i.e., there is no way to explain the instances of the equivalence schema through some "unifying" account of them.

Historically, there have been many deflationary theories of truth--the redundancy theory, disquotationalism, minimalism, performative theory, and prosententialism. The redundancy theory and the performative theory do not garner much support in contemporary debates. However, given their historical value as inchoate theories of deflationism, brief descriptions of each is in order. Ramsey is usually credited with

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[67] Armour-Garb and Beall (2005), p. 3.

formulating the redundancy theory, though there is some debate about this.[68] On the

redundancy view, the truth predicate is redundant. For example, these two claims are

equivalent

> (1)   'The earth is round' is true.

> (2)   The earth is round.

For the redundancy theorist, adding 'is true' to some proposition doesn't add anything

meaningful to it.

The performative theory says that 'truth' operates in a normative role as a kind of

speech act.[69] A speech act is something one does with words that goes beyond merely saying

them, as in making a promise. The predicate 'true' and its cognates helps language users

express approval. As such, the use of 'true' in our language does not express or name a

property of any kind. It is this last part of the theory that makes the performative theory of

truth a deflationary view. Given Kovach's distinction between a descriptive role of truth and

a normative role of truth, and given that a comprehensive theory of truth needs to address

each element, the performative theory of truth is important for deflationists because it gives

them a way to think about the normative aspect of truth without relying on the concept of

truth and our use of 'true' as expressing a substantial property. It is for this reason that

Lynch claims that some sort of performative view "will always be a part of any deflationary

account of truth."[70]

Well known and obvious criticisms of these views include the following: they don't

account for blind ascriptions and generalizations. A blind ascription is when someone

claims that an utterance is true without directly using that utterance, as in "what I said on

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[68] See Kirkham (1992), section 10.4, and Lynch (2001), pp. 421-431, for a discussion.
[69] The performative theory is attributed to Strawson. See his (1950).
[70] See Lynch (2001), p. 424.

page 5 is true." A generalization allows easy reference to a set of claims without citing the claims individually, as in "everything I have said in this dissertation is true." These theories don't explain why we have a concept of truth and the role the truth predicate plays in our language. Given the obviousness of these objections, Lynch correctly points out that there is some debate in classifying Ramsey's work on truth. Why would a philosopher of Ramsey's stature endorse a theory of truth that has such obvious problems? Lynch notes that some philosophers, like Field, think Ramsey is better classified as a correspondence theorist than he is as a redundancy theorist.[71]

The main deflationist views that are currently popular include disquotationalism, minimalism, and prosententialism. A disquotational view would formulate (ES) in terms of sentences.

(DES) *'P'* is true if and only if *P*

On the disquotational view, removing the quotation marks cancels out, as it were, the truth predicate. The result is the assertion of *P*. As Armour-Garb and Beall put it, following McGee, a sentence P is "interdeducible" with " 'P' is true."[72] The disquotational view is similar to the redundancy theory in claiming that the truth predicate is superfluous in many cases. However, disquotationalism explains the use of the truth predicate by appealing to our need to generalize over potentially infinite number of sentences. It also claims that the truth predicate is expressive "because of its disquotational nature."[73] Gupta forcefully criticizes this view.[74] He claims that if disquotationalism were true, no one could have a complete definition of truth. Why? In order to understand completely the meaning of 'truth' one would need to have "a grasp of all of the T-biconditionals. . . . hence. . . a full

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[71] See Lynch (2001), pp. 421-431.
[72] See Armour-Garb and Beall (2005), p. 7, and McGee (1993).
[73] See Lynch (2001), p. 424.
[74] Gupta (1993).

understanding of 'true' is possible only for someone with massive conceptual resources."[75]

He also claims that making a general claim is not the same as asserting all its instances and that disquotationalism can't explain the difference. An obvious response is to say that disquotationalism should be restricted to apply to only sentences that speakers understand. This response, however, isn't satisfactory because there are presumably true sentences that speakers don't understand.

Horwich's brand of minimalism claims that propositions are truth bearers, and, as such, his version of deflationism can account for the objection raised above, i.e., truth can apply to sentences that one doesn't understand.[76] For Horwich, ". . . the meaning of the truth predicate is fixed by the schema 'the proposition that p is true if and only if p'."[77] The "minimal theory" consists in the infinite conjunction of propositions that fit this schema. Because there are more propositions than there are sentences we can understand, Horwich's theory does apply to sentences one understands. For Horwich, a theory is a good one if it explains all the facts that fall under its scope. He thinks his theory does this with truth, in a simple way that has far-reaching implications. He says, "The virtue of minimalism, I claim, is that *it provides a theory of truth that is a theory of nothing else, but which is sufficient, in combination with theories of other phenomena, to explain all the facts about truth.*"[78]

Prosententialism claims that all uses of 'true' are either redundant or can be explained by the prosentential theory. On this view, truth is analogous to pronouns. Pronouns inherit their content anaphorically, by referring back to a noun or noun phrase. 'True' functions as

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[75] Gupta (1993).
[76] It is important to note that Horwich is sometimes classified as a nondeflationist. Kirkham, for example, claims that Horwich isn't a deflationist because Horwich claims that truth is a property. Horwich does claim that truth is a property. However, as Lynch notes, there is a different between a property that is substantial and does explanatory work and one that is merely a nominal property necessary for logic. I side with Lynch here. See Kirkham (1992) and Lynch (2001).
[77] Horwich (2001).
[78] Horwich (1990), pp. 24-25.

a "prosentence" by referring back to sentence tokens. As such, 'true' and its cognates function grammatically in our language as an operator, not as a predicate with genuine content. Because 'truth' seems to function as a predicate, prosententialists claim that the logical, deep structure of sentences containing 'truth' is different from the surface grammar of such sentences. Consequently, the content of the theory concerns a linguistic analysis of the differences between this deep structure and the surface grammar of sentences that contain 'truth' and its cognates. If this difference between the surface grammar and deep structure isn't problematic enough to count as an objection to this theory, there is another. It's difficult to see how 'true' is supposed to function anaphorically in sentences like " 'True' functions as a prosentence" in such a way that "it does not turn out to refer to a property of truth."[79] Kirkham lists these two objections as major hurdles for prosententialists to overcome. Even if prosententialism ought to be part of a theory of truth, it hardly explains everything about truth that philosophers think ought to be explained.

Primitivism

Just before the section on inflationism, I claim that "at the most general level, there are 3 distinct categories of truth theories," i.e., inflationism, deflationism, and primitivism. In a footnote there, I mention that Lynch classifies primitivism as a kind of inflationism. I do not follow suit. If truth is indefinable or primitive, classifying it as an inflationary theory or a deflationary theory commits primitivism to categories that are certainly definable. If primitivism can't be easily catalogued as an inflationary or deflationary theory without committing it to more than it claims, how can one understand what it is? Primitivism is the

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[79] Kirkham (1992), p. 328.

view that the concept of truth is explanatorily basic, and therefore, it is not definable.[80]

Ernest Sosa and Donald Davidson each develop a kind of primitivism. For Sosa, the

concept of truth is needed in order to explain other epistemic concepts like justification.

Davidson claims that the notion of truth can only be explicated in terms of how it relates to

other concepts, like the concept of meaning. Though Davidson thinks that truth is a

primitive concept, he has much to say about it. His theory builds on the work of Tarski, and

both Davidson and Tarski have had a tremendous influence on truth theorists. Davidson

takes Tarski's insights and applies them to natural languages. The result is a full-fledged,

empirically testable, theory of meaning that explains how speakers understand language.

What is Tarski's view to which Davidson is so indebted? As an entry into Tarski's

project, reconsider T-sentences or T-biconditionals, sentences of the form

X is true if, and only if, p.

'X' stands for the name of the sentence, proposition, etc. p. Tarski's project is motivated by

a couple of concerns. Having written in a time when the notion of truth was under attack

(as were all metaphysical notions) by logical positivists who dismissed any concept that could

not be tied to empirical verification, Tarski sought to revive the concept of truth by

explaining it in terms of concepts that were noncontroversial, i.e., semantic concepts like

"satisfaction." In doing so, Tarski thought any theory of truth must have two components.

The T-sentences are one such component, otherwise known as the "material adequacy

condition." This condition links names with objects. Because the material adequacy

condition "captured the most basic fact about our concept of truth," Lynch writes, "any

adequate theory of truth must logically entail every instance of this schema in the language

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[80] See Sosa's (2001) and Davidson's (2001-b).

where the predicate is being defined."[81]   Each instance of the schema is a partial definition of truth; the "logical conjunction" of all the instances is the "general definition" of truth.[82]

Second, the theory must be "formally correct." This requirement allows Tarski to formulate a precise theory in an artificial language in such a way that it doesn't succumb to the Liar Paradox. In order to avoid such logical problems, Tarski defines 'truth' in terms of acceptable semantic notions like 'satisfaction' and employs a formally rigorous system that allows him to skirt ambiguity. Just how Tarski does this isn't important for my purposes. Of course, the details of Tarski's work do, in general, matter a great deal. The details are what allow Tarski to invent, according to Kirkham, "the first formal semantics for quantified predicate logic, the logic of all reasoning about mathematics."[83]

Truth-Bearers

It should be clear from the brief description of truth theories given above that the choice of truth-bearer plays an important role in how any particular theory is formulated. Why think that there is a primary truth-bearer? What are some of the reasons that one might pick one truth-bearer over another? Can a case be made for thinking that the choice of truth-bearer isn't as important as it seems to be? In this section, I address these questions and weigh some competing considerations about candidate truth-bearers. Later in the essay, I return to the issue of truth-bearers, investigating how they affect questions about the value of truth.

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[81] Lynch (2001), p. 323.
[82] Lynch (2001), p. 323.
[83] Kirkham (1992), p. 141.

As noted above, a truth-bearer is something that can have a truth value, something that can be true or false. In Quine's words, a truth bearer is a "vehicle of truth."[84] There are many candidate truth-bearers. The most obvious ones, as noted by Goldberg, are sentences, statements, propositions, and beliefs.[85] Less obvious ones, as noted by Kirkham, include ideas, thoughts, utterances, judgments, assertions, theories, remarks, and speech acts.[86] Kirkham rightly notes that there is much disagreement about truth-bearers.[87] There is disagreement about which of the truth bearers ought to be on the list of candidate truth bearers. There is disagreement about what the definitions of the candidate truth-bearers are; philosophers disagree, for example, about what exactly propositions are, if there are any. There is also disagreement, as both Kirkham and Goldberg note, about whether any particular truth-bearer is the primary truth bearer, even supposing that all agree on the definitions of candidate truth-bearers. Here are some classic reasons why one might endorse one of the more obvious candidates as the primary truth bearer.[88]

Propositions

Philosophers like Horwich and Alston claim that propositions are the fundamental truth bearers. Horwich defends his use of propositions as the bearers of truth in the following kind of way. A theory of truth is supposed to account for all the facts about truth. One of the facts about truth is the manner in which words like 'true' are used in ordinary language. Accordingly, "in ordinary language what are said to be true are the *things* that we

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[84] See Quine (1992).
[85] See Goldberg (2006).
[86] Kirkham (1992), Chapter 2.
[87] Kirkham (1992), p. 47.
[88] One caveat about many of these views—most philosophers do not explicitly claim that they are giving arguments for primary truth bearers. But, it is clear from context that this is what they are up to.

believe and that our utterances express—so called *propositions*."[89] Ordinary language tells us that propositions are things that exist. Although syntax is not an infallible guide, it provides clues about the logical structure of language. With regard to the structure of that-clauses, it seems to be the case that "they articulate relations between people and whatever are designated by the constituent that-clauses," i.e., what Horwich takes to be propositions.[90] Unless there is good reason to ignore this part of the logical structure of ordinary language, a belief in propositions is well supported by ordinary language. Horwich does not think there is good reason to ignore this part of the logical structure of ordinary language. It should be noted that Horwich does not refute a specific argument that defends the giving up of propositions. Instead, he claims that most arguments that ask us to do so are generalizations that beg the question, e.g., the view that material objects are all that exists. In the face of such "question-begging generalizations," there is no good reason to abandon the use of propositions.[91]

However, Horwich is clear that his position does not presuppose a hard line on the nature of propositions. Given his brand of deflationism, the only requirement he places on the nature of propositions is that the concept of propositions be "conceptually prior" to the concept of truth. Because truth is explained in terms of propositions, the conceptual priority of propositions is necessary in order for his theory to avoid a charge of circularity. Apart from this requirement on propositions, Horwich is explicit in claiming that his theory is consistent with several accounts of propositions: "As far as the minimal theory of truth is concerned, propositions could be composed of abstract Fregean senses, or of concrete objects and properties; they could be identical to a certain class of sentences in some specific

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[89] Horwich (1998), p. 129.
[90] Horwich (1998), p. 130.
[91] Horwich (1998), Chapter 6.

language, or to the meanings of sentences. . ."[92] By using propositions, Horwich gains the advantage of being able to account for how one can attribute truth to sentences one does not understand; this is an advantage, as I say above, that other deflationists do not have.

Alston also claims that propositions are the primary bearers of truth.[93] He arrives at this conclusion by examining and rejecting other candidate bearers of truth, i.e., sentences, statements, and mental states. Alston begins by distinguishing sentences types from sentence tokens. Alston gives the example "I'm hungry." This sentence type can be uttered at various times by various people. Each utterance of the sentence type counts as a sentence token. According to Alston, a sentence type is too "unstable" to be a truth bearer. Suppose you are hungry and I am not. If we each utter "I'm hungry" at the same time, then the sentence type "I'm hungry" is both true and false. Alston concedes that a sentence type could be made stable by taking into consideration nonlinguistic factors like who is speaking, the time of the spoken expression, etc. He also concedes that a sentence token could be stable, if one could determine whether the speaker's utterance is a sentence type that is true or false. If so, it seems that determining the truth value of a sentence token amounts to the same thing as determining the relevance of the extralinguistic factors of the sentence type.

Because determining the truth value of a sentence type or token amounts to determining the truth value of a statement, Alston claims that statements are more fundamental truth bearers than sentences. However, a statement, he claims, is "ambiguous between the *act* of stating and *what is stated*, the *content* of the statement."[94] The same kind of ambiguity is exemplified by mental states, i.e., an ambiguity between the state of believing and the content of mental states. According to Alston, consideration of that-clauses shows

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[92] Horwich (1998), p. 17.
[93] See Alston (1996).
[94] See Alston (1996), p. 44.

that it is obvious that the contents of a statement or mental state properly bear the truth value of the statement or mental state. Take the statement "I think that it will rain this afternoon." What you should care about, Alston says, is not my particular speech act. Rather, you should care whether it is true that it will rain this afternoon, i.e., the contents of the utterance. But, the contents of statements or mental states are propositions, at least on most accounts. So, given the four candidate truth bearers, propositions are the most fundamental. The truth of a mental state, statement, or sentence presupposes the truth of a corresponding proposition, according to Alston.

Sentences

Some philosophers think sentences are truth bearers. Prominent among them is Quine. Quine claims that 'propositions' are typically construed by philosophers as referring to either sentences or the meanings of sentences.[95] Quine gives two reasons for thinking sentence meanings are inadequate truth bearers. First, the notion of sentence meanings is "tenuous." His indeterminacy of translation thesis supports this claim. The thesis is "manuals for translating one language into another can be set up in divergent ways, all compatible with the totality of speech dispositions, yet incompatible with one another."[96] If this thesis is right, then different sentence meanings can be mapped onto the same string of symbols. Consequently, sentence meanings are tenuous as truth bearers. Second, in order to get at sentence meanings, one must go through, as it were, sentences themselves; one can only indicate which sentence meaning one has in mind through the use of sentences. For

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[95] See Quine (1992), p. 77.
[96] See Quine (1960), p. 27.

this reason, Quine claims that "it seems perverse to bypass the visible or audible sentences and to center upon sentence meanings as truth vehicles."[97]

Quine admits that the truth value of sentences in ordinary language changes (as Alston also notes), and he says that the truth value of a sentence should be stable if that sentence is to be considered determinately true or false. Consequently, Quine refines what he means by claiming that sentences are truth bearers. More precisely, "eternal sentences" are truth bearers. An eternal sentence is one that is "true [or false] for good." [98] In order to formulate an eternal sentence, one would need to eliminate all ambiguity, vagueness, tenses, pronouns, and the like, from the sentence. The truth value of the resulting sentence is stable, even if the formulation of the sentence is unnatural by ordinary language standards.

Statements

Austin thinks statements are the primary truth bearers.[99] He, like Horwich and Alston, relies on the way we ordinarily speak in order to support this claim. Sentences, mental states, and propositions are not the kinds of things we would call true or false. Sentences are not rightly said to be true or false. Rather, we use other predicates to describe sentences. Sentences are not well formed grammatically, for example, or they are ambiguous. When a sentence is deemed true or false, it is only when enough contextual clues are provided that the truth or falsity of the sentence can be determined for certain. However, as Austin claims, this is just what a statement is. So, it is more accurate to say that statements are truth bearers than it is to say that sentences are truth bearers. Mental states are not rightly said to be true or false either. Some philosophers claim that mental states are

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[97] Quine (1992), p. 77.
[98] Quine (1960), p. 12.
[99] See J. L. Austin (1950), pp. 25-40.

picture-like entities of some kind. Because pictures only *represent* what is true, if mental states are picture-like, they cannot *be* true. In addition, the phrase 'true belief', though common in philosophy, is most likely not common outside of that domain, or so Austin claims. One does not say that a person's belief is true; one says that he believes "in something which is true."[100] Truth bearers, whatever they are, must be the kinds of things that can be true. As for propositions, Alston claims they are merely "varieties" of statements. One does not say that the content of the sentence is true. One says that the sentence is true on this particular occasion and taken in this particular way. That is, one says that statements are true or false, and one uses words and sentences to say it.[101]

Mental States

Ramsey says that mental states are truth bearers.[102] For Ramsey, there are three candidate truth bearers: mental states, statements, and propositions. Because the nature of propositions is so philosophically contentious, Ramsey claims that it is better to consider mental states as truth bearers. If there are propositions, mental states refer to them. If there are not propositions, there are still mental states that can be evaluated. A similar point applies to statements. When uttered aloud, statements are, for Ramsey, expressions of thoughts. When thought silently, statements are identical to mental states. In either case, mental states are presupposed as the meanings of statements. Both statements and propositions, if there are such things as propositions, are connected to mental states in the

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[100] Alston (1950), p. 26.
[101] Strawson is also a prominent thinker who thinks that statements are truth bearers. But, he gives no argument for this claim. He takes it as a matter of convenience to consider statements truth bearers. Because his primary target is Austin, Strawson does well to concede this point to him. So, I do not present Strawson's thinking here.
[102] See Ramsey (1990), pp. 433-446.

right kind of way to allow for mental states to be considered the most appropriate truth bearers.

Many Truth Bearers

Some philosophers do not endorse one specific candidate truth-bearer. Among them, some (like Goldberg) take a definite stance on what can't count as a primary truth bearer, but leave open the possibility that one or another truth bearer can be the primary one.[103] Others (like Field) say that there might be more than one important truth bearer.[104] Still others (like Kirkham) think that anything can be a truth bearer, even teddy bears, given the right conditions.[105] I consider these views in turn.

Field claims that truth-bearers are either utterances or states of thinking. Among utterances, he includes sentences, when they are adequately disambiguated and questions of indexicality are bracketed. In responding to someone who claims that ordinary language usage indicates that propositions are truth bearers, Field says that ordinary usage, on this score, is "of little interest."[106] Propositions, he claims, are supposed to help one assess the truth or falsity of the things one says or thinks. Because one is interested in evaluating the truth or falsity of these things, the goal of a theory of truth is to explain how utterances and/or states of thinking are true or false. If propositions help us do this, they may be admitted into our theory of truth. In any case, though, Field thinks it is a mistake to describe the goal of a theory of truth in terms of seeking to explain the truth or falsity of propositions. Field is suggesting that utterances (sentences) and/or states of thinking are

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[103] Goldberg (2006).
[104] I say "important" because "primary" and "fundamental" imply only one truth-bearer.
[105] Kirkham (1992).
[106] Field (1986).

ultimately the only bearers of truth that are accessible for evaluation. As such, they are the only truth-bearers worth taking into account.

Goldberg suggests that beliefs and sentences cannot be the primary truth bearer. Beliefs cannot be the primary truth-bearer because the contents of beliefs are usually thought to be propositions. If this is correct, then beliefs are truth-bearers only derivatively. For a belief to be true, the content of the belief, i.e., the proposition believed, must be true. Although there are some reasons to think that sentences are the primary truth-bearers, these reasons do not outweigh, according to Goldberg, the reasons against thinking that sentences are the primary truth-bearer. Sentences are important in logic, as in helping explain notions like entailment. Moreover, some theories of truth, according to Goldberg, like the correspondence theory of truth, favor sentences as being the primary truth-bearer. If such theories require sentences to be the primary truth-bearer and sentences turn out not to be the primary truth-bearer, that's bad for such theories. Given the significance of such theories, both historically and in current truth debates, they are not easily rejected. Other truth-bearers, especially propositions, could play the same role in logic and truth theories, depending on how these other truth-bearers are defined. If so, then sentences shouldn't be considered the primary truth bearers after all, especially considering the other problems with them.

Goldberg mentions that there is a dilemma facing anyone who thinks that sentences are the primary truth-bearers. Either sentences are the primary truth-bearers or they are not. If they are, then context sensitive sentences like (his example: 'I am tired.') "will have to be treated as having a truth-value that changes over time, according to the context of use."[107] This is a bad consequence for truth, given that most philosophers think that truth-values

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[107] Goldberg (2006).

don't change over time. A sentence that is false today ought to be false tomorrow, no matter the context of use. If sentences aren't the primary truth-bearer, then context sensitive sentences can't be true or false. In order to think that they are, "sentences must be found that do bear a truth-value," like Quine's eternal sentences.[108] However, adopting this method involves consequences with which most philosophers are uncomfortable. Goldberg mentions two: (1) the "vast majority of sentences of everyday discourse fail to have a truth-value" and (2) "most speakers will have a hard time formulating truth-value-bearing sentences."[109] Proponents of sentences as primary truth-bearer often invoke the distinction between sentence tokens and sentence types in order to skirt the objections mentioned above. A particular type of sentence like 'My dog Sally has bad gas.' has many tokens. One such token was mentioned in the previous sentence. Here's another token: 'My dog Sally has bad gas.' Two tokens of the same type appear on this page. A mere appeal to the type/token distinction, though, doesn't give any reason to think that one or the other is a better primary truth-bearer than something like propositions.

Kirkham proposes another view.[110] Instead of arguing that there are a few candidate truth bearers that deserve more consideration than others, Kirkham claims that the constraints on what counts as a truth bearer are few. One constraint is a general practical, nonphilosophical one. As Kirkham notes, many things can be true or false. So, whatever one choses as a truth bearer must be a large class of things—large enough to use as a truth bearer for all the instances of true ascriptions there might be. Apart from this nonphilosophical consideration, Kirkham says that it is not unreasonable for the choice of truth bearer to be consistent with the larger philosophical framework in which it is being

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[108] Goldberg (2006).
[109] Goldberg (2006).
[110] Kirkham (1992).

invoked. For example, it would be odd for someone like Quine, who is a champion of "observables" for reasons that have nothing to do with the truth bearer debate, to insist that mental states be truth bearers. Providing the class of truth bearers is large enough and functions as a linguistic go between for communication and object, Kirkham thinks almost anything can count as a truth bearer, even teddybears.

Further Commitments

From what has been said so far, one might think that in most cases the choice of a truth bearer does not affect the kind of theory of truth one develops. Rather, it is the other way around. Horwich and Alston both claim that propositions are truth bearers. Horwich is a deflationist. Alston is a realist about truth, claiming that a proposition's truth depends on the world. Truth, for Alston, is a substantive property that does explanatory work in philosophy; propositions are explained by the concept of truth. As already noted, Horwich thinks truth is explained in terms of propositions, not the other way around. Like Horwich, Quine is also a deflationist, though not a minimalist. Quine thinks that truth is not a substantial property, though he thinks that use of the word 'true' (and its cognates) is a useful logical device. Austin is another realist about truth. He differs from Alston in thinking that truth bearers are statements. Austin also examines ordinary language to support his claims. Horwich uses the same technique. Each of them comes to a different conclusion about truth bearers. Ramsey is a redundancy theorist, another kind of deflationist. As such he thinks uses of words like 'true' are superfluous additions to sentences. He considers mental states to be truth bearers. We have, then, three deflationists who disagree about truth bearers, two realists who disagree, and a deflationist who agrees with a realist.

What can one conclude from this discussion? One thing that seems clear is this. Whether one thinks the issue of truth bearers matters depends on one's other philosophical commitments. If one is a nominalist about abstract objects, one is likely to think that there are no such things as propositions, at least on the typical way of understanding them. The position might also depend on the starting point of your theorizing. In the last chapter of this essay, I pursue this idea. If one takes truth's normativity as a starting point, there are implications about what kinds of things count as truth bearers. There are also implications for which theories of truth count as philosophically viable. Before I can say more about these issues, though, I need to defend the claim that truth is normative. It is to this task that I now turn.

Chapter Three: Arguments Against the Value of Truth

In the last chapter, I outline several major theories of truth and briefly discussed the issue of truth bearers. I also say that I would return to these issues in the last chapter, explaining how my view of truth's value affects one's choice of both truth theory and truth bearer. Before I make good on that promise, there is much ground to cover in my effort to explain the value of the property of truth and the normativity of the concept of truth. I begin to cover that ground in this chapter.

Before I can explicitly address the value of property of truth and normativity of the concept of truth, I must first show why certain arguments are flawed. If philosophers like Rorty and Stich are right, truth is not valuable in any kind of way. If they are right, then any positive claim I make about the value of the property of truth and normativity of the concept of truth cannot be correct. Fortunately, Rorty and Stich are wrong. To be sure, showing that they are wrong does not amount to claiming that my view is right, as there might be other, better arguments (yet to be formulated) that come to the same conclusion they reach. However, as I think their arguments are the strongest ones currently in circulation (about which I know), if their arguments are flawed, that is indeed good news for my view. In any case, I owe you a positive argument for my position, which I give in later chapters. Here, I argue that it is possible that the property of truth is valuable, and I do so by showing how the arguments of Rorty and Stich fail. I first consider Rorty's view. Then, I turn my attention to Stich's position. Rorty's influence with regard to this topic is much more far reaching than Stich's. My coverage shows this, as I spend more time discussing Rorty's view than Stich's position.

One might wonder why I should worry about their arguments at all. Even if they are the strongest in circulation, one might think that giving attention to views that are obviously

false is a waste of time. Mendieta notes that many philosophers do not take Rorty seriously, or, if they do, they do so only in a very limited way: "He is a nemesis to many, and is claimed as a friend by only very few. His works are denounced everywhere across the country, in every discipline, and in each of the Ivy League universities."[111] This is the case with regard to almost everything that Rorty discusses. The literature with regard to Stich's work is much less in volume than the attention Rorty receives. In the debate about the value of truth, his views are dismissed without much discussion. In a book devoted to a discussion of the value of truth, Lynch, for example, devotes only two pages to Stich's argument.[112] Perhaps there is consensus that many of Rorty's and Stich's conclusions are false. I don't think they are obviously false, though. I find their arguments interesting and their conclusions worth thinking about, though this might not be easily detected in what follows. And, though I do not care to actually defend this claim, I think it is probably the case that the negative attention Rorty and Stich receive is largely due to philosophical biases on behalf of their opponents, rather than due consideration of these two philosophers' views. In the introduction, I say I want to bring needed clarity to the debate, and I begin by introducing the distinction between concept of truth and property of truth. In this chapter, I don't bother explicitly employing the distinction. Rorty and Stich make general claims about truth. Failure to recognize the distinction between the property of truth and concept of truth, though, weakens their arguments. In order for the reader to see why clarity is needed in the debate, I discuss the issue as these philosophers do, i.e., just talking about truth. In some cases, context will make the distinction obvious. In other cases, the distinction will be less obvious. At the end of the chapter, I include a section applying the concept/property distinction to the forgoing discussions, bringing the issue into better focus.

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[111] Mendieta (2006), p. xi.
[112] See Lynch (2004-b), pp. 91-93.

Rorty and the Value of Truth

Rorty thinks that truth is not valuable; he thinks that there is no deep property or essence of truth and that the concept is bankrupt, at least when interpreted as something other than justification. He doesn't give an explicit argument for this claim, but he says enough about truth that an argument can be formulated on his behalf. In the following section, I offer new reasons for thinking that he is wrong about the value of truth. After characterizing and explaining his view, I say why I think it is not sufficient to justify the claim that truth is not valuable.

Rorty's Argument

As a rough first pass, Rorty's argument goes something like this. For pragmatists, only practical differences matter; if something doesn't make a difference to how one lives one's life, then it is not practically important. There is no practical difference between truth and justification. As Rorty says, "I cannot bypass justification and confine my attention to truth."[113] If it's not possible to bypass justification to see if one has "got it right," then claiming that truth is a goal of inquiry is pointless, and so is claiming it is a kind of good. In this section, I explicate Rorty's view. I do so by focusing on these aspects of his view: his explanation of the distinction between truth and justification, what he says about theories of truth, and his notion of justification as a form of solidarity. I then outline what I take to be his argument, and say why I think the formulation is a good characterization of his view.

Although Rorty thinks that truth and justification are practically indistinguishable, he doesn't think all uses of the word 'true' (and its cognates) are dispensable; nor does he think

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[113] Rorty (1995), p. 281.

dispensable the distinction between true beliefs and beliefs that are justified. After all, it seems obvious that it is possible for a belief to be justified and not true, and it is possible for a belief to be true and not justified. So, how does Rorty make sense of the distinction, if he thinks that truth and justification are practically indistinguishable? He describes 3 different uses of the word 'true': (1) an endorsing use, (2) a cautionary use, and (3) a disquotational use.[114] When uttering an endorsing use of 'true' someone is expressing agreement with a particular claim, as in the response "yeah, that's true" to an assertion. The cautionary use of 'true' amounts to a reminder that it is possible for the justification of a particular claim to be undermined at some future date by some future audience. So 'true' used in this way cautions others that some future context might make unjustified what they take to be justified now, as when someone remarks, "you may have good reason for thinking that, but it's not true." Taking this into consideration, the distinction between truth and justification should be construed as a distinction between justification now and justification later. The disquotational use of 'true' is reserved for saying "metalinguistic things of the form " 'S' is true if and only if _____."[115] Rorty claims that (1) and (3) mark uses of 'true' that can be eliminated easily from our language; 'true' in the sense of (1) and (3) could be replaced with another word that functions as a term of endorsement or metalinguistic convenience. (2) is a use of 'true' that cannot be easily eliminated from our language.

One might wonder why Rorty cares about maintaining the distinction between truth and justification at all. Maintaining the distinction serves at least two purposes. First, as noted, Rorty is a pragmatist. But, he is not a pragmatist who wants to make the same philosophical mistakes his predecessors made, most notably James. A charge that is typically made against Jamesian pragmatism is that it leads to a kind of relativism that is problematic.

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[114] Rorty (1991), p. 128 and (1995), p. 283.
[115] Rorty (1991), p. 128 and (1995), p. 283.

James claims, as is well known, that "'The true,' to put it very briefly, is only the expedient in the way of our thinking, just as 'the right' is only the expedient in the way of our behaving."[116] It is not clear, in James' writing, what "expedient" amounts to. Given changing social norms and conventions, it is likely that what counts as expedient for one group of people will be different from what counts as expedient for another group. If so, then the pragmatist view of truth is relative to whatever definition of expedient is operational in a particular society. Rorty thinks that maintaining the distinction between truth and justification is enough to save pragmatism from this charge of relativism.[117] With the distinction in hand, 'true' is not subject to a current audience's definition of justification (or 'expedient'). Rather, 'true' is reserved for what a future audience takes to be justified. For Rorty, it is always possible to imagine an audience that is "better informed" and "more creative" than are current audiences.[118] So, although truth is still relative to an audience, so to speak, the relativism is not as problematic for Rorty as it is for James.

Second, maintaining the distinction is supposed to prevent one from thinking that Rorty is embracing some kind of epistemic theory of truth, say an "ideal audience" theory of truth. On this kind of theory of truth, a claim is considered true in virtue of how an ideal audience relates to it. If an ideal audience would count a claim as justified, then the claim is true. Rorty does not give an explicit definition of what a theory of truth is, but he gives a good enough idea that I can formulate a definition for him. For Rorty, formulating a theory of truth means being committed to truth as a goal of inquiry. Commitment to truth as a goal of inquiry requires "metaphysical activism."[119] Metaphysical activism requires thinking that the things one says map onto some reality, that one represents reality through language. The

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[116] James (1907), p. 222.
[117] Rorty (1991), p. 128 and (1995).
[118] Rorty (1995), p. 283.
[119] Rorty (1995), throughout.

aim of true beliefs, according to metaphysical activists, is to "get things right."[120] The only way to tell whether or not one is "getting it right" is to think of truth as a "fixed," "unconditioned" goal. Otherwise, there would be no standard with which to measure one's progress toward "getting it right." A theory of truth then, has the following characteristics; it:

(i)   presupposes a distinction between reality and the way reality is represented

(ii)   describes truth as a relation between reality and the way reality is represented

Rorty is not concerned with formulating a theory of truth.[121] He denies (i) because it makes no difference to how we live our lives whether the realists are right in thinking that there is a mind independent world that we try to represent through language or whether the antirealists are right to deny realism. A denial of (i) entails a denial of (ii). So, for all he says about truth, Rorty is not formulating a theory of it. Moreover, according to Rorty, there is no such thing as an ideal audience, because it is always possible that some future audience might be "more imaginative" or "better informed."[122] Because one of the uses of 'true' functions to mark this possibility, by maintaining the distinction between truth and justification, Rorty can avoid being branded an "ideal audience" epistemic truth theorist.

Given the emphasis Rorty places on justification, it's important to have an understanding of what he means by it. Rorty characterizes justification in terms of warranted assertibility. A claim is warranted, on Rorty's view, when it is one that a group of peers would accept. This, for Rorty, is a sociological phenomenon, a matter of a feeling of "solidarity" with one's peer group: ". . . 'rational acceptable', etc., will always invite the question 'to whom?' This question will always lead us back, it seems to me, to the answer

[120] Rorty (1995).
[121] Rorty (1995).
[122] Rorty (1995), p. 283.

'*Us*, at our best'. So all 'a fact of the matter about whether p is a warranted assertion' can mean is 'a fact of the matter about our ability to feel solidarity with a community that views p as warranted."'[123]

Justification amounts to a feeling of solidarity, but what does this latter notion mean? Solidarity, according to Rorty, is the feeling that one has when one sees that the similarities one shares with others with regard to the capacity to suffer "pain and humiliation" is more important than the typical differences marked by race, class, conventions, etc.[124] One naturally feels a sense of solidarity with one's peer group. As such, solidarity is an ethnocentric notion, a label that Rorty wants to employ without its pejorative connotations. For Rorty, ethnocentrism is a way to categorize people into two groups, those to whom one is responsible for justifying one's claims by a process of unforced agreement and those to whom one is not responsible for justifying one's claims in this way. The practices of the sciences give a model to justify one's claims by a process of unforced agreement. The process is free from the kind of cruelty that undermines solidarity and it is rational in the sense that it allows for open discussion, respect and tolerance, among other virtues.[125] So, solidarity is a product of certain rational social practices that help define communities. Given this view of rationality, although the feeling of solidarity involves ethnocentrism, according to Rorty, one can always widen her sense of solidarity by incorporating others into the "group among whom unforced agreement is to be sought."[126]

Given these elements of Rorty's position, it can now be outlined. Here is my characterization of Rorty's position:

1.   Only practical differences matter.

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[123] Rorty (1993), pp. 452-453.
[124] Rorty (1995), p. 192.
[125] Rorty (1995).
[126] Rorty (1995).

2. Truth and justification are practically indistinguishable.

3. If truth were valuable, it would be a goal of inquiry.

4. If truth were a goal of inquiry, there would be a way to tell if a claim has "got it right" apart from the claim's justification.

5. Given 2, there's no way to tell if a claim has "got it right" apart from the claim's justification.

6. So, truth is not a goal of inquiry.

7. So, truth is not valuable.

Most of the premises are straightforward restatements of Rorty's view explicated above. This is not the case for premise 3.[127] However, I don't think Rorty would disagree with it. Before I get to that, I need to say something about why I outline his argument in the first place.

Those familiar with Rorty's work might find it odd that I give such an outline of his view. Rorty resists explicitly such argument characterizations. In rejecting the view that truth is "out there" and that the correct theory of truth is a correspondence one, Rorty is plain about his strategy. Rather than giving an argument, as traditionally conceived, against his objectors, his strategy is one of ". . . redescribing other things, trying to outflank the objections by enlarging the scope of one's favorite metaphors. So my strategy will be to try to make the vocabulary in which these objections are phrased look bad, thereby changing the

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[127] It should be obvious that premise 3 is a key premise and that it is not formulated as an indicative conditional. Depending on one's classification system for conditionals, it could be a subjunctive conditional or a counterfactual. It is a matter of debate whether there is much of a distinction to be bothered with here. I certainly don't want to bother with it. The truth conditions for such conditionals is also a matter of debate and one that I don't intend to enter into here. Ultimately, I am concerned to show premise 3 false. It may be the case that there's no agreement on the truth conditions of conditionals like premise 3. But, there does seem to be agreement that all conditionals, indicative or not, are false if their antecedents are false and their consequents are true and that it's harmless to pretend that such subjunctive conditionals can be parsed in this way. I assume this much in what follows. If formulations like 3 bother you, substitute its indicative counterpart
3* If truth is valuable, it is a goal of inquiry.
If premise 4 is worrisome, apply the same process to it.

subject rather than granting the objector his choice of weapons and terrain by meeting his criticisms head on."[128] Given this, why is it that I bother to outline his argument at all? I do so for the following reasons. Rorty does not give an explicit argument for the claim that truth is not valuable. To be sure, he does argue that truth is a concept that we should dispense with, unless it is reconceived in the right way, i.e., as a kind of justification, but he never explicitly links this idea with the claim that truth is not valuable. The closest he comes to expressing the idea that truth is not valuable is when he says things like this: "I doubt that there is more hope of accumulating relevant behavioral evidence here than there is when attempting to answer the question 'Is he saved?' or 'Does he love the Lord his God with all his heart and soul and mind?'. The question 'Do you value truth?' seems to me as about as pointless as these latter questions."[129] It may be obvious that thinking that truth is not valuable follows from what he says about truth in general. I certainly think it is. Nevertheless, given the centrality of truth's value to the present project, an explicit argument should be given for the claim that truth is not valuable.

Also, whatever Rorty says about "arguments," I think they raise the stakes in philosophical discourse. Explicit arguments helps one see clearly the chain of reasoning that leads to a conclusion. If Rorty is as concerned with solidarity building as he claims he is, he would do well to make his thought as transparent as possible. Doing so helps one get clear on the strengths of the view. It seems like many philosophers dismiss Rorty too quickly and that they do so without knowing much about his views.[130] Frankly, I think many dismiss him simply because of his rhetoric; it's off-putting to many philosophers. That is unfortunate, as I think that Rorty's general philosophical views are worth taking seriously. Moreover, given

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[128] Rorty (1989), p. 44.
[129] Rorty (2000), p. 105.
[130] See Mendieta (2006).

the importance of solidarity for Rorty's view, it seems like that process would be facilitated

through a format with which one could more easily see both the strengths and weaknesses

of his position. I think Rorty would agree that building solidarity is more important that

sticking to a principled position regarding eschewing traditional philosophical argumentation.

If so (and I have no intention to argue this claim) and if I am right that my characterization

helps one to do just that, then Rorty would have to agree.

Lastly, Rorty's view was developed over many decades. Rorty was also incredibly

prolific. Given these two aspects of his work, it makes sense to try to distill his thinking

about the value of truth into chunks that are manageable enough to think about clearly.

Outlining his argument is a way to do just this. It makes sense for reasons that Rorty would

likely accept, i.e., it's more pragmatic. Far from doing Rorty a disservice, I think, making

explicit his argument renders it more compelling.

I've said why I think outlining his argument is useful, but I haven't said why I think

my characterization is a good one. To do so amounts to defending premise 3, as all the

other premises are simple restatements of aspects of his view. Why do I think Rorty would

accept premise 3? His acceptance of premise 3 follows from what he says about the goal of

inquiry and what he would say about something's being valuable. First, consider what he

says about the goal of inquiry. Rorty makes the following claim: "Pragmatists interpret the

goal of inquiry (in any sphere or culture) as the attainment of an appropriate mixture of

unforced agreement with tolerant disagreement (where what counts as appropriate is

determined, within that sphere, by trial and error)."[131] Given the previous discussion, it

seems reasonable to think that a product of the attainment of an appropriate mixture of

unforced agreement with tolerant disagreement is a feeling of solidarity. Implicit in Rorty's

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[131] Rorty (1995), p. 41.

claim is the dissolution of thinking of the goal of inquiry as some object that one attains.

Rorty says as much in the following passage. He writes, "Such reinterpretation of our sense

of responsibility would, if carried through, gradually make unintelligible the subject-object

model of inquiry, the child-parent model of moral obligation, and the correspondence theory

of truth."[132] So, the goal of inquiry is a certain mixture of agreement and disagreement that

results in a feeling of solidarity and has nothing to do with how true sentences represent,

map on to, or correspond with the world. Second, consider what Rorty would say about

value. What is it that makes something valuable for Rorty? He never addresses value per se.

Given the importance of solidarity, Rorty would say that something is valuable if and only if

it contributes to this sense of solidarity. That is, something is valuable if and only if it

contributes to a sense of unity, i.e., it doesn't contribute to pain or humiliation.[133] And,

what's the reason for thinking that pain or humiliation ought to be avoided? Rorty describes

himself as a "liberal." A liberal, in Rorty's sense, is someone who thinks "that cruelty is the

worst thing we can do" and thinks this not because of any metaphysical underpinnings[134] As

such, Rorty says that he can't define the desire to avoid cruelty in a way that is not circular.[135]

Something is valuable, then, according to standards of rationality that promote tolerance,

respect, open discussion, etc. If truth were valuable, it would make a practical difference in

one's life, contribute to solidarity and to the foundations of community, which, according to

Rorty include the "shared hope and the trust created by such sharing."[136] If something were

valuable, it'd be a goal of inquiry in the sense that Rorty is concerned with, i.e., creating a

sense of solidarity. So, if truth were valuable, it would be a goal of inquiry.

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[132] Rorty (1995), pp. 41-42.
[133] This biconditional is not too strong, given Rorty's definition of solidarity and the emphasis he places on solidarity as a guiding social norm. Here and elsewhere, I use 'value' synonymously with 'positive value.'
[134] Rorty (1989), p. xv.
[135] Rorty (1989), p. xv.
[136] Rorty (1995), p. 33.

Rorty's Failure

There are many criticisms of Rorty's position about truth.[137] Some of them are well known, others are not so well known. Most criticisms focus on proving false Rorty's work that deals with premises 2 ("Truth and justification are practically indistinguishable") and 5 ("Given 2, there's no way to tell if a claim has 'got it right' apart from the claim's justification"). While I think many of the counterarguments are damning for Rorty, even if they are flawed, his argument remains problematic. There are problems with premise 1 ("Only practical differences matter") and premise 3 ("If truth were valuable, it would be a goal of inquiry"). Instead of rehearsing the many criticisms of his view, in what follows I give my reasons for thinking that these two premises are untenable.

Premise 1: Only practical differences matter

Suppose that it's true that only practical differences matter. If practical differences matter, then there must be a way to determine what counts as a practical difference. If there were no way to tell what counts as a practical difference, then there would be no way to know if some difference matters. Rorty says little about what counts as practically important. As I see it, there are three ways practical importance can be determined. Practical importance can be determined by

1. an individual: each individual person can figure out what she thinks is practically important by whatever means she sees fit.

2. a collection of persons: each group can figure out what counts as practically important by whatever means it sees fit.

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[137] For examples, see Akeel Bilgrami (2000), John McDowell (2000), Hilary Putnam (2000).

3. some universal norm to which all persons can appeal.

Option 1 is problematic for Rorty because it entails a kind of relativism with which he is not comfortable. A case can be made for why Rorty might support either option 2 or option 3. If he supports option 2, he cannot do so while also maintaining claims that encourage everyone to eliminate certain metaphors. If he supports option 3, he cannot do so while maintaining his linguistic pluralism. In what follows, I show how each option is problematic.

Consider option 1. Rorty can't rely on the differences that matter being defined individually. If this were the standard for determining what counts as practically important, then it would be the case that anyone's definition of practical importance would be admissible. If I thought that caring about the truth as a notion of correspondence made some kind of practical difference in my life, then Rorty would have nothing to say against me. To be sure, he could say that I'm wrong, but this wouldn't mean anything to me. At best, Rorty's claim that people are wrong to think that truth is something that requires metaphysical commitments is just a personal expression of dismay, disappointment, or some such thing. Maybe Rorty really is only concerned with expressing himself in this way. If so, it's hard to understand why he cares enough about persuading others to have spilled as much ink as he has spilled on this topic. Nevertheless, option 1 leads to exactly the kind of problematic relativism that Rorty tries to avoid. Remember, Rorty invokes the distinction between truth and justification in order to avoid the kind of relativism that Jamesian pragmatism is accused of entailing. That problem is a result of relativizing truth to a particular group of people. The result of relativizing to individuals or groups of individuals what counts as practically important is a host of different, likely incommensurate, standards. The result isn't just for what counts as practically important. Given the role of practicality in

pragmatism, the ramifications of relativism are far reaching, threatening to undermine entirely the possibility of solidarity.

Consider option 2. This seems like the sort of thing that Rorty would accept. Presumably, he'd say that what matters for some community is determined through trial and error. That is the sort of thing he says about solidarity. But, if it turns out that some community thinks that the traditional distinction between truth and justification is useful for their purposes, what's to prevent members of that community from employing it? Rorty would likely say that the members of such a community have every right to use it if they see fit. Take, for instance, this claim:

> Different vocabularies allow us to formulate different truths. Our needs and interests are extremely diverse in nature and vary over time with circumstances. Which vocabulary we should adopt depends upon which needs and interests we seek to address. Since some vocabularies are better adapted to one purpose than another, we should be linguistic pluralists, alternating back and forth, inventing and discarding vocabularies as best suits our purposes.[138]

Because different communities have different interests, communities should have the freedom to figure out which kind of terms they want to employ. It's not a far stretch to say that communities should also have the freedom to choose which kinds of standards they are going to use to determine what counts as practically important.

Linguistic pluralism is consistent with both Rorty's emphasis on solidarity and with Rorty's overall view of language as something that helps one cope with the world. Solidarity, recall, is the feeling of unity with a group of persons. Allowing groups to choose vocabularies that are better adapted to some purpose that suits their interests makes possible a feeling of unity within the group. After all, one could not feel a sense of unity with those whom one does not share a common way of talking about the world. With regard to coping

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[138] Rorty (2000), p. 321.

and language, Rorty says that "on my view, of course, any and every pattern of linguistic practice is an attempt to cope with the behavior (either linguistic or non-linguistic) of things."[139]

Such remarks are curious, though, when considering other passages. Take this one, for instance:

> As I see it, one can describe any true assertion as a convenient tool for coping with reality, or as a good move in a language-game, or even as a reasonably accurate representation of reality, just so long as one does make invidious distinctions between kinds of assertions (so that true political or literary or moral judgments, for example, are tools and moves but not representations, for example, whereas true physical theories are all three). Describing true assertions as representations of reality, or as corresponding to reality, is harmless if the metaphors of representing and corresponding are not pressed.[140]

Here, Rorty takes away with one hand what he gives with the other. The last sentence is especially curious. Groups of people who choose to employ the notion of truth as some kind of correspondence are free to do so, provided that they don't take themselves seriously. The trouble is that Rorty doesn't have much authority to make such claims, if he wants to hold onto the importance of the community determining through trial and error what distinctions it finds useful and what distinctions it doesn't.

There is another worry with regard to this passage. What could it mean to say that one can describe a true assertion as being "reasonably accurate representation of reality" while at the same time not pressing the metaphor of correspondence? It seems to me that someone who says that true assertions represent reality does not have any intention in understanding "represent" as a metaphor. For Rorty to insist it has to amount to a metaphor or that the utterer doesn't really know what she's talking about means that Rorty is precluding the chance of building solidarity with this person. Recall that solidarity is a

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[139] Rorty (2000), p. 102.
[140] Rorty (2000), p. 102.

feeling of unity and one that is achieved by standards of rationality that promote unforced agreement and tolerant disagreement. Obviously, Rorty does not agree with such a person. But, is he tolerant of her? Being tolerant, in my mind, amounts to respecting her views in such a way as to entertain the possibility that she is right. To dismiss someone as deluded about what she asserts, to suggest that what she is really doing is just pressing metaphors when she does not see her own assertions in that way, is to disrespect that person in at least two ways; it's to assume that she is not competent enough to know what she really means and to think that the linguistic standards that her community employs, standards which might support her assertion, can't be right. To be clear, Rorty doesn't think that one should be tolerant of every other person. There are some persons who do not deserve tolerance: "We have learned the futility of trying to assign all cultures and persons places on a hierarchical scale, but this realization does not impugn the obvious fact that there are lots of cultures we would be better off without, just as there are lots of people we would be better off without."[141] What matters is whether another's viewpoint, in one's own judgment, is conducive to the building of solidarity and human happiness. Some views are obviously not so conducive, e.g., thinking that pedophilia is okay. Being a realist about truth doesn't fall into this category. Nevertheless, isn't taking the true assertion as a reasonably accurate representation of reality at the same time pressing the metaphor? If so, then Rorty has two options. He could either allow representation talk or say we need to dispense with it altogether. It seems likely that he'd say we should eliminate such talk once and for all. If so, it seems like he's no longer a linguistic pluralist, as he'd be precluding a community from coping with reality as it sees fit on its own terms.

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[141] See Rorty (1999), p. 276. Thanks to Christian Miller for the reference. See Miller (2003).

Perhaps such remarks show that practical importance can be determined through some universal law like the following

What determines if something counts as practically important is whether it helps one cope with the world.

Rorty never defines what he means by "coping." In a sense, this only pushes the problem back a step. It's plausible that what counts as coping for one group of people will be different from what counts as coping for another set of people. This is obviously problematic. Here's a revised proposal:

What determines if something counts as practically important is whether it helps one cope with the world in the right kind of way.

What is the right kind of way? Given Rorty's emphasis on solidarity and solidarity's connection to the absence of cruelty, coping with the world in the right kind of way means coping with the world in such a way that pain and humiliation is not increased. Each community is free to decide how to determine this. However, given the passage above, it is clear that thinking of truth in terms of correspondence does not help one cope with the world in the right kind of way. So, one should give up the notion. Does this interpretation help? It certainly seems to tie together Rorty's emphasis on linguistic pluralism and his disavowal of correspondence theories of truth.

There is an obvious problem here, though. Rorty encourages everyone to give up the correspondence metaphor, and he thinks it is wrongheaded not to do so. This is inconsistent with the claim that we should be linguistic pluralists. So, Rorty faces a dilemma. Either he gives up on being a linguistic pluralist or he gives up on eliminating certain "metaphors." If he gives up on being a linguistic pluralist, he gives up on the view of language that is supposed to help us cope with the world, as linguistic pluralism is supposed

to give the kind of flexibility needed for different groups with different interests and values to cope with the world in ways that reflect those interests and values. Given the proposal that practical importance has something to do with coping, giving up on being a linguistic pluralist means giving up on the claim that only practical differences matter. If he gives up on dispensing with certain "metaphors," then he gives up on the view that truth is not some kind of correspondence between sentences and the world. If he wants to maintain that truth and justification are practically indistinguishable, giving up on the view that truth is not some kind of correspondence also means giving up on the idea that only practical differences matter. Whatever the case, it is clear that taking premise one to be true leads to a dilemma that entails giving up on premise one.

Premise 3: If truth were valuable, it would be a goal of inquiry.

In my characterization of Rorty's argument, premise (3) reads in this way

(3)   If truth is were valuable, it would be a goal of inquiry.

Granting that Rorty is correct in claiming that truth is not a goal of inquiry, does it follow that truth is not valuable? I don't think so. Rorty actually gives a way in which we can think of something being valuable without thinking of it as a goal of inquiry. In presenting a Davidsonian position for the claim that truth is not a goal of inquiry, Rorty says the following

(JM)   so there is nothing which can plausibly be described as a goal of enquiry, although the desire for further justification of course serves as a *motive* of enquiry.

Rorty thinks that our need for justification "subjects us to norms." Here is what he says: "The need to justify our beliefs and desires to ourselves and to our fellow-agents subjects us

to norms, and obedience to these norms produces a behavioral pattern which we must detect in others before confidently attributing any beliefs to them."[142]

What does it mean to say that the desire for justification serves a motive of inquiry? Not surprisingly, Rorty doesn't give an explicit definition of "motive." From the claims cited above, it is clear that motives have something to do with norms and explanation. I propose the following definition of motive:

(M)   A motive is a belief or desire that a person possesses that (at minimum) explains why she acts in a particular way, according to certain norms.[143]

Several parts of this definition are in need of qualification. "Belief or desire" should be construed broadly. I use the words 'belief' and 'desire' because Rorty uses them. However, I have no particular conception of either term in mind. I do not mean to presuppose anything about whether reasons can count as motives. The use of 'belief or desire' is a way to sidestep that issue. By "possesses" I mean to indicate two things, namely, (1) that belief or desire a person has to which she can appeal in explaining her acts to herself or anyone else and (2) that belief or desire a person has that causes her to act in a certain way. So, to say that the desire for justification serves as a motive of inquiry is to say that it (the desire for justification) can explain a person's acting in a certain way and on a particular occasion, according to certain norms. For example, my wanting to convince the reader that Rorty is wrong about value of truth explains my writing this section. The desire for justification serves as one of my motives here, and that explains why I am giving you arguments for certain claims. Furthermore, claiming that the desire for justification serves as a motive of

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[142] Rorty (1995), reprinted in Lynch (2001), p. 287.
[143] I add the parenthetical clause because motives also could function to justify why people act the way they do. See Miller (2008) for more information.

inquiry means that justification is valuable. It is valuable, at least, as a motive of inquiry. That means it's at least valuable in an explanatory way.

So far, I haven't said anything about whether Rorty would accept the Davidsonian claim JM. I think it's clear that Rorty does accept this sort of claim, though perhaps not without some qualification. However, I do not want my case here to rely on interpretations of Rorty's explication of Davidson's position. I bring up JM because it gives me a way to show that something can be valuable to the goal of inquiry without being identified as the goal of inquiry. Given Rorty's remarks about justification as solidarity, the goal of inquiry and the explication of Davidson's view, I think the issue of justification complicates the matter at hand too much. If Rorty is taken as endorsing Davidson's position, justification can't be the goal of inquiry, given that JM claims that nothing can be a goal of inquiry. If Rorty's remarks on justification, which are presented in the previous section, are taken seriously, justification is the goal of inquiry. Moreover, to say that justification is both a motive and goal of inquiry would mean that the desire for justification explains the goal of inquiry, i.e., justification. However, there is nothing explanatory about that. It is better to focus on another issue. Is there anything that functions as a motive of inquiry but is not the goal of inquiry, something other than justification? Consider curiosity.

To get a handle on what curiosity is, it is helpful to distinguish between the kind of conditions necessary for one to be curious and one's being curious about something. What conditions are necessary for one to be curious? One has to be ignorant about that which she desires to know. Ignorance is, in some sense, a matter of degree. One has to know enough to be curious but not so much that the curiosity never arises. Ignorance is not enough, though, for one to be curious. One must also be unsatisfied with what one knows. There probably are more conditions necessary for curiosity to arise in the first place.

Certainly people are motivated by curiosity. For some scientists, curiosity is what they consider their primary motivation. They care more about maintaining an active sense of curiosity than they do about offering the kind of justification that is going to convince their colleagues or secure their next grant.[144] And, to say that their desire for justification explains their curiosity gets things backwards. Rather, it is their curiosity that explains their desire for justification. On the surface, it seems like curiosity is a motive that is valuable for inquiry but one that has little to do with justification.

It's not hard to see that truth can function in an analogous way as justification. For the sake of argument, suppose one can never really know if one has "got it right." Not really knowing that one has "got it right" is not the same thing as knowing that one hasn't "hit the mark." Often, knowing that one hasn't hit the mark is easy enough. It is also easy enough to know that one is closer to the mark, even if one doesn't know exactly what the mark is. If one misses badly enough, one has some kind of measure of where the mark might be. Actually, I think this is a common experience. Working a math or logic problem can be like this, as can repairing an engine. In both cases, something happens when one gets closer to the truth, as it were, even if one doesn't know exactly what the truth is or is never in a position to acquire such knowledge. This experience can serve as a motivation for continued action. Having this experience need not require having any interest in letting others know about it. Think about the person who likes logic puzzles and is motivated to "get it right." There is a moment when getting it right happens, when one knows that she is right. What happens in this moment is sometimes enough for some people. There is no need to know how others have solved the puzzle, whether others have solved the puzzle, or if the particular solution is "good enough." There are two points to consider here: (1)

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[144] Thanks to Kenneth Curry for a discussion of this point.

there's no need to know that you've hit the mark in order to be motivated by something like the truth and (2) it is possible to imagine a person who is motivated by truth and is not satisfied with offering justification to *any* audience, precisely because he is motivated by truth. What is interesting about this scenario is that it shows that the distinction between truth and justification is deeper than Rorty admits.

Stich and the Value of Truth

Like Rorty, Stich doesn't think that truth is valuable. Also like Rorty, he doesn't argue for this claim explicitly. Rather, he takes his task to be a more modest one, one that is supposed to shift the burden of proof on to those who think that truth is valuable. He admits that his argument is not a "knockdown" argument for the claim that truth is not valuable. Stich thinks that it could be the case that truth is valuable. But, it's far from obvious that it is the case. At first blush, this may not seem like an important point to make. However, when considering that most philosophers think that it's obvious that truth is at least instrumentally valuable, Stich's conclusion is more provocative than it first seems. In this section, I present what I call the "Burden Shifting" argument and say why I think it fails.

Stich's Argument

In order to determine if true beliefs are valuable, Stich thinks it is obvious that something must be said about what truth is, what beliefs are, and the ways in which true beliefs can be valued. Stich assumes that beliefs are "real psychological states" and are not simply "explanatory fictions." Furthermore, he assumes token identity with regard to beliefs and brain states. Roughly, this is the view that a particular belief is identical to a particular

brain state, as opposed to the view that a belief type is identical to a brain state type (across individuals).

Given that beliefs are brain states, Stich wonders how beliefs can be true or false. One plausible story is that beliefs are true when they are properly mapped onto some truth bearer that is "more naturally thought of in semantic terms."[145] For example, someone who agrees with Stich about beliefs and thinks that propositions are truth bearers might think that "a belief is true if and only if the proposition to which it is mapped is true."[146] Of course Stich recognizes both that there are problems with this sort of view and that many of these problems are justified. For example, philosophers disagree about what propositions are, if there are any. Another problem that Stich recognizes about this approach is that it might be question begging, depending on the story one gives about semantic properties. Nevertheless, Stich "ignores" such complaints and for the sake of argument assumes that such problems can be worked out. As such, Burden Shifting focuses on the interpretation function that maps beliefs onto truth bearers. His argument also focuses only on interpretation functions that are in agreement with folk beliefs about them, as Stich thinks that any plausible interpretation function must be constrained by pretheoretical intuitions or common sense intuitions about the matter at hand. If an interpretation is not in harmony with common sense, that's prima facie evidence that the interpretation function is fundamentally flawed. As Stich says, "I will simply stipulate that my skepticism about the value of true beliefs is restricted to accounts that assign truth conditions largely compatible with commonsense intuition."[147]

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[145] Stich (1993), p. 104.
[146] Stich (1993), p. 104.
[147] Stich (1993), p. 106.

What kind of interpretation function does Stich think is most plausible? Stich thinks the causal/functional interpretation function (CFIF) is the most plausible one. It is based on what he calls the "causal/functional theory" of "the semantic properties of mental states."[148] Stich doesn't give any reasons for his reliance on this theory other than its popularity. The causal/functional theory combines Tarski's insights about truth conditions with the causal theory of reference. Tarski gives the formal support needed for specifying the truth conditions of well-formed formulas in a language. Stich notes that there are two main shortcomings of Tarski's theory: (1) it can only be "straightforwardly applied to languages with a narrow range" of logical operators and (2) it's not clear what it means on Tarski's theory to get an axiom right, given that the list of base clauses needed for the theory is large. The causal theory of reference helps one know what it means to get the axioms right. Here's how Stich describes the causal theory: "Though the details are sketchy and controversial, the basic idea of the causal theory is that a token of a name denotes an individual if and only if the appropriate sort of causal chain extends from original use or dubbing to the current production of the name token in question."[149] It turns out that getting the details of the story right is not that important for Stich, or so he claims. What is important is that the theory "relies heavily on commonsense intuition and the commonsense concepts or practices that underlie them."[150] The causal/functional theory is one that describes how sentences get their truth conditions. In order to apply this story to mental states, Stich claims that one simply needs to think about mental states as being like sentences: ". . . beliefs are like complex psychological states which, like sentences, can be viewed as built up out of simpler components. . . . The question of how beliefs get their semantic properties can now

[148] Stich (1993), p. 106.
[149] Stich (1993), p. 108.
[150] Stich (1993), p. 108.

be rephrased as a question about how we can assign truth conditions to these cerebral inscriptions."[151]

So much for the theoretical background Stich thinks is needed in order to understand the CFIF. It might seem like all is well. The CFIF maps beliefs onto their truth conditions, and the theoretical background needed in order for CFIF to be plausible is a causal/functional theory that is, in Stich's words, "justifiably popular." If one knows how beliefs can be true or false, it doesn't seem like much of a problem to claim that true beliefs are valuable in some kind of way. Stich thinks, however, that there are some problems with the CFIF, problems that have implications for whether true beliefs can be valuable.

There are two problems with the CFIF, i.e., it is limited and idiosyncratic. Why does Stich think it's limited? There are two reasons why the CFIF is limited. First, there are many possible ways in which "mental words" could get tied to their references. Or, as Stich puts it, there are many "empirically possible causal histories of mental words."[152] This is a point that Stich thinks is supported by commonsense; most people are probably willing to agree that the history of our concepts and mental language could have been different. The CFIF is also limited because there is "no general account of what it is to get the recursive clauses in a definition of truth right."[153] This means that the CFIF can only "be built" from a small number of already understood terms and connectives, yielding a "limited number of constructions." Stich notes that this last problem is not just a problem about lacking a general account. Even if there were an adequate general account, the problem remains. It remains because there are indefinitely many possible "mental sentence constructions." Given an indefinite number of mental sentence constructions, there will be, Stich claims,

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[151] Stich (1993), p. 109.
[152] Stich (1993), p. 111.
[153] Stich (1993), p. 112.

many constructions that do not admit of any "truth theoretic recursive functions." He says, "The space of formally (or syntactically) possible productions or computations vastly outruns those that our intuitive semantics is prepared to interpret."[154] The number of constructions that need fixing vastly outstrips the ways in which they can be fixed. So, the CFIF is limited.

Why does Stich think the CFIF is idiosyncratic? To see that the CFIF is idiosyncratic, one only needs to see that it is *just* one way to map beliefs (or mental states) onto their truth conditions (or propositions, etc.). If there is one way to map items on one list to items on another list, there are many ways to do so. To be sure, the CFIF is one that is "sanctioned" by commonsense. Even if the causal/functional story were the only way of mapping beliefs to their truth conditions, there are many different ways to do this, given the variety of beliefs people have, the variety of people that exist, the number of words there are, cultural and historical circumstances, etc. The causal/functional story needs to be flexible enough to allow for all kinds of reference fixing ways. Some of these ways are bound to depart from commonsense. Stich thinks that one's preference for the CFIF, and a version that does not depart from commonsense, is *just* a preference. The mapping functions that are not sanctioned by commonsense "may strike us as wrong or inappropriate. But there is no reason to think that we could not retrain our intuitions or bring up our children to have intuitions very different from ours."[155] So, the CFIF is idiosyncratic.

The consequence of the CFIF's idiosyncrasies and limitations is that "truth has lots of competition." Take a given set of beliefs. It is sure to contain some true beliefs. One such belief is that there is a green lamp on my desk. This belief is true if and only if there is a green lamp on my desk. Given the result above, the set is also sure to contain some

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[154] Stich (1993), p. 113.
[155] Stich (1993), p. 116.

TRUE* beliefs. According to Stich, a TRUE* belief is one that is sanctioned by a reference fixing mapping that differs (it needs to differ only slightly) from the one sanctioned by CFIF. My belief that there is a green lamp on my desk is TRUE* if and only if there is a green lamp on my desk or there is a purple pen in the cup next to the lamp. Given that there are indefinitely many ways in which to fix the reference of one's beliefs, there are indefinitely many ways in which one's beliefs can be true, i.e., TRUE, TRUE*, TRUE*. . .*. Furthermore, Stich notes that it is usually the case that the percentage of true beliefs is not the same as the percentage of TRUE* beliefs (and so on for TRUE*. . . *). So, when the percentage of one's true beliefs increases, the percentage of TRUE* or TRUE** or TRUE*** (and so on) decreases.

What's all of this have to do with the value of truth? Stich thinks that if one really values true beliefs, then one should not care about giving up beliefs that are TRUE* or TRUE** (and so on). In order to understand his argument for the claim that we do not really care about true beliefs, it is important to note that Stich thinks that there are only two ways of valuing the truth. One can value the truth either instrumentally or intrinsically. He gives the usual characterizations of these ways of valuing something. Something that is instrumentally valuable is valuable as a means to some end that is valuable. Stich cites money as a typical example of something that is instrumentally valuable.[156] According to Stich, something is intrinsically valuable if it is "valuable for its own sake." Stich does note that there is a debate about whether there is only one thing that is intrinsically valuable or many things. Monists are philosophers who think there is only one thing that is intrinsically valuable or one thing that "has" it. Pluralists think that there is more than one thing that is intrinsically valuable. Stich admits that he is a pluralist and points out that pluralism allows

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[156] Stich (1993), p. 93.

room for thinking that something can be both intrinsically valuable and instrumentally valuable. There are good reasons to think that this way of describing the differences between the two kinds of value is flawed, and it is unclear whether Stich's brief discussion of monism and pluralism can accommodate these reasons. He makes this point in passing and says little about it. For now, note that Stich takes these distinctions for granted.

Stich thinks that valuing true beliefs intrinsically is "a profoundly conservative thing to do."[157] Of course, people can value true beliefs intrinsically. Given that the CFIF is limited and idiosyncratic, doing so is, however, as Stich says, a conservative thing to do. There are two reasons why Stich thinks that valuing true beliefs intrinsically is a conservative thing to do. First, given that the "cognitive space" marked out by the CFIF is only a fraction of the cognitive space worth exploring, there might be other parts of this space that are valuable in some way. Valuing true beliefs intrinsically keeps one from taking these other parts of cognitive space seriously enough to value them at all. Second, given that the CFIF is idiosyncratic, truth is preferred over TRUTH*, TRUTH**, TRUTH*. . .*, simply because it accords more with commonsense than TRUTH*, TRUTH*, or TRUTH*. . .* beliefs do. Stich claims that intuitive preferences and beliefs are in some way inherited and that they often escape critical reflection. As such, the preference for truth over TRUTH*, TRUTH**, TRUTH*. . .* is one that is usually based on unexamined intuitions. Valuing true beliefs intrinsically is, then, based on uncritical intuitions. Stich admits that this is not a "knockdown" argument for the claim that true beliefs aren't intrinsically valuable, but he thinks it is enough to shift the burden of proof onto those who think that truth is intrinsically valuable.

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[157] Stich (1993), p. 118.

Obviously, Stich doesn't think that true beliefs are instrumentally valuable either. This is not the conclusion for which he actually argues. He admits that true beliefs *could* be instrumentally valuable. He argues for the claim that it is not obvious that true beliefs are instrumentally valuable. In order to show this, Stich thinks that it is a mistake to show merely that true beliefs are more instrumentally valuable than false beliefs. Rather, it must also be shown is that true beliefs are more instrumentally valuable than TRUE* beliefs or TRUE** beliefs or TRUE*. . .* beliefs. To show that true beliefs are not always the best way to achieve one's goals, Stich formulates the following counterexample. Harry had a desire to live. That was one of his goals. Harry had a true belief that his flight would leave at a certain time and acted on this belief, arriving at the airport in time to board the plane. Unfortunately for Harry, this particular flight ended up crashing, killing him. Harry's true belief got in the way of his goal of surviving, and, thus, it was not instrumentally valuable. In this case, one more false belief would have been better for Harry. But, the CFIF is not the only kind of mapping. Suppose that Harry's beliefs were mapped to what Stich calls their TRUTH**** CONDITIONS in such a way that everything remained the same as the standard CFIF except that "the belief that Harry would express by saying 'my flight leaves at 7:45' is mapped to the proposition that his flight leaves at 8:45, and the belief that Harry would express by saying 'my flight leaves at 8:45' is mapped to the proposition that his flight leaves at 7:45."[158] Such a mapping would have left Harry better off with regard to his goal of surviving. In this case, TRUTH**** is more instrumentally valuable than truth. Stich concludes that "true beliefs are not always optimal in the pursuit of happiness or pleasure or desire satisfaction, nor are they always the best beliefs to have if what we want is peace or

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[158] Stich (1993), p. 123.

power or love, or some weighted mix of all of these."[159] Stich considers an obvious

objection, namely, that his Harry case is consistent with thinking that truth is more

instrumentally valuable than TRUE*, TRUE**, or TRUE*. . .* beliefs in the long run. He

admits that this may be the case. However, thinking that truth is generally more

instrumentally valuable than beliefs with other properties requires an argument. And, as

Stich says, not only are there no arguments on offer, but "as far as I know, no one has any

inkling of how that argument might go."[160] Burden Shifting shows that those who think that

truth is obviously valuable have more work to do to prove their point.

Stich thinks that it should be obvious that Burden Shifting generalizes in the

following ways. Any interpretation function that maps beliefs onto their truth conditions is

limited and idiosyncratic. That's just the nature of such interpretation functions.

Consequently, valuing true beliefs intrinsically is always a conservative thing to do, according

to Stich. Moreover, whatever interpretation function one chooses, one will need to show

how true beliefs are instrumentally more valuable than false beliefs and more instrumentally

valuable than TRUE*, TRUE**, or TRUE*. . .* beliefs. Likewise, no matter which

interpretation function one chooses, sometimes TRUE*, TRUE**, or TRUE*. . .* beliefs are

more instrumentally valuable than true beliefs are.

Stich's Failures

There are several problems with Stich's view, some of which other philosophers have

noted.[161] Instead of rehearsing their views, in what follows I outline my worries about

Stich's position. One worry is that Burden Shifting presupposes a specific theory of truth, a

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[159] Stich (1993), p. 123.
[160] Stich (1993), p. 124.
[161] See Goldman (1991), Harman (1991), Lycan (1991), and Lynch (2004-b).

correspondence view of truth or something of that sort. Remember that Stich is concerned with interpretation functions that map belief states onto other things, things like propositions, possible worlds, truth conditions, etc. So, what it is for a belief token to be true depends on the belief token, the mapping relation, and something else. He writes

> An account of what it is for a belief token (i.e., a certain brain-state-token) to be true can then be given in terms of the entity to which it is mapped: the belief is true if and only if the proposition (or content sentence) to which it is mapped is true; or, if and only if its truth condition obtains; or, if and only if the possible state of affairs to which it is mapped is actual; or, if and only if the actual world is one of the possible worlds to which the belief is mapped.[162]

Recall from chapter 1 that a correspondence theory of truth is one that claims that truth is some kind of relation between a truth bearer and a truth maker. Of course, there is much more to correspondence theories than this. Nevertheless, Stich's description of what it is for a belief to be true looks very similar to what correspondence theorists say is needed in order for a belief to be true.

What exactly is the problem here? After all, isn't Stich taking this characterization of truth for granted? To be sure, this aspect of Burden Shifting is an assumption; it is not something that he argues for. In fact, it functions so much as an assumption that Stich doesn't even recognize that there could be problems with it. In a passage just after the one cited above, Stich does claim that there are some obvious problems with his approach. One could, for example, have a problem with his emphasis on propositions. Philosophers don't agree on what a proposition is or whether there are any. Further, he recognizes that relying on such notions could be question begging in the sense that he is explaining a semantic concept like truth in terms of other semantic concepts. I mentioned both of these earlier. Interestingly, however, he says nothing about his assumption that truth, whatever it is, is a realist notion. The problem here should be obvious. If Stich is presupposing a realist

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162 Stich (1993), p. 104.

notion of truth, something like a correspondence notion, and if one thinks that Burden

Shifting is compelling, then there is an alternative conclusion that one can arrive at when

considering Burden Shifting. One could conclude that theories like correspondence theories

are not good theories of truth. There are all kinds of problems with correspondence

theories, and there are many noncorrespondence theories of truth that are motivated by

concerns like those that Stich highlights. Because Stich's argument depends on a specific

theory of truth, there is a way out for someone who still thinks that true beliefs are valuable.

For such a person, Burden Shifting could function as a reductio for the claim that

correspondence theories are not good theories of truth. If a correspondence theory of truth

leads to the conclusion that truth is not valuable in any kind of way, then, there must be

something wrong with correspondence theories of truth, not with the claim that truth is

valuable.

There is a related worry, one about the mapping relation. The mapping relations

relate belief states to propositions. One might worry that this isn't a matter of truth at all. If

Stich is presupposing a realist notion of truth, one that looks an awful lot like a

correspondence notion, then the focus of Burden Shifting is all wrong. On a

correspondence view, things like propositions are true or false because of their relation to

things in the world; the truth relation ties truth bearers to truth makers. "Truth" in Burden

Shifting ties beliefs to propositions. By Stich's own admission, the relation here is between

two semantic items. Consider again this claim Stich makes: "A belief is true if and only if the

proposition to which it is mapped is true." If the truth relation that matters is the one that

relates truth bearers to truth makers, what matters is that there is some mapping relation that

ties together beliefs onto propositions. It really doesn't matter which one it is. If this is

correct, then Burden Shifting misses the point. One could even grant everything Stich says

about the idiosyncratic and limited nature of the mapping relation and still conclude that truth is valuable, precisely because the mapping relation Stich is concerned with is the wrong mapping relation.

Could one not just apply what Stich says about the mapping relation to truth bearers and truth makers? After all, there is some sort of mapping relation going on there as well; truth bearers and truth makers have to be hooked up in the right kind of way in order for the relation between them to be a truth relation. For argument's sake, suppose one could do so. It doesn't help Stich, given his other commitments. Like Rorty, Stich is a pragmatist. When choosing between competing cognitive processes, Stich recommends this:

> The first step toward the answer I would urge is to adopt a perspective on cognition that grows out of the pragmatist tradition. Cognitive processes, pragmatists will insist, should not be thought of primarily as devices for generating truths. Rather they should be thought of as something akin to tools or technologies or practices that can be used more or less successfully in achieving a variety of goals. . . . In evaluating systems of cognitive processes, the system to be preferred is the one that would be most likely to achieve those things that are intrinsically valued by the person whose interests are relevant to the purposes of the evaluation.[163]

Threats of relativism loom here. Stich isn't scared by relativism in the way that Rorty is, so I side step this issue. Note, though, that if someone intrinsically values true beliefs, so be it; Stich's arguments to the contrary won't matter for such a person. Here is why I highlight Stich's commitment to pragmatism. Stich speaks as if it is practically possible to evaluate different cognitive schemes. His discussion on truth presupposes, it seems to me, that one can stand back and compare different schemes, that one ought not to care about true beliefs because true beliefs are no more valuable than TRUE* beliefs. The practical heart of the matter is that no one is ever in a position like that. Even if it is true that taking into consideration other interpretation functions may be problematic, there is never reason to

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[163] Stich (1993), p. 131.

consider other interpretation functions from a practical point of view. Why? Because from a practical point of view, there is no way to compare different processes in an unbiased way. The best one can do is adjust, as one gets new information, the system one already values. In that system, whichever it be, there's still a difference between what counts as true and what counts as false. If other interpretation functions are practically irrelevant, then the value of truth in the long run can still be maintained. TRUTH*. . .* just becomes truth.

In any event, it is hard to know how seriously one ought to take Stich's remarks on truth when he uses 'truth' in a way that undermines his argument against truth. In discussing value pluralism, Stich claims that there is something more problematic for the pragmatist than relativism. He then continues to dispel this other worry. How he does this does not matter. What matters is his use of 'true' here: "A more settling fact about value pluralism is that if it is true, it may considerably complicate the pragmatist's calculation of consequences."[164] Ought one to take him at his word? Doing so is the only option that makes sense of the rest of the passage, in which he explains how value pluralism complicates matters. Perhaps, Stich is just being sloppy. If one considers the importance of pragmatism to the overall picture, however, Stich's sloppiness here is more telling than if he had been careful. 'Truth' is a word with meaning and value that is not as easily dismissed as Stich makes it out to be. His sloppiness proves this point.

Rorty, Stich, and the Concept/Property Distinction

At the beginning of this chapter, I say that I don't employ the concept/property distinction in an effort to highlight how unclear the debate can be when these terms aren't employed consistently. At the beginning of this chapter, I also promise to conclude the

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[164] Stich (1993), p. 133.

chapter with a discussion of how the distinction applies to Rorty and Stich. I do so in this

section, beginning with Rorty. By failing to recognize the distinction between the concept of

truth and the property of truth, Rorty and Stich offer a way to maintain the value of truth.

Rorty's argument most naturally applies to the property of truth. Take my

characterization of his argument, replace 'truth' with 'the property of truth'' and the result is

the following argument:

1. Only practical differences matter.

2. The property of truth and the property of justification are practically
   indistinguishable.

3. If the property of truth were valuable, it would be a goal of inquiry.

4. If the property of truth were a goal of inquiry, there would be a way to tell if
   a claim has "got it right" apart from the claim's justification.

5. Given 2, there's no way to tell if a claim has "got it right" apart from the
   claim's justification.

6. So, the property of truth is not a goal of inquiry.

7. So, the property of truth is not valuable.

Using the same procedure with 'the concept of truth' yields results that are obviously

problematic. Here is the argument with the concept of truth:

1. Only practical differences matter.

2. The concept of truth and justification are practically indistinguishable.

3. If the concept of truth were valuable, it would be a goal of inquiry.

4. If the concept of truth were a goal of inquiry, there would be a way to tell if a
   claim has "got it right" apart from the claim's justification.

5. Given 2, there's no way to tell if a claim has "got it right" apart from the claim's justification.

6. So, the concept of truth is not a goal of inquiry.

7. So, the concept of truth is not valuable.

In this latter argument, almost none of the premises make much sense. The concept of truth and the property (or concept) of justification are obviously conceptually different. Even Rorty recognizes this. It's not clear what it means to claim that the concept of truth is valuable as a goal of inquiry. The concept of truth might be valuable in its use in gathering information or in guiding action, for example, but to say that a concept that one employs in the process of inquiry is also a goal of that very inquiry doesn't make any sense.

If this is right, things turn out badly for Rorty in a way that I have already discussed, namely, it gives one a way to think about "truth's value" while also rejecting Rorty's conclusion. Because the normativity of the concept of truth and the value of the property of truth are not identical and because his argument naturally favors substitution of 'truth' with 'the property of truth', Rorty's argument turns out to leave completely unaddressed the normativity of truth. The concept of truth might still be useful even if the property of truth is not valuable. Claiming that the concept of truth is bankrupt requires additional argumentation, argumentation that Rorty does not offer. Actually, employing the distinction to Rorty's argument also helps one to see how justification matters for the property of truth. Assume the concept of truth is normative in an action guiding way. Assume there is no way to tell is one "has got it right," i.e., has the property of truth. One way to think of the importance of justification is that it gets one, if the justification is compelling, closer to the property of truth. Most epistemologists would agree. It is precisely because Rorty fails to

heed the distinction between the concept of truth and the property of truth that he formulates a mistaken view of the value of truth.

Stich faces the same kind of problems that Rorty faces. His argument makes claims about the value of truth. Context sometimes makes it clear that he is concerned with the property of truth. For example, there is no other favorable way to understand what Stich means by 'true belief' unless one supposes that he is talking about the property of truth. Like Rorty, then, Stich leaves completely untreated any discussion of the normativity of the concept of truth. One can grant everything Stich says about mapping relations, true beliefs, and the value of true beliefs while maintaining that truth is still valuable in some way. All one has to do is recognize that truth is a concept that is pragmatically useful (as I show above, for instance) and claim that the concept of truth relates to some property of truth, conceived in whatever way one wishes. This latter claim is one that I attempt to establish later in the dissertation. Before I do that, I must first establish that the property of truth is noninstrumentally valuable.

Chapter Four: The Value of the Property of Truth

In the last chapter I show that the two most compelling arguments for the conclusion that truth is not valuable are flawed. Showing that they are flawed opens the door to the possibility that truth is valuable. Nothing more. In the introduction to that chapter, I note that neither Rorty nor Stich is careful about applying the distinction between the concept of truth and the property of truth to his own view. At the end of the chapter I note that it should be obvious from context that both Rorty's and Stich's arguments concern the property of truth. If it is false that truth is not valuable, then truth is either only instrumentally valuable or it is both instrumentally valuable and noninstrumentally valuable, and the normativity associated with truth is either constitutive of the concept of truth or it's not. In what follows, I don't spend any time showing that truth is only instrumentally valuable. If truth is valuable, it is obviously at least instrumentally valuable. Remember that Stich says that showing that truth is valuable requires an argument. Although his comment specifically concerns an explicit rebuttal of his position (which I have already done), it is clear that his point is more general. Well, there are arguments on offer, arguments that are both more sophisticated and more compelling than the kinds of replies that he considers.

In this chapter, I present two very different accounts of the value of the property of truth. One of the views is deflationary. The other is inflationary. On both accounts, the property of truth is valuable for its own sake. Given that inflationists and deflationists are committed to very different views of properties, I distinguish here between the property of truth and "the property of truth." The latter is reserved for the deflationary position, indicating that truth is a nominal property. I first discuss Lynch's view, pointing out a few concerns I have about it. I contend that Lynch's arguments for the claim that truth is noninstrumentally good (call this claim NG) are either flawed or depend on intuition.

Insofar as they depend on intuition, they are not convincing unless Lynch gives us reasons for trusting intuition. Lynch does try to give such reasons. However, they do not give the kind of support that Lynch needs in order to vindicate the claim that truth is noninstrumentally good. I then turn my attention to Horwich's argument for the claim that truth is valuable for its own sake. Likewise, I point out a few concerns I have about it. Horwich's view is much weaker than he thinks it is. Some of the few premises he formulates are false and his inference from these premises to his conclusion is weak. What is important to note at the outset is that even though the views are very different, their conclusions amount to the same thing, i.e., truth is valuable for its own sake. Presenting two very different accounts from very different kinds of truth theorists serves two purposes. First, it shows that it is not only reasonable to think that truth is valuable, it is now standard (hence one of the reasons why Rorty and Stich aren't taken as seriously as they ought to be taken). Second, it shows that the interesting claims about the value of the property of truth are linked to questions about the normativity of the concept of truth. I discuss these kinds of issues in the next chapter.

As an aside: one might think that I should just ignore the sort of view discussed in this chapter, moving on, instead, to my discussion of the normativity of the concept of truth and its connection to the value of the property of truth. That would be too hasty, though. To date, Lynch is the best defender of truth's noninstrumentally valuable status. In addition to helping me close the chapter on Rorty and Stich, as it happens, whether Lynch's work is compelling, it is a major element in the contemporary literature and without his work, this dissertation could not exist. In the introduction, I mention that Lynch shows there is a plausible way of applying the distinction of goodness to the debate about truth. Applying this distinction to truth is an essential component in Lynch's argument supporting the

conclusion that truth in noninstrumentally valuable. Even with its flaws, Lynch presents a comprehensive view about the value of truth. My treatment of his view in this chapter, which is considerably more lengthy than my treatment of Horwich's view, reflects the promise I think Lynch's view has.

Lynch and the Value of the Property of Truth[165]

Few philosophers would deny that truth is instrumentally valuable. Something is instrumentally valuable when it is valuable as a means to some further end. Lynch, though, argues that the property of truth is noninstrumentally good (NG), it's good for its own sake. The following principle expresses this idea:

> TN   Other things being equal, it is good that I believe a proposition when and
>
> only when it is true.[166]

TN just implies that truth is noninstrumentally normative. Here is Lynch's argument for NG:

> (1)   We have a basic preference for the truth
>
> (2)   This basic preference is not a mere preference
>
> (3)   Therefore, truth is NG[167]

Lynch defines "basic preference" as

> (BP)   A preference for something that cannot be explained by our preference for
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> other things.[168]

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[165] Lynch does invoke the distinction between the concept of truth and the property of truth; he also says he is concerned with the value of the property of truth. However, he, for the most part, lets context dictate when he is talking about the concept of truth and the property of truth.
[166] See Michael P. Lynch (2005-c), p. 261.
[167] Michael P. Lynch (2004-a), p. 502
[168] Lynch (2004-a), p. 502.

A mere preference, presumably, is a preference that depends on other things for its value, i.e., it is valuable because it serves as a means to some end. On Lynch's view, a preference is either a mere preference or it's a basic preference. Given this characterization of basic preferences, his argument is better formulated as follows

(1*) We have a basic preference for the truth

(2*) If we have a basic preference for x, then x is noninstrumentally good.

(3*) Truth is noninstrumentally good.

(2) of the original argument is not needed, since basic preferences and mere preferences are mutually exclusive. (2*) is needed in order to make the argument explicit.

Lynch develops three arguments that are supposed to support NG, i.e., the other world argument (OWA), the folk belief argument (FBA), and the integrity argument (IA).[169] FBA is supposed to give us a "grip" on what Lynch is up to. OWA is supposed to reinforce that grip. IA operates independently of FBA and OWA. FBA and OWA depend on an illicit appeal to intuitions; IA is flawed for other reasons.

First, consider FBA. According to Lynch, most people are curious in a certain kind of way. In many cases, people seek knowledge for knowledge's sake. Some math problems are like this, in which knowing the answer has no practical consequences for one's life.[170] Most people believe that knowing the truth in such cases is still valuable. Furthermore, even when they know that the outcome of knowing a certain truth would be bad for them, most people believe that it is good to know the truth anyway. A desire to know the truth of a spouse's infidelity is like this. Lastly, the only way to claim that belief in trivial falsehoods is

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[169] He gives several formulations of OWA. See his (2005-c), (2004-b), pp. 16-19, and (2004-a), pp. 502-503. FBA is given in his (2004-a), p. 502. IA (2005-b) and (2004-a).
[170] This example and the following one are Lynch's.

unacceptable is by thinking that truth is more than instrumentally valuable.[171] Given these

kinds of beliefs, people are "rationally committed" to thinking that truth is

noninstrumentally good.

Lynch claims that beliefs like these are folk theoretic beliefs. In order to even begin

asking questions about a certain property or concept, one must have some idea of the sort of

thing about which one is asking. If one did not have some idea of the sort of thing about

which one wants to theorize, she would have no starting point from which to theorize.[172]

Folk beliefs give the initial structure necessary for postulating a theory in the first place. As

such, folk beliefs about a subject are either beliefs that most people would endorse about the

given domain or that most people are rationally committed to given their other beliefs about

that domain.[173] According to FBA, because people have certain kinds of beliefs, they are

rationally committed to believing that truth is noninstrumentally good.

There are at least 2 problems with FBA, especially taking into consideration Lynch's

motivation for the argument. He claims, "it is worth pausing and briefly thinking about

whether everyone shares this view. Do we believe that truth is more than instrumentally

good? I think many do believe this, or are at any rate rationally committed to believing it by

other tacit folk beliefs they have about truth."[174] Clearly, whether most people believe that

truth is noninstrumentally good is an empirical matter. As such, it needs some sort of

empirical confirmation in order to be substantiated. Lynch offers no such substantiation.

Whether people are rationally committed to believing NG, given their other beliefs, is, in

part, also an empirical matter, though not as clearly so. If one is going to say that people

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[171] Lynch includes another premise, i.e., that we have a preference for choosing correctly, given two options.
This is close enough to what the OWA is supposed to show that I exclude it here.
[172] Lynch (2005-a), section 2.
[173] Lynch (2005-a), 36.
[174] Lynch (2004-a), p. 502.

should believe in the noninstrumental goodness of truth based on what they already believe about the property of truth and the concept of truth, one needs to know what people already believe about truth. Without some kind of empirical substantiation, claiming that most people should believe that truth is noninstrumentally good based on other beliefs is questionable. So much for the first problem.

Lynch admits that this picture is not going to convince everyone, especially the pragmatist about truth.[175] Suppose I seek an answer to a math problem that has no apparent practical application in my life. Why do I take such action? There are all kinds of motivations in this kind of case. It is incredibly difficult to pinpoint what the actual motivation is in a case like this. Without doing so, one motivation cannot be assumed to be the correct one. Likewise for the other beliefs mentioned above. From a pragmatic point of view, then, having certain beliefs like the ones noted above does not rationally commit one to believing NG. Maybe there are more pragmatists about truth out there than Lynch would like to admit. That would be troubling for Lynch's view. If it turns out that enough people do not share the belief that truth is NG or have any beliefs that would rationally commit them to adopting such beliefs, then, by Lynch's own lights, the "grip" of FBA is considerably relaxed. So much for the second problem.

Next, consider OWA. Suppose there are two worlds, W and W*. Also suppose that the only difference between each world is that W* came into existence only 10 minutes ago. One stands outside both worlds, having the choice to live in either one. The beliefs that one holds will be the same in each world. So, one's beliefs about the present and the future have the same consequences in both worlds. However, the beliefs that one has about the past will be mostly the property of true or mostly false, depending on whether one chooses to live in

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[175] Lynch (2004-a), p. 505.

W or W*. Given this choice, most people, Lynch claims, would choose to live in the world in which most of their beliefs about the past are true; most people would choose to live in W. Whether a person would rather live in W or W* depends on a person's intuitions about the case, precisely because once in a world, there would be no way to tell them apart. Lynch admits this much, calling scenarios like OWA "intuition-pumps."[176]

OWA is supposed to show us that we would choose to live in one world instead of another and that this choice is not one based on instrumental goods. What if you think you've got no way to decide which world to live in? Lynch is banking on "most people" agreeing with him. However, he has not shown that most people do, in fact, agree with him.[177] OWA inherits the same problems as FBA. Without showing this, OWA does little work in reinforcing the grip on his main point.

At best, then, most people's intuitions will match Lynch's own. If so, then FBA and OWA give us a "grip" on thinking that the argument for NG is sound. But, even supposing that most people believe NG, the grip is only as strong as the story he gives for thinking that intuitions are trustworthy. Otherwise, if I share the intuitions, but I don't think intuition is reliable, then I still have reason to question the argument for NG. I address this point in the next section. At worst, intuitions here will clash. If so, then Lynch's argument fails because premise 1 is false.

Lynch on Intuition

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[176] Lynch (2004-a), p. 502.
[177] I have carried out informal surveys with approximately over 200 introduction to philosophy students. From their responses, it is clear that less people would pick W over W* than Lynch would like. Of course, informal surveys are just that, i.e., informal. But, the responses are sufficient and widespread enough that I now wonder about Lynch's point here.

Lynch develops a minimalist conception of intuition that is based on certain platitudes, i.e.,

common sense views about what intuitions are supposed to be. These platitudes about

intuition are

> (B)   Believability: Intuitions are propositions that the subject either believes or is
>   inclined to believe.
>
> (SO)   Source-opacity: The subject does not know the causal processes that make
>   the relevant proposition believable for her; in particular, its believability does
>   not appear to be the result of the usual sources of evidence, e.g., perception,
>   memory, inference and the like.
>
> (TR)   Theoretical Relevancy: Philosophical intuitions are of positive or negative
>   epistemic theoretical relevance.[178]

(B) and (SO) apply to intuitions of any sort, philosophical or not. (TR) applies only to the

role of intuition in philosophical analysis. Appeals to intuitions are normally used by persons

who want to give some sort of credence to a particular view that lacks other evidence. Were

the intuitions not believable, there would be no reason for thinking the view is credible in

any way. If the view had some kind of other support, intuition would be unnecessary. So

much for (B) and (SO). (TR) amounts to the claim that intuitions are sometimes useful in

philosophical analysis, depending on their context.

There is an obvious problem with Lynch's account of intuition. Folk theoretic

beliefs about intuition are what ground Lynch's view of intuitions. Folk theoretic beliefs,

though, are intuitions themselves. They are beliefs that are believable without having a clear

source for their believability. So, Lynch's views about intuitions are based on intuitions. He

recognizes this.[179] The reasons why Lynch thinks this ought not to be troublesome are

spelled out in the following argument:

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[178] Lynch (2004-b), p. 232, p. 235.
[179] Lynch (2004-b), p. 236.

(1) It is practically impossible to avoid their use.[180]

(2) Therefore, we act rationally responsibly when we use intuitions

This argument is supposed to convince us that intuitions are trustworthy.

All kinds of things are practically impossible to avoid. That doesn't mean that I'm justified or act responsibly in doing them. Here is an example. It's practically impossible for me to avoid using words when speaking to someone, intending, say, to express my anger. So, I'm justified in using words when speaking to someone in order to express my anger. But, there are appropriate and inappropriate ways to express anger. Some inappropriate ways would be *wrong*.

Even if this example does not address the kind of point Lynch has in mind, it shows that his argument lacks something. Invoking the spirit of McGrath's criticisms against Lynch's argument for NG, the argument doesn't have the specificity required to function as support for NG.[181] The example above is supposed to show this. While the argument may be true in general, there is no reason to think that the general rule applies to any particular case. It may be true that in general avoiding appeals to intuition is practically impossible and that one is justified, in general, in appealing to intuitions. But, that doesn't mean that one is justified in appealing to intuitions in any particular case. One appeal to intuition in NG takes the form of OWA. OWA is supposed to test a particular intuition, i.e., whether one thinks that truth is NG or merely instrumentally good. If the preceding comments are correct, then there is no particular reason to think that the appeal to intuition in this particular case is justified, even if one is justified in appealing to intuitions in general.

I haven't said that intuition can't be defended, just that Lynch's defense is unconvincing. So, more work needs to be done to convince the reader that truth is NG. So,

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[180] Lynch (2004-b), p. 236.
[181] I discuss McGrath below.

98

Lynch or someone on his behalf owes the reader more. I admit that I am sympathetic to his view and ultimately agree with his general picture. So, the "I owe you" is one that I'd like to see paid.

Lynch freely admits that intuition pumps are just that, i.e., intuition pumps. At most, intuition pumps can only serve to motivate a position; they can't be used to defend it. It is a good thing, then, that Lynch gives arguments that he claims do not depend directly on intuition pumps. I have already mentioned one of those arguments—the integrity argument—but I have not said much about it. The other arguments are the argument from self-knowledge and the argument from sincerity. Let me start with the integrity argument.

Lynch gives a "condensed" version of the integrity argument (IA), reproduced below.

> Caring about truth for its own sake is an essential element of intellectual integrity. Intellectual integrity is a constituent good for humans. Anything that is a necessary constituent of a constituent good is a constituent good. So caring about truth as such and for its own sake is a constituent good. If caring about something for its own sake is a constituent good for us, then it is worth our caring about for its own sake. Therefore, it is worth caring about truth as such and for its own sake.[182]

Lynch does not explicitly define what he means by intellectual integrity, but he comes close. Having intellectual integrity is having the willingness to pursue truth "even when it is dangerous or inconvenient or expensive," other things being equal.[183]

What about the other two arguments, i.e., the argument from self-knowledge and the argument from sincerity? Lynch says that "caring about truth is deeply connected to happiness," both to one's own happiness and the happiness of others.[184] How is caring about the truth connected to one's own happiness? Living with integrity and authenticity, in

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[182] Lynch (2005-b), p. 5.
[183] Lynch (2004-a), p. 504.
[184] Lynch (2004). Lynch also claims that caring about the property of truth has political value as well. I am less concerned with this kind of value, so I do not canvass those arguments here.

general, make for living a happier life than living without integrity and authenticity. Self-knowledge, which, like all knowledge, has something to do with truth, allows one to get what one wants and allows one to know what one wants in the first place. Integrity, having a sense of self, requires self-knowledge. Moreover, one cannot live authentically, one cannot be true to oneself, without knowing what one cares about. Of course, this is not to deny that obtaining self-knowledge is a difficult and complicated matter. Life is messy; that includes both one's interior and exterior life. Even so, as Lynch claims, happiness has something important to do with living an authentic life with integrity. One cannot live authentically with integrity if one doesn't have true beliefs about oneself and the world in which one lives: "A person with a strong sense of self is very aware of what she cares about; she almost always knows, in other words, what really matters to her, while obviously a person with a weaker sense of self has less knowledge of this sort. In either case, however, it is having certain true beliefs that is essential. Knowing what you care about is constitutive of having a sense of self."[185] Of course, Lynch is not talking about just any kind of happiness. Sensually oriented, desire based, ephemeral happiness is easy enough to find and might figure into what someone thinks happiness is about. However, one can be happy in this way while remaining quite in the dark about oneself, so long as certain desires are met. Here is what Lynch says about happiness:

> The fact that we think of happiness as having some minimal characteristics. . . means that we are tolerant of there being more than one way to be happy, while at the same time agreeing that there are definite ways to be unhappy. Thus, many of us will agree that happiness requires at a minimum a certain amount of physical and psychological health, freedom from continuous pain and the achievement of some pleasure, friendship, love, integrity, and self-respect. But we also think there are many ways to go from there.[186]

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[185] Lynch (2004), p. 124.
[186] Lynch (2004), p. 142.

Why does Lynch think that caring about the truth is connected with the happiness of others? What one cares about is not unrelated to how one acts. This is an obvious point. If I care about helping others in need, then that disposes me to act in certain ways. Caring about the truth, then, disposes one to act in certain ways. As Lynch says,

> I mean that to the extent that one cares about truth, one manifests particular character traits that are oriented toward the truth. It involves being willing to hear both sides of the story, being open-minded and tolerant of others' opinions, being careful and sensitive to detail, being curious, and paying attention to the evidence. And it also involves being willing to question assumptions, giving and asking for reasons, being impartial, and being intellectually courageous—that is, not believing simply what is convenient to believe—politically or otherwise.[187]

Lynch doesn't explicitly connect what any of this has to do with truth's connection to other people's happiness. It is clear that he thinks that one who lives with intellectual integrity, all other things being equal, will live a happier life than one who does not have intellectual integrity. This point is easy enough to grasp. Furthermore, to object that having intellectual integrity might make someone unhappy (think of the happy religious believer turned cynical atheist) is not to undermine the claim; "it just shows that there is more to happiness than having only intellectual integrity."[188] It's reasonable to suppose that people who are open-minded, tolerant, respectful of others, etc., i.e., people who exemplify the traits associated with having intellectual integrity, help make other people's lives go better. That is, it's reasonable to suppose that such persons cause less suffering in the world than people who do not care about the truth.

There is another, more fundamental way that caring about the truth is related to the happiness of others. As Lynch notes (as well as other philosophers like Williams), there is a connection between caring about the truth and being truthful; hence, the argument from

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[187] Lynch (2004-b), pp. 129-130.
[188] Lynch (2004-b), p. 135.

sincerity.[189] Lynch rightly claims that lying, though it has something to do with what one person does to another, is tied up with beliefs, insofar as liars seek to deceive others about their beliefs. Deception is a kind of harm. Of course, as Lynch says, there might be times when deception is justified. These are exceptions to the norm. The norm is that "much of cooperative human activity depends on the assumption that people speak the truth to each other. . . . A society where the reverse is true—that is, where lying is the default and truth telling (although perhaps common) is the exception—wouldn't last very long. . . . Cooperative activity would be limited or nonexistent."[190] Of course, the happiness of a group of people is not the same thing as the duration of that group's existence. That is not the point Lynch is making here. As it just happens to be, we are social, cooperative animals by nature. A society that severely limits social connection (and the imagined one surely does) is a society that limits the possibility of happiness for its members.

Here is another example of how truth is connected to the happiness of others, one that Lynch doesn't discuss but one that serves as a corollary to his argument from self-knowledge. If self-knowledge makes life go better, all other things being equal, then a lack of self-knowledge makes life go less well. A consideration of self-deception is helpful here. Self-deception is a common feature of human life. If one is honest about it, self-deception happens disconcertingly often and in surprising, often subtle ways. Self-deception also happens in a variety of contexts. There are instances of self-deception that don't really matter all that much. There are instances of self-deception that are quite serious and damaging. Take addiction. Many people believe addiction is a mental disease that involves

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[189] Williams (2002).
[190] Lynch (2004-b), p. 151.

systematic self-deception on the part of the addict.[191] In order to rationalize using drugs that one knows ultimately lead to self-destruction, one weaves complicated stories about one's needs, desires, goals, history, about the world and how it works and about one's place in the world. The addict is so adept at doing this that when he finally "gets clean" it is not uncommon for an addict to require the guidance of others in order to make even the simplest decisions about that addict's life. Addicts are so adept at self-deception that they no longer trust their own judgments. This inability to trust one's judgment or to fail to clearly discern the difference between reality and what the addict thinks is reality persists, for some addicts, well into the first months or years of recovery. Precisely because he doesn't really know what he is doing, he miscalculates how his decisions affect others. Given this, an addict's patterns of mental behavior can result in real harm to others. Lynch makes the point that there's an important link between self-knowledge, truth, and one's happiness. What he doesn't focus on, what I'm focusing on here, is that without self-knowledge, one has a greater chance of causing harm to others than would be possible with more self-knowledge. Self-deception serves as a case in point.

Of course, there are objections to these kinds of arguments. Take the IA for example. McGrath expresses three worries about this argument.[192] The first worry is that Lynch's argument is insufficient for establishing that it is good to care about any particular truth for its own sake. Even if one grants to Lynch that, in general, most people care about the truth because it is noninstrumentally good, that doesn't show that they care about a particular truth T for its own sake. Second, granting that Lynch has shown that particular

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[191] Of course, this medical model of addiction is not the only model, and it is a controversial one. But, it does seem to be the most widely accepted model. The controversy about this is irrelevant to the point I am making here.

[192] He actually expresses four worries. But, the last worry relates more to Lynch's claim that minimalism cannot account for the noninstrumental value of Ptruth. So, I leave out the worry here. See his (2005), pp. 302-310.

truths are worth caring about for their own sakes when they are part of particular contexts of having intellectual integrity, Lynch has not shown that "all or even most token states of caring about truth and believing the truth are finally good."[193] According to McGrath, it is this latter qualification that Lynch needs to prove if he is to support TN. The general nature of TN means that it applies to all truths, no matter whether they are constituent parts of some other kind of good. If TN is right, one should care about every truth, even if it has no connection to intellectual integrity. But, according to IA, one only has reason to care about particular truths because they are constituent goods of intellectual integrity. The third worry concerns the following claim

If caring about X is a final good, then X is a final good.

Caring about X, even if that state of caring is itself noninstrumentally good, is not enough to support the claim that X itself is valuable for its own sake. There is a difference between the value of caring about something and the value of that something apart from anyone's caring about it. Lynch needs to show, McGrath thinks, how these two are related if IA is going to work. Otherwise, even if most people believe NG or are rationally committed to NG, it could still turn out that the property of truth is not noninstrumentally good.

Lynch has an answer for McGrath, but it is not convincing. His answer focuses on the point that the act of caring about something gives value to that something:

> What I have claimed is that constituent goods are more than instrumentally good—for the simple reason that being a part of something is distinct from being a means to it. And therefore something's being constituently good—*always* being good *qua* its being a part of a larger whole, as we might put it—means that it is worth caring about for reasons that have nothing to do with what it is a means to. And that is what I want to claim about truth.[194]

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[193] McGrath (2005), p. 305. Something that is finally good is worth caring about for its own sake.
[194] Lynch (2005-b).

Reiterating this point is not enough to alleviate McGrath's worry. McGrath worries that Lynch needs to show that the property of truth is finally good and that something that is finally good is good apart from its relation to any other good. One could interpret McGrath as claiming that Lynch is concerned with the intrinsic goodness of truth. Something is intrinsically good if and only if its value does not depend on any external sources. Lynch explicitly says that he is not claiming that the property of truth is intrinsically valuable; he is only claiming that the property of truth is noninstrumentally valuable.[195] Explicitly saying so, however, does not constitute an argument. On Lynch's view, truth is not valuable in itself, but it is valuable for its own sake. Without an argument for the claim that being valuable in itself is not reducible to being valuable for its own sake, one is justified in thinking that Lynch is concerned with defending truth's intrinsic value. Lynch gives us no such argument. To be sure, he does say that one *could* explain the term "for its own sake" by means of talking about intrinsic value, implying that there is some connection between the two phrases. He thinks this avenue is too messy to be philosophically informative.[196] Such remarks only explain his preference for justifying NG by means of IA. They do not justify the claim that one *should not* construe "for its own sake" in terms of "value in itself." However, we are supposed to care about truth for its own sake. As I read McGrath, even granting that truth is a constituent good, it is still a part of another good, and caring about it because it is a part of something is enough to make dubious the claim that truth is something that can be cared about for its own sake. It is this point that Lynch has not addressed in the way he needs to.

Even if one dispels McGrath type of worries about these kinds of arguments, it is worth asking whether the arguments show what Lynch thinks they show. One might have

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[195] Lynch (2005-b), p. 7.
[196] Lynch (2004-b), p. 127.

the following sort of concern. Suppose the arguments do show that the property of truth is worth caring about noninstrumentally. That is a very different conclusion than claiming that there is a property of truth that is worth caring about in this way. After all, Lynch's argument about the value of truth assumes that there is a property of truth in the first place. Lynch does give other arguments for his view of the nature of truth, which I mention briefly in the chapter on theories of truth. I won't rehearse those arguments here. Here is a reasonable response to the worry. If truth exists, it is not the sort of property that is empirically detectable. So, the best one can do is weigh the explanatory benefits of thinking that truth exists against the costs of including such a property in one's ontology. Viewed in this way, Lynch's arguments that truth exists and that it is noninstrumentally valuable functions importantly in a view of the kinds of values that make life meaningful. I return to this point later. Before I do so, let me briefly compare and contrast Lynch's view with Horwich's position.

Horwich and the Value of the Property of Truth

I mention in the introduction to this chapter that Horwich's view is very different than Lynch's view. Unlike Lynch, Horwich is a deflationist. As such, he doesn't think there is any deep, metaphysical property of truth. For Horwich, truth is only a logical "property." He does think that concept of truth is a useful concept, as is having true beliefs. So, how does a deflationist like Horwich account for the value of truth?

Why does Horwich think that truth is "worth bothering with?"[197] Before Horwich gives an answer to this question, he distinguishes three different ways one can value the truth. One can value the concept of truth (or having the concept of truth). One can value

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[197] Here I follow Horwich (2006). Horwich makes many of the same points in his (2002). The line of argument in Horwich (2006) with regard to the value of truth is more developed.

the "intrinsically evaluative character of truth."[198] Or, one can value "true" beliefs. Horwich recognizes that these three ways of valuing the truth are not disconnected, but he focuses on what it means to value true beliefs, focusing on "truth." Caring about valuing "true" beliefs is expressed in the norm

> VT   It is desirable to believe what is true and only what is true.[199]

As I mention later in this essay, this norm is a combination of two norms: people should believe only what is "true" and people should believe anything that is "true." One should pursue the "truth" and try to avoid falsity. Like Lynch, Horwich recognizes that valuing the "the property of truth" is just one of the things that people value. There are cases when valuing the "truth" might conflict with some of these other values. It is precisely because "the property of truth" is just one thing people care about that VT is not ill-formed, according to Horwich.

Horwich gives two arguments in support of the claim that the "truth" is worth bothering with, one aimed showing the instrumental value of "truth" and another aimed at showing the noninstrumental value of "the property of truth." The pragmatic argument is supposed to establish the instrumental value of "true" beliefs. It's simple: truth is worth caring about because having "true" beliefs pays. Suppose I want tacos from Taqueria De La Guatalupana. This desire requires that I act in certain ways. If I believe "truly" that there is such a taqueria, that I like its tacos, that it has tacos, I will satisfy my desire to eat tacos when I make the effort to go to the taqueria. If my beliefs about the taqueria are false, my desires will be frustrated.

Horwich notes two objections to this line of reasoning. Sometimes the satisfaction of certain desires is better served by false beliefs than they are by "true" beliefs. Suppose I

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[198] Horwich (2006), p. 347.
[199] Horwich (2006), p. 347.

want to be happy. Suppose, also, that my wife is cheating on me. I'd be better off, the objection goes, if I did not bother with the "truth." Another case: consider an archeologist who has an inflated perception of the importance of his work. He considers his work to be tremendously important and he derives much satisfaction from this belief. If he were to have "true" beliefs about the importance of his work, he'd be worse off than he is with the false beliefs. Horwich claims that these sorts of objections do not undermine the pragmatic argument. They do not do so precisely because the pragmatic argument accommodates the insight that there are other motives, values, concerns, etc. that people care about. Given this, of course there are cases where the payoff of having "true" beliefs makes people worse off than the payoff of having false beliefs. However, these cases are not sufficient to show that "the property of truth," in general, is not instrumentally valuable.

Horwich also claims that "truth" is not just instrumentally valuable; it's noninstrumentally valuable too. He gives three reasons. First, most people agree, Horwich argues, that some items of knowledge are valuable for their own sakes. Knowledge itself is one such thing. Second, without assuming this, "it would be hard to justify our pursuit of truth in fields of inquiry such as ancient history. . ."[200] Third, it is important to pursue "truth" in "normative domains" like ethics and epistemology, even though "true" normative beliefs don't often "facilitate the satisfaction of desires." So, "the property of truth" (having "true" beliefs) is noninstrumentally valuable.

For Horwich, claiming that "truth" is noninstrumentally valuable amounts to claiming that seeking the "truth" is a moral virtue. He explains why he thinks this is the case by expounding on the connection between instrumentally valuable "true" belief and noninstrumentally valuable "true" belief. He says, "It is presumably because most beliefs are

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[200] Horwich (2006), p. 351.

useful in practical inference. . . that our society. . . inculcates a general concern for truth for

its own sake."[201] Elsewhere he writes,

> Commitment to truth, alongside kindness, courage, and so on, does seem to be a
> moral virtue. But this concession does not undermine the pragmatic story I have just
> sketched, because our acknowledgment of this virtue is surely grounded in the utility
> of truth. After all, an important discovery is not useful merely to the person who
> makes it, but to all the rest of us to whom it is communicated. Thus it is beneficial
> to each member of a community that the other members pursue the truth. And this
> explains why children are inculcated with the moral norm, and hence why we all
> endorse it.[202]

There are norms associated with the concept of truth, and these norms are not constitutive

of the concept of truth (I say more about this in the next section). This should not be

surprising, Horwich claims, because there are norms associated with all kinds of other

nonnormative things in our world, from human happiness to preserving giant pandas (both

of these are his examples). That a concept or a "property" has norms associated with it is

not sufficient to make the further claim that truth itself (the concept of truth and the

property of truth) is normative or valuable.

Is Horwich's argument for the claim that "truth" is noninstrumentally valuable a

good one? I don't think so. Not only is it unclear whether the conclusion follows from the

premises, it looks like the argument is question begging. Here is the argument:

1.   Some kinds of knowledge are valuable for their own sakes.

2.   This explains the value of certain human activity that is otherwise hard to

       explain.

3.   It is important to pursue "truth" in domains like ethics and epistemology.

4.   Therefore, "truth" is noninstrumentally valuable.

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[201] Horwich (2006), p. 351.
[202] Horwich (2002), p. 143.

Assuming for the moment that the conclusion follows from the premises, there are problems with premises 1 and 3. On most epistemic theories, knowledge is a combination of justification and something like truth; knowledge is not merely the acquisition of something like truth.[203] What reason has Horwich given to think that it is the "truth" part of the knowledge equation that makes knowledge valuable for its own sake? He has given none. With regard to premise 3, even if one grants it, it is not clear how the importance of pursuing "truth" in ethics is related to thinking that "truth" is noninstrumentally valuable. His remarks about the commitment to "truth" as a moral virtue don't help much. Thinking of "the property of truth" as only instrumentally valuable is enough to secure the kinds of societal goods Horwich uses as examples. The point here is that it doesn't matter why people value "truth" just so long as they do. There is nothing in Horwich's argument that supports the claim that thinking of "truth" as noninstrumentally valuable is necessary for securing the kinds of goods people think are beneficial.

Comparing Lynch's and Horwich's views, it looks as if Lynch's view is a more sophisticated and worked out, yet similar, position as Horwich's view. The crucial difference, of course, is that Lynch thinks that the noninstrumental value of the property of truth is constitutive of the normativity of the concept of truth. Horwich disagrees. The value of "the property of truth" and the norms associated with the concept of truth are separate matters altogether. This line of reasoning is consistent with his claims that a theory of "the property of truth" ought not be a theory of anything else. Perhaps this explains why his view of the value of "the property of truth" is not as well worked out as Lynch's position. Horwich could just as easily leave the discussion of norms and values to ethical theorists.

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[203] I say "something like truth" to make room for accommodating Gettier counterexamples to the traditional view of knowledge as true, justified belief.

What is interesting here is that both an inflationist and a deflationist can agree on the value of the property of truth ("the property of truth"), i.e., that truth is noninstrumentally valuable. The real issue is how to account for the normativity of the concept of truth (assuming, for the time, that the value of the property of truth is somehow related to the normativity of the concept of truth. One of the reasons Lynch is an inflationist is because he thinks that the property of truth is noninstrumentally valuable and that deflationary views can't account for this fact about truth.[204] If Horwich is correct, deflationists can account for this fact. All deflationists would have to say is that the normativity associated with the concept of truth and one's thinking that "the property of truth" is noninstrumentally valuable is a task for metaethicists. Addressing this issue is the task of the next chapter.

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[204] Lynch (2004).

Chapter Five: The Semantic/Pragmatic Debate and the Question of Normativity

In the introduction to this dissertation, I parse the question "What is the value of truth?" into two questions. The first question is "Is the property of truth noninstrumentally valuable?" This is the only question I have addressed thus far; I have shown that it is possible to think that the property of truth is noninstrumentally valuable. I have accomplished this by showing how the best arguments in favor of the claim that the property of truth is not valuable are flawed. I have bolstered this position by outlining two plausible arguments, i.e., Lynch's position and Horwich's view, for the claim that the property of truth is noninstrumentally valuable. It turns out that an inflationist and a deflationist agree that truth is noninstrumentally valuable. This alone might be enough to show that positions like Rorty's and Stich's are suspicious. The other question is "Is the normativity of the concept of truth an intrinsic or extrinsic feature of the concept of truth?" I now turn to answering this question and tying the answer to the noninstrumental status of truth. The route for doing so, however, is not straight forward; but, it is one that I think is promising. First, I set the stage by showing that this question about the concept of truth is where the interesting debate lies regarding the value of truth. In doing so, I discuss several proposed norms of truth, indicating which proposals are given by philosophers who think that the normativity of truth is "constitutive" of the concept of truth, or, in my description, which philosophers think that the normativity of the concept of truth is an intrinsic feature of the concept of truth. Some philosophers, like Horwich, argue against this claim. Others take it for granted. Kovach explicitly argues that the normativity of the concept of truth is part of the concept of the truth concept itself. His view is, in my opinion, the most interesting of the bunch. It is the view that motivates my overall strategy in this section. I

look at his view in some detail, in the end suggesting it needs supplementation. I suggest another, more promising route.

The Norms of Truth

Several philosophers have proposed norms of truth similar to the ones I mention in the previous chapter. Here I focus on philosophers who have explicitly formulated a truth norm. There are other philosophers who discuss the normativity of truth, but they do so without formulating explicitly a norm of truth.[205] I discuss Engel, Kovach, Lynch, and Horwich.

Engel rejects two norms that express, he claims, the two most prominent ways to think about truth as a norm.

(Deontic)   If it is true that P, then one ought to believe (assert) that P.

(Evaluative)   For any P, if P is true, then it is valuable to believe that P.

(Deontic) expresses the idea that norms are action guiding, that they obligate us in certain ways. (Evaluative) expresses the idea that norms invoke certain "feelings or psychological attitudes."[206] Both (Deontic) and (Evaluative) have the same problem, according to Engel. Each is too general, applying to anything that is true. There are some truths that are not worth knowing, e.g., trivial truths, truths that would cost persons too much to know, or truths that are unknowable by beings like ourselves. In such cases, it is unreasonable to say that we are obligated to know the truth of the matter, whatever that may be. The absurdity of (Deontic) is easy to see. Most philosophers accept the normative principle that 'ought' implies 'can'. This principle together with the claim that some truths cannot be believed by beings like us is sufficient to show the absurdity of (Deontic). The absurdity of (Evaluative)

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[205] Most notable is Crispin Wright (1992).
[206] Engel (2001-b), p. 45.

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is just as easy to see as soon as one realizes that some truths are not valuable. Engel's example here is the number of blades of grass in his yard. On these two readings, "the claim that truth is a norm is obviously false."[207]

Engel's own formulation is the following:

(ENT) For any P, one ought to believe that P only if P.

The advantage of (ENT) over both (Deontic) and (Evaluative) is that it doesn't say that you ought to believe whatever is true. Rather, it says that you ought to believe "only what is true."[208] (ENT) also accords with an intuitive way to think about the nature of belief. Constitutive of beliefs is that they aim at the truth. As such, (ENT) does not express a deontic norm or an evaluative norm. (ENT) is "definitional" of the concept of belief. (ENT) is, as Engel says, "a *conceptual* norm."[209] Here, Engel distinguishes a conceptual norm from a cognitive one. A conceptual norm is one that is definitional of a concept, as described above. A cognitive norm marks the demands belief places on the believer, in the kinds of ways that deontic and evaluative norms place on believers.

Like Engel, Kovach distinguishes several kinds of 'oughts'. In a strong sense, 'oughts' indicate duties that people have. In a weak sense, to say that one ought to do something is just to say that "'there is a reason to do x' or even 'you have a legitimate motive for doing x'."[210] With this kind of "ought" are associated prima facie obligations. Prima facie obligations are obligations that persons have just in case they have no other overriding obligations. For example, I have a prima facie obligation not to tell lies unless doing so will save someone's life. For Kovach, truth is a value concept and, as such, it is action guiding in a broad sense that includes both actions, as understood implicitly by Engel, and the

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[207] Engel (2001-b), p. 45.
[208] Engel (2001-b), p. 47.
[209] Engel (2001-b), p. 49.
[210] Kovach (2000), p. 201.

formation and expression of attitudes.[211] Truth is evaluative, as it is used in assessing claims

for their correctness. Truth is also more deeply normative in the sense that " 'oughts'

systematically follow from judgments in which it is involved."[212] However, Kovach

mentions that the normativity of truth is not typically associated with the strong sense of

'ought.' He does not give any reasons for this claim, but it seems clear, given the association

of prima facie obligations with the notion of truth, that a strong sense of 'ought' would have

the same kind of untoward consequences that Engel suggests.

Kovach claims that the norm of truth is constitutive of the meaning of the truth

predicate. I take up this issue later. For now, it is worth noting that for both Engel and

Kovach, the truth norm, whatever it is, is constitutive of concepts. For Engel, the emphasis

is on the concept of belief. For Kovach, the emphasis is on the concept of truth. As

mentioned above, Kovach thinks the truth norm is action-guiding: "Truth enters into the

evaluation and regulation of thought and talk as a standard for the assessment of claims, for

the ordering of beliefs, and for the conduct of inquiry."[213] Kovach proposes two versions of

the norm of truth:

> (KTN1)   One ought, other things being equal, accept a claim C that is true

> (KTN2)   One ought, other things being equal, to accept the truth

There are interesting similarities and differences between Engel's formulation of the truth

norm and Kovach's formulation. After cataloguing other proposals, I say something about

the similarities and differences among all of the proposals.

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[211] Kovach (2000).
[212] Kovach (2000), p. 201.
[213] Kovach (2000), p. 202.

Horwich also recognizes that there is a truth norm, as I note in the previous chapter.[214] One might think this a curious thing, given that Horwich is a deflationist. Recall that Horwich's truth norm is

(HTN) It is desirable to believe what is true and only what is true

(HTN) is a combination of two norms: (1) we should believe only what is true and (2) we should believe anything that is true. One might think, Horwich notes, that these two norms are too demanding, given that there are many trivial truths that are just not worth knowing. But, neither part of (HTN)—the "pursue truth" part and the "avoid falsity" part--is too "exaggerated" once one realizes that pursuing the truth is just one value among many: "Clearly, valuing true belief does not preclude valuing other things as well. And clearly our various values will occasionally conflict—we won't always be able to satisfy them all and must on occasion decide that some are to be sacrificed for the sake of others."[215]

Lynch formulates at least three norms, though he thinks they express the same idea.

(LTN1)   For all p, it is prima facie good to believe that p if and only if it is true that p.[216]

(LTN2)   Other things being equal, it is good that I believe a proposition when and only when it is true.[217]

(LTN3)   It is prima facie correct to believe that p iff the proposition that p is true.

Like Horwich, Lynch thinks that these norms express both the idea that we should pursue truth and that we should avoid error.[218] Like the others, he also makes room for bad truths

214 Horwich (2006).
215 Horwich (2006), 348.
216 Lynch (2005-b), p. 1.
217 Lynch (2005-c), p. 261.
218 Lynch (2004-a), p. 500.

and good falsehoods by including a "prima facie" clause or an "other things being equal clause." It is clear that these two clauses are supposed to function in the same way, a way that is different from an "all things considered clause."

What are "bad truths" and "good falsehoods" and how do the clauses relate to them? Bad truths are, according to Lynch, those truths that are so trivial that it is pointless to waste one's energy knowing them, "too complex" for anyone to grasp, and truths that are bad from a moral point of view.[219] Good falsehoods are those beliefs we have that are based on good evidence. Given good evidence, we might think something is true when in fact it is not. Given good falsehoods and bad truths, one might question, as McGrath and David do, Lynch's proposed truth norms.[220] Lynch claims that truth is always prima facie or other things being equal good, though it is not always all things considered good.[221] Truth is valuable, but it is not the only thing that is valuable. Good falsehoods and bad truths show this. All things considered, we might be better off in some particular circumstance not caring about the truth. That claim is consistent with the claim that truth is valuable. As Lynch says, "There is nothing mysterious about prima facie goodness. It simply reflects the facts of life. Things get complicated and values conflict."[222]

There are a few more things to note about Lynch's truth norms. As opposed to Kovach, who describes the concept of truth as being normative, Lynch claims that it is the property of truth that is normative. Both Kovach and Lynch distinguish the "normative" from the "evaluative," but Lynch is more explicit about what the distinction amounts to: "Here I am reserving 'evaluative' as a modifier of a word or a word's use, as opposed to

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[219] Lynch (2005-b), pp. 1-4.
[220] See David (2005-a) and McGrath (2005).
[221] Lynch (2005-b), p. 2.
[222] Lynch (2005-b), p. 2.

'normative', which I reserve for describing properties."[223] The word 'true' and its cognates

have an evaluative use. Lynch claims that it is the property of truth that is normative

because it is the content of beliefs, i.e., propositions, that are true or false, as opposed to the

"act of believing" that is true or false.[224] And, Lynch says that a "property is normative of

something when it is good for that something to have it."[225] So, truth is the normative

property of propositions, which are the contents of beliefs. Two more distinctions. Like

Kovach, Lynch recognizes that there is a difference between thick values and thin values.[226]

Thick values are both normative and descriptive. Thin values have no nonnormative import.

The property of truth, for Lynch, is a thick value. Truth is also "deeply normative" as

opposed to "superficially normative."[227] By this, Lynch means that truth is not only

instrumentally normative; it is worth caring about for its own sake. Though Lynch thinks

that it is the property of truth that is normative, he also thinks that the truth norm is

"constitutive of our concept of truth." It is constitutive of our concept of truth because the

truth norm is a truism about truth; it is part of our folk-theoretic network of beliefs about

the nature of truth.[228] I say more about this in a moment.

Here are the truth norms grouped together:

(KTN1)   One ought, other things being equal, accept a claim C that is true

(KTN2)   One ought, other things being equal, to accept the truth

(ENT)   For any P, one ought to believe that P only if P

(LTN1)   For all p, it is prima facie good to believe that p if and only if it is true

            that p

[223] Lynch (2004-a), p. 499.
[224] Lynch (2004-a), p. 499, and (2005-b), p. 2
[225] Lynch (2004-a), p. 499.
[226] Kovach also uses the distinction, but he does so with regard to concepts instead of properties. See Kovach (2000).
[227] Lynch (2004-c), p. 501.
[228] Lynch (2005-c).

(LTN2)   Other things being equal, it is good to believe a proposition when and only when it is true

(LTN3)   It is prima facie correct to believe that p iff the proposition that p is true

(HTN)   It is desirable to believe what is true and only what is true

There are obviously points in common and points of differences between these truth norms, and I've already discussed some of these similarities and differences. There are some more similarities and differences worth noting. Lynch, Engel, and Horwich tie truth to belief. The truth norm is one for belief. Kovach, too, can be read this way. For him, one ought to accept the truth, other things being equal. Accepting the truth just means adopting certain beliefs, i.e., ones that are true. Kovach's truth norm seems considerably weaker than the others, as it does not make any "if and only if" qualifications. Conspicuously absent from Engel and Horwich's truth norms is an "other things being equal" or "prima facie good" clause. However, in explaining their truth norms, each philosopher invokes these qualifications, and it is safe to say that adding such a clause is consistent with their truth norms. All agree that such clauses are necessary to account for trivial truths, truths that would cost a person too much to know (morally or otherwise), truths that are unknowable by rationally limited beings, either because the truths are too complicated to understand or because there are simply too many of them.

There are some other obvious differences between these truth norms. Lynch formulates his truth norms in terms of propositions. Kovach formulates his in terms of accepting claims. Engel and Horwich make no explicit mention of either claims or propositions in their truth norms, though elsewhere each one claims that propositions are

the proper bearers of truth.[229] The choice of truth bearer doesn't really matter here. One need not be committed to the existence of propositions in order to see the value of a truth norm, even if the truth norm presupposes the existence of propositions. Another difference that doesn't seem to matter much here is the difference between the property of truth and the concept of truth. Lynch claims that normativity attaches to properties. Kovach claims that the normativity stems from the concept of truth. Horwich says that the normativity of truth is not constitutive of the concept of truth itself. As Horwich is a deflationist, though, he would also say that the normativity of truth is not related to any property (other than a logical one). The emphasis on properties or concepts doesn't much matter here because there is a relation between concepts and properties, whatever view of truth one holds. I return to this point later.

There are some comments that I make above that deserve more attention. First, let me address what it means to say that a concept is normative. To say that a concept itself is normative is to say that it functions as action guiding in at least a minimal sense or that it is associated with principles, rules, maxims, etc. that are normative. There may be some doubt that a concept, by itself, can be normative. This is a legitimate worry, but it is not one that should hinder the debate here. All that is needed in order for a concept to be normative is that the concept is associated in the right kind of way with something else that is more clearly normative. To say that the concept of truth is normative means that it functions in the manner described here. Do not mistake, however, the claim that the concept of truth is normative with the claim that its normativity is a semantic feature of the concept. To claim that a concept is normative is a separate matter from explaining the source of a concept's normativity. Even if it is the case that the concept of truth is normatively operative in every

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[229] I have already discussed this issue with regard to Horwich. For Engel, see his (2001-c).

instance that it is used, it is still possible that the normativity has its origins in something other than the concept itself. For Kovach, a concept is normative just in case it generates 'oughts'. I say more about this when I discuss his view in detail. Above I say that Lynch thinks that a "property is normative of something when it is good for that something to have it." He also says that "something is normative if it is worthy of aiming at, or caring about."[230] A concept, then, is normative on his view when it is good for a person to have or if it is worthy of caring about. In thinking that concepts can be normative, Lynch and Kovach are in good company. Korsgaard expresses both of these views when she says, "Concepts like knowledge, beauty, meaning, as well as virtue and justice, all have a normative dimension, for they tell us what to think, what to like, what to say, what to do, and what to be. It is the force of these normative claims—the right of these concepts to give laws to us—that we want to understand."[231]

Second, Kovach and Horwich rightly note that there is a difference between saying that there are norms that are associated with the use of 'truth' and norms that have their source, so to speak, in the concept of truth itself. Kovach says, "However, it is one thing to notice that *truth* has these uses, and another to hold that *truth* is a normative concept in the strong sense that the normative character of *truth* is part of the meaning of the truth predicate."[232] Properly speaking, for Lynch, it is the property of truth that makes the concept of truth normative. Lynch still thinks, however, that a truth norm is part of the concept of truth. Recall from the theories chapter that Lynch, like Wright, develops his view of the nature of truth from certain "platitudes" that most people have about truth. These platitudes define the concept of truth. One of the platitudes is the truth norm. This way of

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[230] Lynch (2004-b).
[231] Korsgaard (1996), p. 9.
[232] Kovach (2007), p. 208.

developing a view of truth, however interesting it is, doesn't give a fighting chance to deflationary theorists. For them, there is either no property of truth or the property is not substantial enough to count as a normative property. The only way to describe truth as a property for a deflationist is to claim that it is a logical property. So, whatever normativity is associated with truth-talk , it can't be, for deflationists, a constitutive feature of the concept of truth. So, here is the heart of the debate. Is the normativity of truth "constitutive" of the concept of truth? Unfortunately, few truth theorists take up this question directly. In general, inflationists think it is, and deflationists think it is not.

The Semantics/Pragmatics Distinction

In order to make some headway in resolving the debate about whether the normativity of truth is a "constitutive" feature of the concept of truth, I follow Kovach's lead and change the terms of the debate. As I see it, asking whether the normativity of truth is a constitutive feature of the concept of truth is the same as asking whether the normativity of truth is an intrinsic or extrinsic property of truth. Both of these questions amount to asking whether the normativity of truth is a pragmatic feature of truth or a semantic feature of truth. This is Kovach's way of approaching the problem; it is one that is interesting and promising. The idea, as I take it, is this. Because words express concepts, investigating the nature of meaning and how words are actually used provides a good way to figure out the nature of concepts. Since 'truth' and its cognates express the concept of truth, looking at the meaning of 'truth' and how the word 'truth' is used in action, so to speak, offers a way of getting a handle on the issue at hand. On the face of it, then, it doesn't seem like applying a distinction that is usually reserved for utterances is problematic when applied to concepts. Doing so also doesn't seem to presuppose any particular view of concepts. For now, let the

concept of truth be whatever it is that is marked by the truth predicate, so long as it doesn't presuppose a substantial property of truth. In this section, I give background on the semantics and pragmatics debate, background that is connected with arguments I formulate later in this chapter. In the next section, I explain how Kovach uses the distinction between semantics and pragmatics in an attempt to show that the normativity of truth is a semantic feature of the concept.

What is the distinction between semantics and pragmatics? Contemporary debates in philosophy of language and linguistics concerning the semantic/pragmatic distinction originate with the work of Grice. Grice's distinctions between what is "said" and what is "implicated" and the different kinds of implicatures, e.g., conventional and conversational implicatures, give rise to the debate about the semantic/pragmatic distinction and ways to detect the semantic and pragmatic content of an utterance.

Grice's most important work in the philosophy of language focuses on the "conditions governing communication." Central to that discussion is Grice's distinction between what one says and what one implies with any given utterance. What one "says" is "closely related to the conventional meaning of the words (the sentence)" that one utters when uttering the words (the sentence).[233] What one implies, the "implicature," is what is "implied, suggested, meant, etc."[234] An "implicature" is what a speaker means by an utterance that goes beyond the meanings of the words; implicatures are what is communicated but not literally said by speakers in conversation. There are conditions that govern language use in such a way that participants in communication understand this difference between what is said and what is implied. Grice claims that when speakers engage in communication, their communication is governed by the cooperative principle. This is

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[233] Grice (1975), p. 167.
[234] Grice (1975), p. 166.

both a descriptive claim about the way people normally communicate and a prescriptive

claim about the way they ought to communicate.[235] Here is the cooperative principle, in

Grice's words

> (CP)   Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage which
> it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which
> you are engaged.[236]

(CP) is implemented by rational maxims and submaxims that govern the appropriateness of

communication. Grice lists four maxim categories: quantity, quality, relation, and manner.

Each maxim category contains submaxims, which are ways to implement the supermaxim.

For example, the maxim of quality says that one should "try to make your contribution one

that is true." A submaxim of quality says "do not say what you believe to be false."[237]

There are two types of implicatures—conventional and nonconventional

implicatures. Conventional implicatures, according to Grice, are generated by the meanings

of certain words in the sentences used by a speaker in a conversation, participles like

"therefore." Grice's example is this: "He is an Englishman; he is, therefore, brave." Here is

how Grice explains the conventional implicature:

> I have certainly committed myself, by virtue of the meaning of my words, to its
> being the case that his being brave is a consequence of (follows from) his being an
> Englishman. But while I have said that he is an Englishman, and said that he is
> brave, I do not want to say that I have *said* (in the favored sense) that it follows from
> his being an Englishman that he is brave, though I have certainly indicated, and so
> implicated, that this is so. I do not want to say that my utterance of this sentence
> would be, *strictly speaking*, false should the consequence in question fail to hold.[238]

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[235] Grice (1975), p. 169.
[236] Grice (1975), p. 167.
[237] Grice (1975), p. 168.
[238] Grice (1975), p. 167.

Nonconventional implicatures include conversational implicatures, which are "affected" by the maxims.[239] Conversational implicatures have the following main properties: they are (1) calculable, (2) cancelable, and (3) non-detachable. Grice mentions three other features of conversational implicatures. I do not take these three features to be main features of implicatures, and, it seems, that no one else does either.[240] Before explaining (1)-(3), let me note another distinction. Grice distinguishes between particularized conversational implicatures and generalized conversational implicatures. A particularized conversational implicature is one that depends on the particular features of a specific context and no other context. For example, my use of irony in a specific context makes sense only if I intend my meaning to go beyond what I have said in a particular way. In such cases, according to Grice, I fail to fulfill a maxim of quality for the sake of generating a specific implicature.[241] A generalized maxim depends on the form of words an utterance has, no matter a change in context. Generalized conversational implicatures are philosophically important in ways that particularized conversational implicatures are not, e.g., explaining the "difference in meaning between logical constants of formal languages and their counterparts in natural languages" and as a way of specifying whether certain issues are semantic ones or pragmatic ones.[242]

Conversational implicatures have the three properties mentioned above; they are calculable, cancelable and non-detachable. To say that a conversational implicature is calculable is to say that it is "capable of being worked out; for even if it can in fact be intuitively grasped, unless the intuition is replaceable by an argument, the implicature will not

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[239] In (1975) Grice says that conversational implicatures are a "subclass" of nonconventional implicatures, but he does not give a characterization of what nonconventional implicatures are apart from discussing conversational implicatures.
[240] For an example, see Jerrold Sadock's (1978). There, he says, "Of these, only the first three are reasonable candidates for practical tests that could be used in settling the matter in particular instances."
[241] Grice (1975), p. 171.
[242] Perry and Korta (2006), p. 11.

count as a conversational implicature."[243] A conversational implicature is calculable from the (CP) and the maxims. A conversational implicature is cancelable either explicitly or contextually. It is cancelable explicitly if it is "admissible" to add a qualification like "but, I don't mean to imply thus and such." A conversational implicature is cancelable contextually by changing the context of the implicature in such a way that the implicature is appropriate in one context but not the other. An implicature is non-detachable if saying the same thing in another way carries the implicature. These are defining features of conversational implicatures. If an implicature does not have these features, it is not a conversational implicature. Consequently, these features may also be used, supposedly, as tests for determining whether an implicature is a conversational one or some other kind.

The "traditional" or "standard" view of the distinction between semantics and pragmatics deviates little from Grice's own work. The "traditional" view is so-called, as I take it, because of its historical roots in Grice's work and because of the popularity it has among philosophers. Consider two descriptions of the standard view. Szabo characterizes the traditional view in this way: semantics is "concerned with what is said" and pragmatics is concerned with "what is implicated."[244] Additionally, he makes clear that interpretation of utterances involves both semantic and pragmatic components, something that is obvious upon reflection. Similarly, according to Bianchi, the traditional view of the semantics/pragmatics distinction claims that semantics deals with the literal meanings of words and sentences and pragmatics deals with how speakers rely on context in order to communicate information. Here is how she characterizes it: semantics is "the field of the study of language dealing with the conventional (or literal) meanings of words and sentences and the relations between those meanings, and between linguistic expressions and their

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[243] Grice (1975), p. 170.
[244] Szabo (2005), p. 3.

denotations."[245] Pragmatics "studies how speakers use context and shared information to convey information that is supplementary to the semantic content of what they say, and how hearers make inferences on the basis of this information."[246]

Although many philosophers still favor the traditional view, there are problems with it. Szabo claims that "it may well be that some of the simplicity and intuitive appeal [of the traditional view] comes from a lack of clarity about what the view is actually committed to."[247] The traditional view is intuitively appealing because of its simplicity. However, as Szabo argues, that simplicity is complicated when one considers Austin's differences among perlocutionary, illocutionary, and locutionary speech acts, distinctions that Grice fails to notice.[248] A speech act is simply something someone does with words. To understand the differences among Austin's three kinds of speech acts, consider Szabo's example: "Consider a case when you are looking for the exit and in order to help you out I sincerely utter 'It's on the left'."[249] The perlocutionary act involved in making this utterance is what Szabo means "by" the utterance, i.e., that you actually proceed to the exit. That's different from the illocutionary act involved in the utterance. The illocutionary act is that act that Szabo means "in" making his utterance, i.e., imparting information to you about where the exit is. A locutionary act is simply uttering words that are meaningful. These distinctions (pick any two) clarify the traditional view of the semantics/pragmatics distinction at the expense of making the traditional view more complicated. Consequently, Szabo claims, the traditional view loses its intuitive appeal.

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[245] Bianchi (2004), p. 1.
[246] Bianchi (2004).
[247] Szabo (2005), p. 3.
[248] See Austin (1962).
[249] Szabo (2005), p. 3.

In addition to the complications Szabo mentions, the traditional view has problems dealing with certain cases. There are well known problem cases that call into question the adequacy of the traditional view. Typical examples include the following (which Bianchi lists)[250]

1. All the bottles [I just bought] are empty.

2. Nobody [famous] goes there any more because it's too crowded.

3. I have nothing [appropriate to the occasion] to wear tonight.

The list goes on, but the basic idea is the same for each example. These are all typical things someone might say on a particular occasion. When uttered, no one has any difficulty deciphering the intended meaning of the sentence, even though the utterer fails to include the information in the brackets.

What exactly is the problem with these cases? What is at issue is how to determine what counts as the truth conditional content of [the proposition expressed by] an utterance. If the traditional view is right, then there is a sharp distinction between what is said and what is communicated by any utterance. The "proposition literally expressed," or the "literal truth conditions," or the "conventional meaning" is the territory marked by semantics and aligns with "what is said." It might strike one as strange that the conventional meaning is the same territory marked by semantics and what one literally says. Remember that conventional implicatures are generated by nontruth-functional components of a sentence in addition to the meanings of the words. As Sadock notes, "Conventional implicatures thus should be and have been handled in a way that closely parallels the treatment of semantic content."[251] In the cases above that means that the truth conditional content [the proposition] of the sentences has something to do with what is said apart from the information contained in the

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[250] Bianchi (2004), p. 4.
[251] Sadock (1978).

brackets. On the traditional view, semantics has a difficult time accounting for the seemingly obvious importance of context in determining the truth conditional content of an utterance and pragmatics has a difficult time accounting for the idea that an utterance can express a proposition apart from its context of use. The problem cases seem to show that "there is a significant distance between the conventional meaning of a sentence and the proposition expressed by uttering that sentence—a distance not imputable only to ambiguity or indexicality."[252]

Of course, there are many different responses to these problem cases, which amount to there being different views about the nature of the distinction between semantics and pragmatics. There are several different ways that philosophers and linguists have attempted to save either semantics, endorsing the traditional view, or endorse the priority of pragmatics. Bianchi puts the views on a spectrum. On one end of the spectrum, for example, are traditionalists, e.g., those philosophers who explain away apparent pragmatic contributions by invoking "hidden indexicals" embedded in utterances. Indexicals are obviously context dependent. The truth conditions for an utterance that contains 'I' as in 'I want a cookie' depends on just who the 'I' is referencing. A hidden indexical is just what it sounds like; it is an indexical that is part of the logical structure of a sentence but that is not an obvious part of the surface structure of the sentence in the way that 'I' is above. As Bianchi says, for semanticists (a kind of traditionalist), "the only process affecting the truth conditions of an utterance is the mandatory semantic process of 'saturation', triggered by the presence of a syntactic element (explicit or hidden)."[253] On the other end of the spectrum are radical contextualists who claim that the truth conditions of any utterance cannot be

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[252] Bianchi (2004), p. 5.
[253] Bianchi (2004), p. 5.

determined without appeal, in some way or another, to context. Szabo classifies the views

differently. He claims that there are six main ones:

(a) *Competence*. Typically, some but not all of what the speaker conveys could be grasped by any competent speaker without special knowledge.

(b) *Encoding*. Typically, some but not all of what the speaker conveys is encoded in the expression uttered.

(c) *Compositionality*. Typically, some but not all of what the speaker conveys is compositionally determined (by the syntax and the lexicon).

(d) *Rules*. Typically, some but not all of what the speaker conveys can be ascertained by following rules, as opposed to elaborate cognitive strategies.

(e) *Truth-conditionality*. Typically, some but not all of what the speaker conveys is truth-conditionally relevant.

(f) *Intentional-independence*. Typically, some but not all of what the speaker conveys is independent of the speaker's specific intentions to talk about this or that.[254]

Still others, like Cappelen, eschew the terms 'semantics' and 'pragmatics' altogether, although

it is obvious that he is concerned with the same issues that concern those philosophers who

endorse the use of those terms, i.e., delimiting the truth conditional content of utterances.

Actually, Cappelen is blatant in his disavowal of the terms 'semantics' and 'pragmatics'. He

states, ". . . there's no such thing as *the semantics-pragmatics distinction* and looking for it is a

waste of time. No such distinction will do any important explanatory work."[255] In focusing

on nailing down just what the distinction amounts to, according to Cappelen, one loses

focus on a number of issues that are important for addressing issues about semantic content

and context-sensitivity, running the risk of simplifying matters so much that the real issues

go unresolved. As such, Cappelen offers his own mapping of the debate, classifying

approaches into 3 broad categories, i.e., "semantic explanations (S-explanations),"

"pragmatic explanations (P-explanations)," and "index explanations (I-explanations)." In

other places, Cappelen (with Lepore) claims that the debate about context sensitivity really

amounts to a debate between semanticists and radical contextualists. These are just three

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[254] Szabo (2005), p. 6.
[255] See Cappelen (2007), p. 3.

ways of characterizing the debate. There are more.[256] Not only are there different ways to characterize the semantic/pragmatic distinction, there are several ways to characterize the debate itself, depending on any number of constraints, from how one decides to define the terms at play to how one figures out what's really at stake in the first place.

Even considering that there are many ways to draw the distinction between semantics and pragmatics and some of these ways are more influential than others, it might not be clear why the debate matters in the first place. Why is the debate important? Whatever Cappelen says, there is theoretical utility in the distinction. According to Bianchi, whatever positions there might be, "it has become clear that many controversies in the philosophy of language arise from different ways of conceiving the semantic/pragmatic interface. As a consequence, many conflicting formulations of this interface have been proposed in recent years, and today any theory that purports to explain language and communication must draw a sharp line between semantics and pragmatics."[257] And, there is a more general reason for thinking the distinction is important. Here is what Szabo says about the importance of the debate

> The fact that we do not have a robust and widely agreed upon explicit conception of what that distinction really amounts to does not make the debates futile: perhaps the participants share a tacit and fairly rich underlying conception of the distinction, a conception that has yet to be adequately articulated. Or, if this optimistic assumption proves illusory, perhaps there are a *few* such conceptions at play, some in some debates, and others in others. Either way, work needs to be done to bring the tacit conceptions(s) to the fore.[258]

He continues to say that the debate is not ". . . merely technical. The disagreement concerns something far more profound, i.e., what is implicit and what is explicit in what we say, the propositional content that we are responsible for, the *commitment* toward our interlocutors

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[256] For another example, see Recanati (2005).
[257] Bianchi (2004), p. 3.
[258] Szabo (2005), pp. 7-8.

that we express by saying something—by choosing those particular words in those particular circumstances. An essential issue, not only for our philosophical thinking, but also in our everyday life." For the purposes of this dissertation, I assume that Bianchi and Szabo are correct. The distinction is important and has far reaching implications for philosophy in general and for the debate about truth in particular.

The Semantics/Pragmatics Distinction and the Normativity of Truth

With a preliminary understanding of the distinction between semantics and pragmatics, I can now address how the distinction applies to the debate about the value of truth. There are not many philosophers who discuss the semantic/pragmatic distinction in the context of talking about the value of truth. Adam Kovach is one, the only one that I am aware of who discusses the issue at significant length. He invokes the distinction in its standard form and uses it to make some interesting claims about the value of truth. In this section, I explain Kovach's view and outline the reasons why I think his view is mistaken.

Here is Kovach's view. Kovach claims that truth is a value concept. What does it mean for something to be a value concept? As a rough first pass, for Kovach, a value concept may be distinguished from other kinds of concepts in the sorts of roles it plays in "language, thought, and life."[259] Value concepts "guide" our actions, help us in forming attitudes about ourselves and the world, and play some kind of role in our expression of those attitudes.[260] To say that truth is a value concept is to say that it functions in one of these ways. Kovach is primarily concerned with truth's action guiding role.

More specifically, Kovach says, to say that truth is a value concept is to say that it has the following two features: truth is an evaluative concept and it is a normative concept. As

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[259] Kovach (2000) p. 200.
[260] Kovach (2000)

an evaluative concept, truth plays a role in assessing the correctness of certain claims, whether one's own or others'. For example, if one makes the following claim "The distance from here to the end of the hall is 100 yards," I might respond by saying "That's true." In responding this way, I am saying that the statement is correct. As a normative concept, truth gives us certain prima facie obligations. Remember, a prima facie obligation is an obligation that one has to do something or refrain from doing something, unless outweighed by other obligations. Kovach claims that people recognize "certain prima facie obligations with respect to truth."[261] For example, unless I have some overriding reason not to do so, I have an obligation to tell the truth. Likewise, unless I have some overriding reason not to do so, I should do what I can to make sure I have true beliefs. For Kovach, there are strong and weak obligations. A weak obligation to do something means that there is a mere reason or motivation to do something. If one has a strong obligation, one has a duty to do something or refrain from doing something. The difference between having a mere reason and having a duty to do something isn't easy to explain, and the history of the difference between the two is replete with controversy. Just what counts as a reason, how motivation is tied to that, what kind of justification is needed in order make the difference between a mere reason and a morally weighty reason are just a few of the issues that one needs to consider in order to adequately explain the difference between the two. Nevertheless, the superficial difference is intuitive and one that is easily grasped. A morally weighty reason, as I have phrased it, is a reason that one has to do something (or refrain from doing something), no matter one's inclinations. Not so with a mere reason. Moreover, obligations are impersonal in the sense

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[261] Kovach (2000), p. 201.

that if one has an obligation to do something, so does everyone else in "similar circumstances."[262]

Here is another way to describe the same idea. There is a strong sense and a weak sense, or, a moral sense and a nonmoral sense of normativity. For example, the rules of etiquette are normative, as they are action guiding. According to the rules of etiquette in our society, it is wrong to place your salad fork closer to the plate than your dinner fork. No one would deny that this kind of imperative is considerably weaker than the imperative that tells you that it is wrong to torture babies for fun. The rules of etiquette are nonmorally normative, or weakly normative, and the rules of morality, so to speak, are obviously strongly normative.

Kovach argues that these evaluative and normative aspects of truth are constitutive of the concept itself. It is part of the meaning of the word 'true' and its cognates that truth is normative and evaluative. That truth is a value concept, in other words, is a semantic feature of truth. This semantic feature of the concept of truth is distinguished from the weaker claim that the normative and evaluative aspects of truth are part of the pragmatics of the truth predicate. If truth were a matter of pragmatics, the value aspect of the truth predicate would depend on situations in which it would be appropriate to use the predicate. In Kovach's words,

> *(Weak normativity thesis)* The concept of truth enters into certain norms
> *(Strong normativity thesis)* The concept of truth is a normative concept, in that some claims involving 'true' entail claims involving explicitly normative vocabulary.[263]

Elsewhere, he phrases it this way:

> In a strong form, the view will include a semantic thesis about the evaluative character of truth, according to which the evaluative character of truth, reflected in the evaluative use of 'true' and in the normativity of the concept of truth, is part of

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[262] Kovach (2000).
[263] Kovach (2007), p. 208.

the meaning of the truth predicate. This strong form of the view maintains that the evaluative character of truth is not just an effect of the pragmatics of truth talk. A weaker form of the evaluative conception of truth does not involve any semantic theses. It maintains only that the evaluative character of truth is a central and important feature, and that it reflects a deeply entrenched aspect of our use of the truth predicate.[264]

In order to show that these features are semantic features of the truth predicate, Kovach employs the tests proposed by Grice, which are, Kovach claims, supposed to show the difference between "pragmatic implicature" and "semantic entailment."[265]

One way the tests can be used is to determine whether an expression is a matter of pragmatics or a matter of semantics. As Kovach employs them, a pragmatic implicature refers to that which can be implied from statements based on conversational maxims. A semantic entailment refers to that which can be inferred from the meanings of statements. Kovach uses the cancelability and calculability tests to show that, based on the logical nature of language, the normative and evaluative aspects of the concept of truth is a semantic feature of the concept: Take Kovach's examples:

(1) Claim C is true,

(2) Claim C ought, other things being equal, to be accepted.

(3) Claim C is correct.

If oughts systematically flow from the concept of truth, Kovach claims, then 'oughts' associated to truth should be equivalent with the meaning of 'truth'. The Gricean tests are supposed to show this. First, consider the cancelability test. To show that the move from (1) to (2) is cancelable, one must show that it is cancelable either explicitly or contextually. To show that it is cancelable explicitly is to show that it is admissible to qualify (2) without producing an inconsistency with (1). But, if one has reason to assert (1), then it seems

[264] Kovach (2000), p. 202.
[265] Kovach (2007), pp. 202-203.

inconsistent to say that one ought not to accept the claim. It is obviously inconsistent to say that claim C is true and that one ought not, other things being equal, accept claim C. The cancelability test shows that the move from (1) to (2) is not dependent on contextual features of asserting them. So, the move from (1) to (2) does not involve a pragmatic implicature. It involves, rather, semantic entailment.

Second, consider the calculability test. On the assumption that people in conversation are committed to (CP), to say that an implicature is calculable is to say that one can determine the implicature by means of the maxims of conversation. But, according to Kovach, none of the maxims make calculable the move from (1) to (2) or from (1) to (3). So, they are not calculable and, therefore, not pragmatic implicatures. Rather, they are semantic entailments. The semantic features of the concept of truth help explain why moves from (1) to (2) and (1) to (3) are appropriate, or so Kovach claims.

Kovach's use of Grice's implicature tests is supposed to show that the normativity of truth is a semantic feature of the concept of truth. If Grice's implicature tests were not problematic, Kovach's argument might be convincing. It's too bad for Kovach that Grice's implicature tests are questionable, at least taken as they are. Although many philosophers seem to take the tests to be sufficiently intuitive to warrant abandon of critical reflection of them, there are a few philosophers who have questioned the tests and who have done so in a way that renders the tests suspicious. I consider two such arguments: the arguments given by Weiner and Sadock.

Weiner focuses on the cancelability test. If Grice is right, all conversational implicatures are cancellable. Weiner points out something I have already noted and illustrated with Kovach's work: "one frequently sees a cancelability test used to show that

some effect of language use is not an implicature."[266] According to Weiner, however, "not all conversational implicatures are cancellable."[267] Grice's notes that conversational implicatures depend on speaker's implicit use of the CP. Competent language users are able to determine, with a given context of utterance, what a speaker means by uttering a sentence in that particular context. Considering the nature of CP and what Grice says a conversational implicature is, Weiner draws several "moral[s]" for which he provides ample examples. "The first moral," he says," is that the cancelability test does not help determine when an implicature is present. To be sure that the lack of cancelability rules out implicature, we must be sure that the cancelling utterance 'but not B' is to be taken literally."[268] Given the nature of communication, speakers are not really ever in a position to know that. The conclusion: "But if we can tell what utterances are to be taken literally, we do not need a test for the presence of an implicature."[269] There is another moral that Weiner draws: "The second moral is that some speech acts are difficult if not impossible to perform in some circumstances."[270] This moral exacerbates the problem with the cancelability test, as seen in the first moral. Not only is it the case that "we must be sure that the canceling utterance is to be taken literally," in order to figure out if an implicature is present, there are some cases when that is impossible. As I read Weiner, the point is this. For a test to be useful, there must be a consistent way to implement it. There is no way to do that with Grice's cancelability test. So the test is useless.

Of course there are some philosophers who disagree with Weiner's analysis. Michael Bloome-Tillman takes issue with it.[271] Given the historical importance of Grice's work and

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[266] Weiner (2006), p. 127.
[267] Weiner (2006), p. 128.
[268] Weiner (2006), p. 129.
[269] Weiner (2006), p. 129.
[270] Weiner (2006), p. 130.
[271] Bloome-Tillman (2008).

the pervasiveness of implicature tests like cancelability in both philosophy and linguistics, Weiner's arguments, Bloome-Tillman thinks, deserve close attention. Bloome-Tillman gives Weiner this attention and comes to the conclusion that something like a cancelability test is still useful if one makes appropriate changes to Grice's test, where the appropriate changes result in implicatures being "explicitly cancellable*."[272] Bloome-Tillman proposes a modified test. One can quibble about how similar to Grice's original claim Bloome-Tillman's test is. That quibble doesn't much matter here, as it is clear that Grice's cancelability test is flawed as it is. On that score both Weiner and Bloome-Tillman agree.

Unfortunately, this isn't the only flaw with Grice's test. Nor is it the most serious. Sadock finds problematic each of the 3 main Gricean tests. With regard to calculability, Sadock notes that while it may be a necessary condition for an implicature, it is clearly not a sufficient condition. Why? He gives two reasons. Reason one: "First of all, the Cooperative Principle with its maxims of Quality, Quantity, Relation, and Manner is so vague that almost anything can be 'worked out' on the basis of almost any meaning."[273] If this is the case, and it seems obvious that it is, the CP is too powerful for its own good, making the calculability test insufficient. The second reason concerns the changing nature of language. It is commonplace for phrases that originally need something like the CP in order to be understood to come to mean what they have been consistently used to express, rendering the CP futile in understanding how implicatures are now generated with such phrases. Sadock gives examples like 'spill the beans' and 'go to the bathroom'. The "metaphorical" meanings of these phrases are so entrenched in language that the metaphors are all but lost. No one needs the CP to figure out what a speaker means when she utters either of these phrases. Sadock concludes, "Yet the principles that *originally* allowed these expressions to

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[272] Bloome-Tillman (2008), p. 160.
[273] Sadock (1978), p. 368.

have metaphorical implicatures are also cases where the Cooperative Principle could be invoked, but where it should not be."[274] Even if calculability is a necessary feature of conversational implicature, it isn't a sufficient feature.

Sadock also finds fault with the nondetachability test. Grice, according to Sadock, recognizes a problem with this feature. This feature of conversational implicature, like the other two, depend on the content of what a speaker says. The tests do not take into account the way in which the speaker says what she says. But, tone, for example, very much matters to whether a hearer understands properly what a speaker means to convey by an utterance. Nondetachability is useless in such cases. Even so, Sadock argues that nondetachability is neither necessary nor sufficient as a feature of conversational implicatures. Why isn't it sufficient? According to Sadock, "for one thing, nondetachability is not strict enough to distinguish between entailment and conversational implicature, as Grice himself points out."[275] Here is one of his examples. Take the phrase 'Bill and Harry left.' One cannot utter this without conveying 'Harry left.' Working this out is a matter of conventional implicature, not conversational implicature. The test isn't sufficient to distinguish between conversational and conventional implicature. Another problem with nondetachability, Sadock argues, stems from the CP itself. If it is true that almost any phrase can be used in almost any way, given the right context of utterance, Sadock is "led to wonder whether anything is detachable from anything."[276]

What about the cancelability test? Putting aside smaller problems with the test, problems that might be ameliorated, Sadock says, "Here is the bigger bug in the theory of cancelability: the test does not distinguish cases of ambiguity from cases of univocality plus

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[274] Sadock (1978), p. 368.
[275] Sadock (1978), p. 369.
[276] Sadock (1978), p. 371.

possible conversational implicature."[277] Ambiguity is a grammatical issue. Univocality plus

conversational implicature is a matter of context of use. The purpose of a test like

cancelability is to distinguish conversational implicature from conventional implicature. If

the test can't distinguish between the two hard cases, the test is not of much use. Sadock

gives several examples. He also shows how cancelability and nondetachability are

problematic when taken together. Here is his conclusion about the tests:

> Only one feature, calculability, is clearly a necessary property of conversational
> implicature. But calculability is trivially necessary since nearly anything can be
> 'worked out' with the aid of the Cooperative Principle on the bases of nearly any
> meaning in some context. Nondetachability fails to be a necessary feature of
> conversational implicature since there does not seem to be any principled reason why
> two lexical items could not differ just in that one includes cancellation of a
> conversational implicature that might be associated with the other. In such a case,
> substitution of the more specific lexical item for the less specific one would amount
> to detaching a conversational implicature. Cancelability is probably a necessary
> feature of conversational implicature, but it gets progressively harder to cancel any
> implicature the more it generalized it is.[278]

Even if some of the details of Sadock's argument are incorrect, I think his argument is

sufficient to show that there are some real problems with using Grice's tests as they are.

Perhaps with enough modification, the tests could be rendered sufficient and necessary for

determining when a conversational implicature is present.

The problem with Kovach's use of the tests, then, is easy to see. He uses the tests as

they are without recognizing the real problems with doing so. Does that mean the

normativity is not a semantic feature of the concept of truth? Not necessarily. Given the

obvious fruitfulness of a program like Grice's (even if his tests are flawed), constructing tests

that might shed light on the nature of language use is a good idea. Good tests not only help

explain data about actual language use, they also clear up philosophical difficulties, helping

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[277] Sadock (1978), p. 373.
[278] Sadock (1978), p. 375.

philosophers make some progress in understanding the nature of truth; this is a point to which I shall return in a moment.

Perhaps not all is lost for Kovach. Recognizing the limitation of Grice's framework and understanding the importance of "new diagnostics" in structuring the debate about the distinction between semantics and pragmatics, Cappelen and Lepore employ three different tests in order to determine whether the truth conditions of a sentence depend on the context of utterance. There are not many "tests" that are designed explicitly for doing the same sort of thing that Grice's test are supposed to do. The focus of Cappelen and Lepore's tests is slightly different from the focus of Grice's tests. Kovach and others who use Grice's tests as they are assume that testing for conversational implicature and semantic entailment amount to using the same tests for each. Given the complexity of the debate about semantics and pragmatics, it might be better to test for semantic content with tools that focus on that content. Cappelen and Lepore base their tests on context sensitive expressions that everyone recognizes are context dependent. Though Cappelen and Lepore repudiate the debate between semantics and pragmatics, it is clear that context sensitive terms are ones that require pragmatic input in order to be truth-apt. There is agreement about this set of context sensitive expressions: [personal pronouns, demonstrative pronouns, adverbs like 'here', 'there', 'now', etc., adjectives like 'actual' and 'present', words and aspects of words that indicate tense, contextuals that include common nouns like 'enemy', 'outsider', 'alien', etc., and common adjectives like 'foreign', 'local', 'domestic', etc.].[279] On Cappelen and Lepore's view, these are the only context sensitive expressions: "The only context sensitive expressions are the very obvious ones listed above plus or minus a bit."[280] As it happens, the "Basic Set" passes the three tests. That should not be surprising, since all agree that these

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[279] This is Cappelen and Lepore's description of the set. See their (2005), p. 1.
[280] Cappelen and Lepore (2005-a), p. 2.

expressions are context sensitive. A test that was inconsistent with the Basic Set wouldn't be

a good test. As such, these tests are "obvious tests of context sensitivity."[281] Before

explaining the tests, it's important to note that the tests are not, according to Cappelen and

Lepore, formulated as an ad hoc way of supporting their view called "Semantic

Minimalism."

      Semantic minimalism, as defined by Cappelen and Lepore, is motivated by the

"simple and obvious" idea that "the semantic content of a sentence S is the content that all

utterances of S share. It is the content that all utterances express no matter how different

their contexts of utterance are."[282] Their specific version of semantic minimalism is "more

elaborately" spelled out as the conjunction of seven theses. For now, the more elaborate

version doesn't matter. What matters is the recognition that the semantic content, or truth

conditional content, of a sentence is the same from context to context. Of course, I have

already mentioned that all philosophers agree that there is a set of expressions that are

context dependent and, thus, that context matters to some extent in figuring out the truth

conditional content of sentences with such phrases. One way of describing the difference

between semantics and pragmatics is that the debate is about the size of that set of context

sensitive expressions and how the context fits into determining the semantic value (and truth

conditional content) of utterances that contain such phrases. Cappelen and Lepore's view is

minimal in the sense that it only recognizes the Basic Set as context sensitive expressions.

Context matters in determining the content of sentences with these expressions but the

context sensitivity is grammatically triggered.[283] There is a lot more to say about their view,

which I won't do here. What is important to note here is that the tests aren't a result of a

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[281] Cappelen and Lepore (2005-a), p. 87.
[282] Cappelen and Lepore (2005-a), p. 143.
[283] Cappelen and Lepore (2005-a), p. 144.

stubborn insistence that their view is right. Rather, their view seems to be motivated by the tests themselves. In any case, the tests are supposed to be obvious. On that score, it doesn't much matter which came first, the view or the tests (for those readers who find this claim suspicious, I'll have more to say later). Cappelen and Lepore develop 3 tests, which each item of the Basic Set passes. These are context sensitive expressions without a doubt. If another expression is context sensitive, it, too, should pass the tests (or so say Cappelen and Lepore).

Test 1: An expression is context sensitive only if it typically blocks inter-contextual disquotational indirect reports.

An indirect report is a statement made by a reporter about an utterance that someone else has made. A disquotational report disquotes, so to speak, that report. For example, suppose I say, "Tomorrow is the last day of the week." A disquotational report of that utterance would look like this

Kamper said that tomorrow is the last day of the week.

An intercontextual disquotational indirect report is a disquotational report about an utterance and it's a report that retains its truth value from context to context. Given that context sensitive expressions are, by definition, context dependent, sentences containing them cannot be disquotationally and indirectly reported from context to context without sacrificing truth conditional content. Take the example above by me on Thursday. Suppose someone else says on Friday, "Kamper said that tomorrow is the last day of the work week." It is obvious that the semantic value of the two utterances is different from one context to the other. This shows that the original claim contains a context sensitive expression, namely, 'tomorrow'.

Test 2: Context Sensitive Expressions Block Collective Descriptions

Here's how Cappelen and Lepore explain this test: "If a verb phrase v is context sensitive (if it changes its semantic value from one context to another), then on the basis of merely knowing that there are two contexts of utterance in which 'A v-s' and 'B v-s' are true respectively, we cannot automatically infer that there is a context in which 'v' can be used to describe what A & B have both done."[284] Cappelen and Lepore use this test for verb phrases and unambiguous singular terms. Here is their example. Take two sentences (1) 'Yesterday John left' and (2) 'Yesterday Bill left.' Suppose each sentence is true but uttered in different contexts. (1) is true in context1. (2) is true in context2. It doesn't follow, according to Cappelen and Lepore that the collective description 'Yesterday John and Bill left.' is true in some context. The context sensitive phrase 'yesterday' blocks this collective description, as do any of the expressions in the Basic Set. This is not the case for sentences without context sensitive expressions. Here's an example. Suppose someone says, "Golfers wear hats," uttered in context1. Someone else says, "Baseball players wear hats," uttered in context2. The collective description is "Both golfers and baseball players wear hats." That the two utterances occurred in different contexts doesn't affect the semantic value of the collective description. There is some context in which the collective description could be true. It should be obvious how this example differs from the previous one. In this last example, even though the sentences were uttered in different contexts, it's still true that "Both golfers and baseball players wear hats."

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[284] Cappelen and Lepore (2005-b), p. 201.

Test 3: Context sensitive expressions pass an intercontextual disquotational test and admit of real context shifting arguments.

Cappelen and Lepore say that test 3 is comprised of two different tests, i.e., a test for intercontextual disquotation and for context shifting arguments. The tests, however, are two different ways of doing the same thing, and, as the IDC is easier to understand than the CSA, I don't discuss the CSA here. Test 3 amounts to inserting a supposedly context sensitive expression into a sentence in a particular context. Doing so "fixes" the semantic value of the expression. After all, whatever else one might want to say about a context and context sensitive expressions, it is clear that context sensitive expressions change semantic value in different contexts. Take the resulting expression and use it in another, clearly different context. If the expression is context sensitive, the semantic value of the resulting expression should change. Here is how Cappelen and Lepore put it:

> e is context sensitive only if there is a true utterance of an instance of the following schema for inter-contextual disquotation (ICD for short; where S contains): ICD. There are (or *can* be) false utterances of [S] even though S.[285]

Here is one of their examples: "There is a false utterance of 'that's nice' even those that's nice (said pointing at Al's car)." It should be clear that context makes all the difference in this example; it matters what is being pointed out, by whom, when, etc. Cappelen and Lepore continue to explain how this relates to context shifting arguments. In the context of this section, such an explanation unduly complicates matters. Cappelen and Lepore would agree—they leave out this third test entirely in a "Tall Tale."[286]

There are a few points to make with regard to how these tests differ from Grice's own tests. First, they function in a way to help readers focus on the semantic content of utterances: "They are ways to get the audience to notice semantic features of sentences

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[285] Cappelen and Lepore (2005-a), p. 105.
[286] Cappelen and Lepore (2005-b).

uttered. They create contexts in which our attention is drawn to features of the semantic content expressed by the utterances in question."[287] While Grice's tests are supposed to pick out the same class of expressions, the focus is different. Grice focuses on the distinction between conventional and conversational implicature. Cappelen and Lepore focus on semantic content. Second, the tests "require the theorist to confront intuitions about her own language *in use* and not just about other people's use of language."[288] The tests require the actual use of the context sensitive expressions in question. Again, this is different from the tests Grice proposes. To use Grice's tests, it's enough to talk about context sensitive expressions without actually using them in context.

Cappelen and Lepore note that all of this points to the obvious, i.e., that competent language users know when expressions are context sensitive. Communication succeeds, in part, because of this knowledge. Their tests help to pick out those expressions that competent language users already know are context sensitive.[289] One might ask why use the tests at all, if they just pick out the obvious? Cappelen and Lepore would probably say that the tests confirm intuitions about language use, intuitions that are muddled through philosophical investigation. Likewise, intuitions by themselves don't count as arguments.

It should be clear to the reader why I'm discussing these tests. If Kovach uses Grice's tests and there are good reasons to be suspicious of those test (true on both counts), and if there are other tests that accomplish the goal Kovach is concerned with accomplishing, i.e., showing that the normativity of truth is a semantic feature of the concept of truth, then those tests ought to be used instead of Grice's tests or in conjunction with a Gricean view modified to ameliorate the problems with the original tests. Even if these tests

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[287] Cappelen and Lepore (2005-a), 113.
[288] Cappelen and Lepore (2005-a), 104.
[289] Cappelen and Lepore (2005-a), 113.

aren't better than Grice's own, using them might be helpful to Kovach. After all, on his view, if 'truth' is context sensitive, then there is good reason to think that the normativity of the truth predicate is not a semantic feature of truth.

Before I can apply the tests to truth-talk, I must get clear on what truth-talk is. There are at least two levels of truth talk. There is the nonphilosophical, everyday level where speakers use the word 'true' and its cognates. Examples of this level are easy to find. Here are two very different examples:

(TSF)   The truth will set you free.

(TBH) It's true that black holes exist.

In addition to this level of truth-talk, there is philosophical talk about truth-talk. The debate about the normativity of truth is an example. In what follows, I run Cappelen and Lepore's tests on both kinds of truth-talk. Because I am specifically interested in the normativity of truth, I limit the field of philosophical truth-talk to talk about the norms of truth. I also only run the first and third tests; because the second test is designed for verbal phrases.

I run each test on each of the 2 examples of ordinary truth-talk (TSF and TBH) and on LTN1, KTN2, and HTN. Why do I choose these examples? With regard to both philosophical truth-talk and ordinary, everyday truth-talk, I want to use examples that contain the words 'true' and 'truth'. Although I suspect the results won't differ with the difference between the two words, as they both have roughly the same definitions and uses, their forms obviously differ. Using two cognates of the same concept wards off potential objections that might claim the scope of the tests is too limited. With regard to the truth norms, I also want examples that actually use the words 'true' or 'truth'. One cannot tell if 'truth' is context sensitive if one does not use the word in context. That rules out ENT. Given the major distinctions in theories of truth, I want a truth norm devised by an

inflationist and one devised by a deflationist. Hence the choice of LTN1 and HTN. I focus on KTN2 for two reasons. LTN1 ties truth to prima facie goods. KTN2 does not, at least not explicitly. I want to test whether the expression of the norm in this way matters to context sensitivity. Second, given that this entire section of the dissertation is due to Kovach's work, I include his norm as professional courtesy. With regard to TSF and TBH, I want examples that are common and that would likely be uttered in different contexts, no matter how one defines a context.

Test 1: An expression is context sensitive only if it typically blocks inter-contextual disquotational indirect reports.

Suppose someone knocks on your door at home. You answer. It is a Jehovah's Witness, coming to save you. He asks whether you have been saved. You respond that you don't even know what that means. He says

(TSF)   The truth will set you free.

Later that day at the office, I knock on your door. You answer. After recounting the morning events, you say

        Robert [the Jehovah's Witness] said that the truth will set you free.

The intercontextual disquotational indirect report is not rendered false, i.e., the semantic values of the components of TSF remain stable across contexts and through indirect report. So, according to this test, there are no context sensitive phrases in TSF other than the obvious 'you'.

        Suppose you attend an astronomy lecture about black holes. A student, who obviously was not paying attention, asks at the conclusion of the lecture, "I mean, do black holes really exist?" The lecturer answers

(TBH)   It's true that black holes exist.

The next day, amused with the lecture's one-liner, you recount the story to me. You ask, "do you know how the speaker responded?" I say, "No." You say

The astronomer said that it's true that black holes exist.

Does such a report make sense? Does one have to know more to understand the report? No. There is nothing in TBH that is context sensitive, other than 'that' which obviously refers to 'black holes exist.' 'It's true that' functions here as a unit referring to whatever it is in the world that follows 'that' in the phrase 'it's true that.' In this case, that is black holes actually existing.

The set-up is the same for KTN2, LTN1, and HTN. Suppose I am delivering a paper to a crowd of philosophers and I say one of these (and only one)

(KTN2)   One ought, other things being equal, to accept the truth.

(LTN1)   For all p, it is prima facie good to believe that p if and only if it is true
              that p

(HTN)   It is desirable to believe what is true and only what is true.

You go back to your office. A colleague asks you how my talk went. You say one of these (and only one)

Kamper said that one ought, other things being equal, to accept the truth.

or

Kamper said that for all p, it is prima facie good to believe that p if and only if it is
true that p.

or

Kamper said that it is desirable to believe what is true and only what is true.

The result is the same for each truth norm. The inter-contextual disquotational indirect report is not blocked, once the members of the Basic Set are taken into account. While each of the norms has a context sensitive expression that shows up in the Basic Set, their function in each norm is obvious. If there were any other context sensitive terms, the report would be blocked

Test 3: Context sensitive expressions pass an intercontextual disquotation test.

Recall IDC; it has the following form

There are false utterances of [S] even though S.

If IDC is true, then there is a context sensitive expression in S. If IDC is not true, then there is no context sensitive expression in S. Now, consider IDC for our samples:

(TSF-IDC)   There are false utterances of 'The truth will set you free' even though the truth will set you free.

(TBH-IDC)   There are false utterances of 'It's true that black holes exist' even though it's true that black holes exist.

(KTN2-IDC)   There are false utterances of 'One ought, other things being equal, to accept the truth' even though one ought, other things being equal, to accept the truth.

(LTN1-IDC)   There are false utterances of 'For all p, it is prima facie good to believe that p if and only if it is true that p' even though for all p, it is prima facie good to believe that p if and only if it is true that p.

(HTN-IDC)   There are false utterances of 'It is desirable to believe what is true and only what is true' even though it is desirable to believe what is true and only what is true.

Are any of these sentences false? Yes. Actually, they are all false. To see why, take TSF-IDC. Suppose that the truth will set you free. If so, any utterance of the sentence 'the truth will set you free' is also true, once the obvious item in the basic set, i.e., 'you', is taken into account. This obviously contrasts with Cappelen and Lepore's examples. Here is one of theirs

> There is a false utterance of 'She is French' even though she is French. Suppose she, the woman I am currently thinking of, is French. That's not enough to make every sentence 'She is French' true. It obviously depends on who 'she' refers to. So, it's clear in this example that 'she' is context sensitive.[290]

What about the other examples. Take TBH-IDC. Suppose it's true that black holes exist. Is that enough to "fix" any utterance of the form 'It's true that black holes exist'? It seems so. I can't think of any counterexamples. Remember, these tests are supposed to put one's focus on the semantic content of a sentence. Using the tests, it is supposed to be obvious that an expression is context sensitive, at least to a competent language user. I take myself to be just that, and it's not obvious to me that any of these sentences 'truth' or 'true' is context sensitive.

Do these tests help Kovach? If I have conducted the testing appropriately, then they confirm that 'truth' and 'true' are not context sensitive terms. This does help Kovach, at least a bit. If 'truth' and 'true' were context sensitive terms, the normativity of truth could not be a semantic feature of the concept of truth. This should be obvious enough, once one considers what it means for a term to be context sensitive, what it means for something to be a semantic feature of a concept, and what it means for something to be a pragmatic feature of a concept. Of course, there are several objections that could be raised against these specific tests, just as there are several objections that have been raised about Cappelen and Lepore's semantic minimalism project. I won't cover those objections here. Why not?

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[290] Cappelen and Lepore (2005-a), p. 105.

The help these tests give to Kovach is limited. Assuming they are correct, they only show that 'truth' and 'true' are not context sensitive terms; the tests do not show that the normativity associated with the terms are intrinsic to truth. It is still possible, as Kovach himself realizes, that the truth-conditional meaning of 'truth' could remain stable across contexts of discourse while the normativity of the use of 'truth' could depend on specific contexts of use. If the meaning of 'truth' and the way that people use the term diverge enough, these tests won't help much. Horwich thinks this divergence is right on target, as I have duly noted. Keep in mind that these are the only tests that I have come across that are designed to focus the tester on the semantic content of sentences. If Grice's tests are flawed and these tests are limited, then Kovach's position is limited.

There is another avenue available for help, one that is conspicuously absent from this debate. Inspired by Kovach, I suggest the following method. There are some concepts that seem to be intrinsically normative. Take the concept of good. If any concept is intrinsically normative, good is it. If the normativity of truth is really an intrinsic property of the concept of truth, then 'truth' ought to behave semantically like 'good'. The moral semantics that explains the use of 'good' should also explain the use of 'truth'. If it does, then there is good reason to think that the normativity of truth is an intrinsic feature of truth. If it does not, there remains enough data to make some tentative conclusions about the concept of truth.

Moral Semantics

The ways of accounting for terms like 'good' can be divided into three broad categories:

1.   Moral terms are not truth-apt; they are all context sensitive.

2.   Moral terms are truth-apt; they track objective, mind-independent properties in the world.

3.   Moral terms are truth-apt and they are context sensitive.

One might think that these three categories correspond neatly with the major positions in metaethics. For example, typically, noncognitivists are described as philosophers who think that moral terms like 'good' do not express beliefs; rather, they are described as thinking that moral terms express desires or emotions. Cognitivists are usually described as philosophers who think that moral terms do express beliefs and, so, moral terms are truth-apt.[291] There are a host of different varieties of cognitivists and noncognitivists, and the differing views handle the issue of the meaning of moral terms differently. The classification above does match up with some views, though not all. Classic expressivists like Ayer certainly think that moral terms are not truth-conditional.[292] So called "Cornell Realists" think that moral expressions are truth-apt, endorsing position 2 above.

I am operating on the assumption that the normativity of the truth is a semantic feature of the concept of truth. On this assumption, one would expect 'truth' to function semantically like other terms that are intrinsically normative. Moral claims are characteristically unusual in the sense that they seem to be truth-apt but also seem to be context sensitive to some degree. On the one hand, most people think that sentences like 'It is wrong to torture babies for fun' are true, and that the function of such sentences is more than merely expressing an attitude. On the other hand, most people seem to think that such sentences, in addition to being true or false, express certain attitudes and that the expression of these attitudes plays some kind of role in accounting for the meaning of moral expressions; this is exactly the sort of thing that is supposed to distinguish normative claims

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[291] For examples, see any introductory book on metaethics.
[292] See Ayer (1952).

from descriptive claims. Consideration of such issues helps to focus why moral semantics matters in the first place. Shroeder notes that it is common for metaethicists to borrow from philosophy of language in order to develop their theories of moral semantics.[293] While that is true, one ought not conclude that there is nothing more to moral semantics than a mere application of philosophy of language to issues in metaethics. Moral terms are special, in a sense. As the examples show, the trick is to find a way to accommodate the context sensitivity of moral language while also figuring out how such language can be truth-apt.

There are several problems applying categories 1 and 2 to 'truth'. 'Truth' is not context sensitive in any usual sense. That is the least one can gather from the application of Cappelen and Lepore's tests to sentences containing 'truth', assuming their tests are adequate ones. If category 1 is the right view of normative semantics, then either 'truth' is not normative at all or the normativity associated with truth is not a semantic feature of the concept. Category 2 has the opposite issue. If moral terms track moral properties, then there is a problem accounting for the reality of how moral terms are used in everyday discourse. There is something about moral language that calls for attention to context. If category 2 is the right view of normative semantics, then if 'truth' is normative, it is normative at the cost of undermining the traditional concerns of truth theorists; it is only recently in the history of truth debates that the normativity of truth has been an issue. If 'truth' tracks a normative property of some kind, the history of philosophical discourse on truth has been amiss. That would be a surprising result.

There are other obvious problems with these first two kinds of views. Recall the problem of mixed inferences and the scope problem. The problem of mixed inferences raises the following issue. If 'truth' is in some way fundamentally context sensitive, it is hard

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[293] Shroeder (2010) and (2008).

to understand how truth functions in inferences containing statements from clearly different domains of discourse. The scope problem raises the opposite issue. If 'truth' is not in some way context sensitive, it is hard to understand how certain areas of discourse are truth-apt, e.g., moral language, comical language, etc. Enough has been said to establish the claim that the concept of truth is in some way normative. The issue at hand is whether the source of the normativity of truth is a semantic or pragmatic feature of the concept. If all normative terms are context sensitive, 'truth' is too. That leads to the problem of mixed inferences. If all moral terms track mind-independent properties regardless of context, 'truth' does too. That leads to the scope problem. So, there are independent reasons to be skeptical about the theories that fall under the scope of categories 1 and 2.

I assume that any plausible theory of moral semantics must make room for both the insight that attitudes matter in determining meaning and that moral claims are truth-apt. In what follows, I briefly discuss one view that is prominent and influential, e.g., Wedgwood's conceptual role moral semantics. Prima facie, this position is a plausible way to account for the meaning of terms like 'true'.[294] In doing so, I evaluate 'truth' in light of the theory, based on the assumption that the normativity of truth is a semantic feature of the concept of truth. While Wedgwood's theory is prominent and influential, it is not uncontroversial. It is also a nascent theory. My point in the following sections is not to defend his brand of conceptual role moral semantics as the best approach to explaining moral language. Nor is my point to defend the claim that this approach is the best one with regard to explaining the normative aspects of the concept of truth. My point it to suggest that it could be theoretically beneficial for truth theorists to apply the best theories of moral semantics to their own work

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[294] Wedgwood (2001).

on the normativity of truth. Application of such theories to the debate on truth yields interesting results, ones that ought to be taken seriously in the debate.

Conceptual Role Moral Semantics

Conceptual role semantics is "view that the meanings of expressions of language (or other symbol system) or the contents of mental states are determined or explained by the role of the expressions or mental states in thinking."[295] Any conceptual role semantics gives the meaning of terms based on the role those terms have in thinking; Wedgwood uses conceptual role semantics to explain moral terms in a way that isn't supposed to be vulnerable to the kinds of criticisms discussed above. His view is a "hybrid" theory, one that is supposed to be flexible enough to accommodate context sensitivity while also being insensitive enough to allow sentences with moral terms to be truth apt. He says he ". . . shall assume that every moral term has the function of standing for a property or relation. That is, I shall assume that cognitivism is correct, and that the meaning of moral terms is straight-forwardly truth-conditional. . . My aim here is just to show that it is possible to give a plausible truth-conditional semantics for moral terms."[296] It might be surprising to see that giving a plausible truth-conditional semantics for moral terms is important enough to constitute the entire focus of Wedgewood's work. He cites an article by Ziff that explains his motivation, an article that gives credence to the claim that moral language is "enormously context-sensitive."[297] Given this entrenched view, Wedgwood needs to do much work to show that moral terms are truth-apt. Wedgwood is explicit in stating that this theory is intended to explain the meaning of all moral terms. He says, "In this discussion, I will use

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[295] Greenberg and Harman (2006), p. 295.
[296] Wedgwood (2001), p. 6.
[297] Wedgwood (2001), p. 6. See Ziff (1960).

the word 'moral' in its broadest sense, so that 'moral terms' include all normative or

evaluative terms whose primary function is the evaluation of courses of action."[298] There

are, of course, different ways of conceiving conceptual role semantics and different ways of

applying it to moral language. Wedgwood's view is arguably the most influential

contemporary metaethical view. According to his account, terms mean what they do in

virtue of "basic rules of rationality" that govern usage.[299] The proper use of a term is one

that is related in the right kind of way with a "thinkers" other mental states. Based on this

idea, Wedgwood argues that "moral terms get their meaning from their role, not in deductive

inference, but in *practical reasoning*."[300] Wedgwood notes that this sort of idea has been

suggested before. He cites this passage of Harman's: "what makes something the concept of

danger is in part the way in which the concept is involved in thought that affect action in

certain ways."[301] Wedgwood's picture of what it means for something to play a role in

practical reasoning is more complicated than is necessary for me to describe here. Suffice it

to say that for Wedgwood, practical reason ties together thought, action and, importantly,

motivation in a way that stakes a claim in another metaethical debate, i.e., between

internalists and externalists. In what follows, this linkage is clear. For the sake of argument,

I do not question this conception of practical reasoning.

According to Wedgwood, a theory that explains the meaning of moral terms must

"contain an account of what it is for someone to understand the term" and "explain whether

the term's meaning is truth-conditional."[302] His view attempts to do both. To show how his

version of conceptual role semantics works for moral terms, Wedgwood borrows an

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[298] Wegwood (2001), p. 4.
[299] Wedgwood (2001), p. 6.
[300] Wedgwood (2001), p. 12.
[301] Harman (1987).
[302] Wedgwood (2001), p. 5.

"unconditional, all-out evaluative judgment" offered by Davidson, i.e., "*x* is (all things considered) a better thing for *z* to do at *t* than *y*."[303] A claim like this takes into account relevant alternatives of action at determinate points in time, with the agent's goals in mind. Such a judgment, Wedgwood claims, is just what one means in saying that one is acting rationally. He says, "If there is something that is definitely the best thing to do, all things considered, at a given time, then that thing is what you *ought*, all things considered, to do at that time. . . Many philosophers express this concept by using the term 'rational'. . ."[304] Wedgwood formalizes this conception, which is unimportant for my purposes. What is important is that understanding what it means for some course of action to be better for someone at a certain time is just what 'better than' means. Based on the meaning of the term 'better than', which is defined by its role in one's conceptual landscape, one acts irrationally when one fails to act on the preference which ought to be formed in understanding what the term means. As Wedgwood claims, "The meaning of the term B ['better than'] is given by the term's role in practical reasoning; and the goal of practical reasoning requires that one align one's preferences with this relation. . . . According to this account, the meaning of the term 'better than' is entirely determined by the rule that defines the *rational practical consequences* of accepting sentences involving this term."[305] If one has a belief that x is better than y and that x really is better than y, then it is irrational not to prefer x over y.

This last citation deserves more attention. Wedgwood's emphasis is on "rational practical consequences." "Entirely determined" could use emphasis too. The rule entirely determines the meaning of the term 'better than' and his theory is supposed to give an

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[303] Wedgwood (2001), p. 13.
[304] Wedgwood (2001), p. 14.
[305] Wedgwood (2001), p. 20.

explanation of how speakers understand moral terms and how such terms are truth-conditional. That means that this rule is supposed to give insight into both of the requirements for an adequate semantic theory of moral terms. Even in simple cases, his theory is complex. He claims this derives from the complex nature of moral thought and the role moral concepts have in our lives.[306] The key to his theory is this: the "essential conceptual role" of a moral concept "consists in the way in which certain beliefs involving this concept commit one to incorporating a certain proposition into one's plans."[307] In his theory, propositions are truth bearers, tying concepts to the actual world. Propositions are truth-conditional, and understanding a moral concept amounts to forming an intention to act in a certain way, based on incorporating a proposition into one's belief system.

What are the rules, then, for 'better than'? Here is the rule, in his terminology:

Acceptance of '$B(x, y$, me, $t)$' commits one to having a preference for doing x over doing y at time t.[308]

He explains the rule in this way: "To follow this rule, it must be the case that, whenever one rationally accepts '$B(x, y$, me, $t)$', one also forms a preference for doing x over y at t, at least if the question of whether to do x or y at t arises; and at all events, one must never *violate* this rule—that is, one must never simultaneously accept '$B(x, y$, me, $t)$' and form the *opposite* preference, for doing y over x at t." For Wedgwood, having a preference is not the same thing as having a desire. Rather, a preference, on his view, is a "conditional intention." If it is better to perform x over y at t, then if one is going to act, one ought to perform x over y at t, on pain of acting irrationally. Understanding the term 'better than' amounts to forming a certain preference to act in a certain way at a certain time. As Wedgwood says, "the truth"

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[306] Wedgwood (2001), p. 13.
[307] Wedgwood (2006), p. 25.
[308] Wedgwood (2001), p. 15.

of the term 'better than' "must guarantee that it is correct to prefer x over y and a mistake to prefer y over x."[309]

As noted above, Wedgwood wants his theory to apply to all moral terms, both thick ones and thin ones. Thin moral terms are more general than thick ones. The term 'better than' counts as a thin moral term. His theory is supposed to be a theory for all moral terms. What about the thick ones? How are such rules formulated? Wedgwood claims that there are "two main options." He says, "First, the meaning of other moral terms may be explicable in terms of rules of inference that link such terms with the 'thin' moral terms, such as those whose meaning we have already discussed. Second, it may be the meaning of these other 'thicker' moral terms is to be explained" analogously to how "thin" moral terms are explained.[310] He gives the example of 'morally required' and claims that "acceptance of 'z is morally required to do x at t' commits one to acceptance of 'x is (all things considered) a better thing for z to do at t than not doing x'."[311] Wedgwood gives two examples of forming the rule for "thicker" moral terms. Here is the first example: "Acceptance of 'x is better than y for purpose P commits one to having a preference-with-respect-to-P for x over y."[312] Here is the second: "Acceptance of 'x is contemptible' commits one to endorsing an attitude of contempt towards x" In the first example, Wedgwood explains the meaning of 'morally required' in terms of preferences. In the second, he does so analogously to how he explains 'better than'. Wedgwood sums up the two part requirement of his semantic theory in this way: "The meaning of the term B ['better than'] is given by the term's role in practical

[309] Wedgwood (2001), p. 18.
[310] Wedgwood (2001), p. 24.
[311] Wedgwood (2001), p. 24.
[312] Wedgwood (2001), p. 25.

reasoning; and the goal of practical reasoning requires that one align one's preferences with this relation [of being (all things considered) a better thing to do]."[313]

I assume, for the time, that his view adequately explains how agents understand moral terms and how such terms are truth-apt. What interests me is determining how his view works for terms like 'truth' and 'true'. His view is supposed to be able to handle all moral terms. At first glance, it might seem as if 'truth' and 'true' aren't moral terms, considering that I make the distinction between normative terms and moral ones. This distinction, though, maps easily onto the distinction Wedgwood uses between thick and thin moral terms. Remember, he says, "In this discussion, I will use the word 'moral' in its broadest sense, so that 'moral terms' include all normative or evaluative terms whose primary function is the evaluation of courses of action." 'Truth' and its cognates are normative terms. If, on the assumption that his view is correct, it turns out that the costs of accounting for terms like 'truth' outweigh the benefits of endorsing his view, then either (1) there is good reason to think that the primary use of 'truth' and 'true' is not a normative one or (2) there is good reason to dispense with Wedgwood's view. If his view can handle terms like 'true', then one must question the assumption that his view is correct before concluding that his view ought to be endorsed.

To see how his view handles 'truth' and 'true', reconsider this claim: "According to this account, the meaning of the term 'better than' is entirely determined by the rule that defines the *rational practical consequences* of accepting sentences involving this term." Replace 'better than' with 'truth' and the result is

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[313] Wedgwood (2001), p. 20.

(CRST)   The meaning of the term 'truth' is entirely determined by the rule that defines the rational practical consequences of accepting sentences involving 'truth'.

(CRST) isn't the rule. Nevertheless, it still gives one an idea about how Wedgwood's theory applies to 'truth'. Analogous to his example, to say that the meaning of 'truth' is entirely determined by some rule is to say that the rule explains both how agents understand the term and how sentences containing the term are truth-apt. Understanding the term amounts to its playing a certain role in one's practical deliberation, i.e., that when one understands the 'truth' one forms a certain intention to act in a certain way, and that it's irrational not to act in this way. It also means that understanding sentences that contain 'truth' places one in a relation with the world, because truth is a property of propositions.

What, then, are the rules for 'truth' or 'true'? Here are three examples:

(CRST1)   Acceptance of 'x is true' by z at t commits z to having a preference-with-respect-to-x by z at t.

(CRST2)   Acceptance of 'x is true' by z at t is (all things considered) a better thing for z to accept at t than not accepting 'x is true'.

(CRST3)   Acceptance of 'x is true' by z at t commits z to endorsing an attitude of believing truly toward x.

First, consider (CRST2). The issue here is whether CRST2 explains how speakers understand 'truth' and whether 'truth' is truth-apt. The meaning of 'truth' on this view is determined by its role in practical reasoning. What roles does 'truth' play in practical reasoning? Accepting the sentence that contains 'true' is, all things considered, better than not accepting it. It is reasonable to assume that accepting a sentence amounts to believing it. As it is, then, this rule differs little from any of the truth norms already discussed. This

should not be surprising. After all, truth theorists of all stripes formulate essentially the same sort of truth norm. Does CRST2 explain whether sentences containing 'truth' are truth-apt? On this view, to say something is truth-apt is to say that it is irrational not to incorporate certain propositions into one's plans, namely, the proposition that is true, and form preferences accordingly.

There are some obvious problems here. First, the truth norms by themselves don't resolve any of the disputes among truth theorists. As noted earlier, both inflationists and deflationists formulate truth norms. Their norms, however superficially similar, are explicated very differently. Horwich, for example, claims that the norms are not built into the concept of truth. Lynch disagrees. Both philosophers think truth is noninstrumentally valuable. Even if Wedgwood is right, his theory doesn't do much to resolve any of the disputes between truth theorists. Either the major players in the debate don't really understand the terms of conversation or the truth norms aren't sufficient to adjudicate the disputes. It is more plausible to claim the latter than the former.

Consider (CRST1). The formulation of this rule ought to remind one of a discussion in the chapter about theories of truth. T-sentences have the following form:

'p' is true if and only if p.

The rule adds something to this formulation. It states that acceptance of 'x is true' is preference forming, at least, as Wedgwood says, in a conditional way. Even assuming that this rule explains how agents understand 'truth' and how 'truth' relates to the actual world, it doesn't say anything about what kind of preference to which one ought to be committed. In order to understand what kind of preference one ought to form when one believes 'x is true' one needs to know more about truth itself. One could cite the standard line that "truth is the aim of belief" or the "goal of inquiry," but such slogans presuppose that one already has

an understanding of 'truth'. Again, one could easily rely on the truth norms, understanding CRST1 as a way of saying 'if x is true, then one ought to believe it' and, Wedgwood might say, adjust one's actions accordingly. Then CRST1 has the same difficulty as CRST2.

CRST3 doesn't fare much better than CRST2 in terms of explaining what 'x is true' means or how it is truth-apt. What does it mean to say that one endorses "an attitude of believing truly" toward x? Here is something Wedgwood might say:

Endorsing an attitude of believing truly toward x by z at t commits z at t to having a preference-with-respect-to-endorsing-an-attitude-of-believing-truly-toward-x.

This sort of response is consistent with what Wedgwood says about 'better than'. Moral terms ought to be explained in terms of preferences, linked to such thin moral terms, or in an analogous way to such terms. Doing so only pushes the problem back. Not only does it do that, but it seems obviously circular to explain 'x is true' by using 'believing truly'.

Wedgwood recognizes this circularity and dispels some of the worries mentioned above. His theory spells out what it means to understand moral terms and for those terms to be truth-apt. Understanding the terms requires appeal to their conceptual roles and their truth-aptness requires appeal to some property or relation. Wedgwood doesn't take a stand on what these properties or relations are, nor does he think he needs too. On the contrary, that his view doesn't take such a stand is, as he sees it, a virtue of his theory. As such, his theory is compatible with whatever the best theory is for explaining morality and practical reasoning. Moreover, because he invokes a distinction between object-language and meta-language, he claims that his theory is not circular in a way that is problematic.[314] With regard to truth, that means that the best metaphysical theory of truth is consistent with a truth norm. This isn't a virtue, though. The circularity is more problematic than Wedgwood

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[314] Wedgwood (2001), p. 20.

admits and the debate about truth helps show this. A moral semantics for 'truth' ought to do more than explain that understanding 'truth' amounts to an understanding a truth norm and the practical consequences of implementing it in one's life. A moral semantics ought to address the source of a term's normativity, i.e., whether the normativity is a semantic or pragmatic feature of the concept. On that score, application of Wedgwood's theory to 'truth' fails. The result is this: either the primary role of 'truth' isn't normative or Wedgwood's theory is fundamentally flawed. If his theory is fundamentally flawed, then its application to 'truth' is a nonstarter. I assume his theory is adequate. If the primary role of 'truth', then, isn't normative, what is it?

What is the primary role of 'truth'? Wedgwood claims that the primary role of normative terms is to evaluate and guide action. Truth is a concept that has multiple roles. One of those roles is normative. However, that is not its primary role. If it were, then Wedgwood's theory would better apply to 'truth' than it does. The other role of 'truth' is typically associated with assertion. Greimann and Siegwart point out the historical precedent of thinking about the concept of truth in this way. They say,

> Thus, in Kant's theory, truth is considered to be a "modality" whose application is an essential constituent of "assertoric judgment." . . . Anachronistically speaking, Kant's point is that the function of the concepts of possibility, truth and necessity is not to make a contribution to the propositional content of a judgment, but to fix its mode, that is, their function is to determine whether the propositional content is judged as possible or as true or as necessary.[315]

Greimann and Siegwart claim that much of the current debate about truth is too "restrictive," focusing mainly on propositional content. This restricted view leads to thinking, they claim, that truth is redundant. Taking into account the illocutionary uses of 'true', truth cannot be redundant. The concept of truth has an explanatory role and a

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[315] See their (2007), pp. 1-2.

normative role. Here is what they say: "With regard to the level of illocutionary force, the concept of truth seems to play also an important explanatory role. In order to explain the notion of assertion, for instance, it seems to be necessary that we make use of the concept of truth. . ."[316]

The two most important illocutionary roles for 'truth' are explanatory and normative. Which of these is the primary role? Given the complications with the application of Wedgwood's theory to 'truth', one can conclude that the primary role of the concept of truth is explanatory. Why? Wedgwood's theory, on the assumption that it is correct, applies to all terms which have primary roles as normative. His theory fails to adequately explain 'truth.' So, the primary role of 'truth' is explanatory.

What does the primary role of 'truth' have to do with the semantic/pragmatic distinction? From what has been discussed so far, the following two claims are reasonable. If the primary role of a term is normative, the normativity of the term is a semantic feature of the concept which the term expresses. If the primary role of a term is not normative, any normativity associated with the concept the term expresses is a pragmatic feature of the concept. Consequently, the normativity of the concept of truth is a pragmatic feature of the concept.

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[316] Greimann and Siegwart (2007), p. 3.

Chapter Six: Concluding Remarks

What are the implications of the claim that the normativity of truth is a pragmatic feature of the concept of truth? It should be obvious that the assumptions with which one begins one's theorizing about truth has ramifications in the later stages of inquiries. It should also be obvious that how one interprets an assumption can lead to very different views about the matter at hand. Take the requirement that an adequate theory of truth ought to explain the T-biconditional. Searle notes this one insight has engendered by a deflationary view of truth and a correspondence view. He says, "Disquotation is the inspiration behind various minimalist or deflationary or even redundancy thoeires of truth that say in general that there is no such thing as a separate property of truth. . . The matching condition inspires other theories of truth; the most famous of these is the correspondence theory. . ."[317]

Historically, the debates about truth have been about the ontological status of the property of truth. While some progress has been made in the debate about truth, one often gets the feeling that truth theorists are mostly spinning their wheels. One reason for this, I suggest, is that the debate has been off to a wrong start. Starting with an investigation of the normative aspects of truth is a more promising strategy than beginning with an inquiry into the ontological nature of truth. There is at least one obvious reason why this is the case. There is some access to the data which is necessary to yield some results, however tentative. If truth be told, no one has any epistemological access into the metaphysical status of properties like truth, if truth really is a property. However, there is plenty of opportunity to study how people use words and employ concepts. The investigation is never easy, as the

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[317] Searle (2007), pp. 32-33.

history of metaethics shows, but at least there is something that is somewhat tangible with which to begin.

What, then, are the implications for theories of truth? One implication is that one should approach with caution any theory that claims that the normativity of truth is constitutive of the concept or property of truth. Some inflationary positions come immediately to mind. Traditional monist theories, both realist and antirealist ones, fare well on this point, if their other shortcomings aren't already too damning. Contemporary pluralist theories, though, might be problematic on this score. Functional pluralism and superassertibility theories are two examples. It may not be the case that each of these theories must be eschewed altogether. Perhaps, the theories can be substantially modified enough to include the insights of the previous sections of this dissertation. Without such modification, though, neither theory looks promising. Whether the general theories of functionalism and superassertibility/minimalism can be modified is one thing; whether particular brands can be modified is another. For example, taking truth to be constitutively normative is a defining characteristic of Lynch's brand of functional pluralism, as it is with Wright's minimalism. Without thinking of truth in this way, it's difficult to see how either particular theory could get up and running.

Warnings exist for deflationary views, as well. Any view that claims that truth isn't fundamentally explanatory is a view that one would do well to dismiss altogether. This might very well spell trouble for deflationary views. Recall that deflationary views are united in taking the equivalence schema to be both conceptually and explanatorily fundamental. Here's what I say in the chapter on truth theories:

What does it mean to take the equivalence schema as fundamental, both conceptually and explanatorily? According to Armour-Garb and Beall, to take the equivalence schema as conceptually fundamental is to take its instances as necessary, a priori, and analytic: "To say that the instances are conceptually fundamental is to say that they do not follow from definitional relations holding among the concept of truth and more 'basic' concepts in terms of which 'true' can be defined."[318] To take the equivalence schema as explanatorily fundamental is to (1) take the instances of the equivalence schema as "fundamental explainers of truth-talk" and (2) to consider a "definitional analysis of truth" to be the only way to analyze the concept, i.e., there is no way to explain the instances of the equivalence schema through some "unifying" account of them.

Whether the insights of the previous sections spell trouble for deflationary views depends on how one interprets the conditions mentioned in this passage. Redundancy theories and disquotational theories are obviously problematic, as they are consistent with the claim that truth is not fundamentally explanatory. Horwich's minimalism, prosententialism, and the performative theory of truth might be consistent with the claim that truth is fundamentally explanatory. Consistency here, though, likely means significant overhaul of the theories; at the very least, it means formulating an account of the normativity of truth that is much more sophisticated than Horwich's account. Whether the cost-benefit analysis of such an overhaul will come out in favor of deflationary views seems unlikely, at least on the face of it. Accounting for the explanatory power of truth without appealing to other concepts that might be more basic, concepts like satisfaction, is a task that has proven to be very difficult indeed.

Whatever theory of truth one ultimately adopts, there are at least two new adequacy conditions that the theory must meet, if one's starting point is the noninstrumental value of the property of truth and the (extrinsic) normativity of the concept of truth. The theory must be able to account for the explanatory role of 'truth' as the primary role of the concept of truth. The theory must also be able to explain how the normativity associated with the

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[318] Armour-Garb and Beall (2005), p. 3.

concept of truth is a pragmatic feature of the concept and one that is ubiquitous enough for truth theorists to think mistakenly that the normativity is "built" into the concept itself. Relatedly, the choice of truth-bearer for theories of truth must also be one that is consistent with these adequacy conditions. If the primary role of 'truth' is explanatory, then the choice of truth-bearer ought to be one that maximizes the theory's explanatory power. Of the truth-bearers examined in the second chapter, statements and propositions most obviously fit the bill. These new adequacy conditions are a direct result of the insights of this dissertation. However small the contribution of these insights is to the current debates, adhering to them, I think, would advance the conversation in a productive direction.

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Master's Paper: "A Meaningful Self-Concept: Ideas on a Kantian Theme"

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Employment

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Executive Assistant: Partnership for a Healthy Mississippi, Jackson, MS (1998-1999)

Publications

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Awards

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First Prize, Graduate Student Essay Contest
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