Chapter 1 : Project MUSE - What Is Meaning?

It is argued that propositional attitude ascriptions of the form a believes / asserts that S semantically express propositions that report that an agent bears the relevant attitude - belief or assertion - to the proposition semantically expressed by S in the context in which the report is made.

This is merely a suggested name for convenience, because they are verbs which have the form of relating an object to a proposition. As I have been explaining, that is not what they really do, but it is convenient to call them propositional verbs. There is never any reason to suppose that sort of thing. What a proposition is, is one thing. How we feel about it, or how we regard it, is another. We can accept it, assert it, believe it, command it, contest it, declare it, deny it, doubt it, enjoin it, exclaim it, expect it. Different attitudes toward propositions are called propositional attitudes, and they are also discussed under the headings of intentionality and linguistic modality. Many problematic situations in real life arise from the circumstance that many different propositions in many different modalities are in the air at once. In order to compare propositions of different colours and flavours, as it were, we have no basis for comparison but to examine the underlying propositions themselves. Thus we are brought back to matters of language and logic. Despite the name, propositional attitudes are not regarded as psychological attitudes proper, since the formal disciplines of linguistics and logic are concerned with nothing more concrete than what can be said in general about their formal properties and their patterns of interaction. One topic of central concern is the relation between the modalities of assertion and belief, perhaps with intention thrown in for good measure. Discrepancies here can occur for many reasons, but when the departure of assertion from belief is intentional, we usually call that a lie. Other comparisons of multiple modalities that frequently arise are the relationships between belief and knowledge and the discrepancies that occur among observations, expectations, and intentions. Deviations of observations from expectations are commonly perceived as surprises , phenomena that call for explanations to reduce the shock of amazement. A number of software systems are now available to simulate propositional attitudes for industrial purposes, for customer relation management systems, decision support and content generation Galitsky Issues[edit] In logic, the formal properties of verbs like assert, believe, command, consider, deny, doubt, imagine, judge, know, want, wish, and a host of others that involve attitudes or intentions toward propositions are notorious for their recalcitrance to analysis. It provides that, given a true statement of identity, one of its two terms may be substituted for the other in any true statement and the result will be true. It is easy to find cases contrary to this principle. For example, the statements: Barbarelli was so-called because of his size. See also Useâ€"mention distinction.

Chapter 2 : Propositional attitudes - Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy

6 The Problem Posed by Prepositional Attitude Ascriptions Propositional Attitude Ascriptions In chapter 3 I argued that the semantic contents of most linguistically.

Frege presents his puzzle as one about the relationship between the cognitive value of expressions and their ordinary reference, arguing that the two must be distinct. Similar puzzles arise with other propositional attitude verbs. See the supplementary document: So, we would ordinarily accept the following sentences as true. Without propositional attitude attributions, one might hope for a simpler semantics, in which only the referent of a name is relevant to the evaluation of sentences that contain it. For consider the following pair of sentences. Indeed, it is plausible to insist further that the two sentences have the same modal profile. Even if Lois and others do not realize it, these sentences, given their meanings, must have the same truth-value. So their objective semantics can be the same: However, if we expect semantics to account for the difference in cognitive value of 5 and 6 Lois accepts 5 but not 6 , we must recognize a semantic difference in the contribution of the two names. We can get to the same conclusion by a different route. The trip, although somewhat lengthy, is worth taking. Lois is disposed to sincerely, reflectively, and competently accept 5 while denying 6. Lois is, presumably, also disposed to accept the following sentence. The Disquotation principle, so-called by Saul Kripke in his , does just that. If an agent A sincerely, reflectively, and competently accepts a sentence s under circumstances properly related to a context c , then A believes, at the time of c, what s expresses in c. Why relativize to context and time? But if both 2 and 4 are true, then, it would appear, Lois believes a proposition and its negation and would thus be guilty of irrationality. Intuitively, however, she is not irrational. If an agent A sincerely, reflectively, and competently denies or withholds acceptance from a sentence s in a context c , then A does not believe, at the time of c, what s expresses in c. Converse Disquotation and the fact that Lois denies 6 entail that 3 is true. But if both 1 and 3 are true, then, it would seem, we should not allow substitution of co-designating singular terms within the scope of propositional attitude verb, or the threat of contradiction we saw above will be brought home to us, the ascriber. If both 1 and 3 are true, then, one would think, 1 and 4 must say different things. In distinguishing these two arguments we follow Kripke In summary, Frege calls our attention to two problems, i the problem of the apparent difference in truth-value of corresponding belief attributions such as 1 and 4 , and ii the problem of the difference in the cognitive significance of sentences composed in the same way of elements with the same reference such as 5 and 6. If distinct belief attributions indicate differences in cognitive value of the sentences in their that -clauses, then these two problems are really a single problem, presumably with a single solution. Those same expressions as they occur in 1 and 4 , however, refer to different ways that Lois has of representing the man Superman. According to Frege, this difference in reference explains the difference in truth-value of 1 and 4. The ordinary sense of an expression â€" the way that the expression indicates its referent â€" becomes a part of the truth-conditions for a sentence in which the expression occurs, if that expression is used within a belief context. Frege unifies these theses by maintaining that the ordinary sense is a way of representing an object. Thus he can explain the difference in truth-value between 1 and 4. Propositional attitude verbs induce a shift in reference; occurrences of expressions within their scope refer to what Frege called their customary sense. Within the scope of an attitude verb expressions refer to what they express when outside the scope of an attitude verb. Although the truth-value of a sentence depends on the referents of terms, the cognitive value depends on the senses attached to the terms. The view is attractive â€" some would say wonderful. If only it were true. Some accuse it for violating semantic innocence. Davidson is the locus classicus of this complaint; Barwise and Perry develop the charge. Proponents of semantic innocence see an expression as having the same reference in a wide body of linguistic environments. Sometimes semantic innocence is just taken as a raw datum, directly intuited perhaps. But one might also substantiate the claim by considering anaphora across attitude verbs. For more, see the entry on anaphora. Sentence 8 tells us

nothing about how Jack represents Jill. Soames presents a similar argument against the Fregean solution, although he does not use it to argue for semantic innocence directly. The point is related to the more general worry whether or not Fregean accounts can make sense of de re belief. The Fregean should not be terribly perturbed by these considerations. Frege pulled off the last insight by claiming that propositional attitude verbs induce a reference-shift. But there are other ways to get the same result. The example is from Quine So, substitution fails but not because the substitution affects the reference of the terms. Similarly, a neo-Fregean might claim that expressions have their customary references and senses whether inside or outside the scope of a propositional attitude verb, thus ensuring semantic innocence, but insist that the propositional attitude verbs themselves are in some way sensitive to the senses of the expressions within their scope and not merely their references. Then substitution of co-referring singular terms within the scope of an attitude verb is blocked, as such substitution affects the semantic value of the attitude verb itself, but innocence is preserved. See Forbes , , for development of a similar idea. Furthermore, it is far from clear that semantic innocence must be accepted. We cannot directly intuit that an occurrence of a proper name in the scope of an attitude verb has the same reference as an occurrence of that name outside the scope of that attitude verb. That is too theoretical to simply intuit. If it is to be accepted, it must be supported by argument. We can ask whether the problem of cross-attitudinal anaphora supports semantic innocence. There is reason to think that it does not. In his Kaplan taught us how we can be Fregeans and allow quantifying into attitude verbs. A sentence like 8 would then be read as something like: But its mere presence shows two things. First, one needs an argument for the claim that a proper treatment of cross-attitudinal anaphoric relations is possible only if semantic innocence is accepted. And that argument will have to show what is wrong with a view like the one suggested by Kaplan, as that view promises to show how a reference-shifting view can accommodate the phenomena. Second, and relatedly, one cannot refute the Fregean claim that proper names have both a sense and a reference and that propositional attitude ascriptions are sensitive to sense and not just reference simply by producing sentences like 8. The simple Fregean solution, however, faces other, more serious, problems. The account seems to fail when we try to extend it to other types of propositional clauses that can occur in belief contexts. It is difficult to accommodate the use of such terms with a Fregean theory that requires that the mode of presentation is the semantic value of a singular term in a propositional attitude clause. See Perry , and Kaplan , pp. For more recent attempts, see Heck These two claims seem to get the wrong results for propositional attitude reporting sentences with indexicals in their complement clauses. Consider, for example, the following sentence. Suppose that McKay utters If there is such a first-person mode of presentation, then this is what it is for Alice to believe that she herself will solve an important problem in physics, which is not what McKay was saying in uttering Only the referent, not its mode of presentation, seems relevant with ordinary uses of indexical expressions. The problem is that the perspective connected to a use of an indexical in an attitude report is not typically intended to match the perspective of the target of the report. A related problem involves attributions of a common belief to many people. Like the problem of indexicals, this problem highlights the problematic nature of the Fregean claim that a belief attribution indicates the way in which the believer represents an individual in belief. It seems plausible that different people associate different modes of presentation with the same name. If so, the following sort of sentence seems to prove difficult for the Fregean. See Richard for a development of the variability problem. See Forbes , for an attempt to solve it. Let us pause to briefly and inadequately present a line of response to the problems of indexicals and of variability. But, as Fregeans, we want these reports to require more than merely having beliefs with the relevant referential content. To pull this off we might attempt to construct a similarity class of senses. Presumably a Fregean would want the similarity class to be defined more narrowly than just in terms of co-reference. Finding such a middle ground between identity of sense and mere co-reference may well prove to be difficult indeed. However, much of what Mark Richard says in his discussed below in Contextualist theories about restrictions on correlation functions can be employed by the Fregean to try to find this middle ground. Related to the above problems facing a Fregean view is the problem of intuitive entailment-successes. Then, intuitively, there is something such that Bill said

it and Lois believes it. But it is hard to see how the Fregean can account for such apparent entailment-successes, precisely because of the way in which the account explains intuitive entailment-failures like 1 and 4. While the case is not incontrovertible, many have taken the problems presented above to show that the only semantically relevant value of a singular term in the scope of a propositional attitude verb is its reference. So, if we suppose that the sole semantically relevant value of a singular term is always its reference, what is there to say about the intuitive difference between 1 and 4 and the arguments that they differ in truth-value? Russell proposed what we might call an acquaintance-based theory of thought, according to which some of our thoughts are directly about the individuals they concern. We shall follow Kaplan in calling such propositions singular propositions. A proposition is singular with respect to an object o just in case it is about o in virtue of having o as a direct constituent. It is general with respect to o, on the other hand, just in case it concerns o but only in virtue of having a proxy of o that determines, either by satisfaction conditions or otherwise, o. Russell maintained that there are logically proper names, which contribute only their referents to the propositions expressed by sentences that contain them in subject position. He thus maintained that sentences containing logically proper names express singular propositions.

The problems posed by attitude ascriptions for possible worlds semantics have led many theorists to characterize the semantic content of a sentence S as a structured complex the constituents of which are the semantic contents of the semantically significant constituents of S.

Meanings are plausibly regarded as functions from such contexts to semantic contents, which in turn are closely related to the assertions made, and the beliefs expressed, by utterances. For example, the semantic content of I live in New Jersey in a context C with x as agent and t as time is standardly taken to be the proposition that x lives in New Jersey at t. To understand the meaning of this sentence is, to a first approximation, to know that a competent speaker x who sincerely and assertively utters it in C asserts, and expresses a belief in, this proposition. Whether the semantic content of a sentence is always among the propositions asserted by an utterance of the sentence, and whether, in those cases in which it is, the assertion of any other proposition by the utterance is always parasitic on the assertion of the semantic content, are matters of detail. Though important, they do not affect the foundational point. A semantic theory for a language is part of a larger theory that interprets the assertions and beliefs of its speakers. This, more than any other fact, allows one to subject semantic theories to empirical test. Competent speakers of a language are relatively good at identifying the propositions asserted and beliefs expressed by utterances. Attitude Ascriptions This point is closely related to the use of attitude ascriptions 1a N asserted that S 1b N believed that S to test different semantic analyses of S. It is convenient to express this in terms of the relational nature of the attitudes. In each case of assertion there is someone, the agent, who does the asserting, and something, the object of assertion, that is asserted. The term proposition is used to designate things that are objects of assertion and other propositional attitudes and bearers of truth value. Assertion is a mediated relation holding between agents and propositions. An agent asserts a proposition p by doing something or employing some content-bearing representation associated with p. The most familiar cases are those in which the agent asserts a proposition by assertively uttering a sentence. Ascriptions like those in 2 report the assertions of agents: This analysis also applies to 2b , which is true if and only if Edward asserted the proposition designated by the proposition that the Earth is round. On the assumption that this proposition is also designated by that the Earth is round, this analysis can be extended to 2c , which is equivalent to 2b. Similar remarks hold for other propositional attitude verbs, including believe, deny, refute, and prove. With this in mind, one can return to the ascriptions in 1. On these assumptions substitution in such ascriptions can be used to discriminate different but intensionally equivalent semantic analyses of S. In this framework a semantic theory is a formal specification of truth with respect to a possible context of utterance and circumstance of evaluation. Circumstances of evaluation are traditionally identified with possible world-statesâ€"thought of as maximally complete properties that the world genuinely could have had. As a result, the semantic contents of all necessarily equivalent sentences are taken to be identical. This, plus the standard treatment of attitude ascriptions as reporting relations between agents and the semantic contents of their complement clauses, leads to the counterintuitive prediction that substitution of necessarily equivalent sentences in such ascriptions never changes truth value. In Jon Barwise and John Perry attempted to evade these results by constructing a semantic theory in which metaphysically possible world-states were replaced by abstract situationsâ€"thought of as properties that need be neither maximally complete, nor genuinely capable of being instantiated by any parts of the world. This strategy was shown to be unsuccessful by Scott Soames , where it was demonstrated that variants of the problems posed by attitude ascriptions for standard possible worlds semantics can be re-created for any choice of truth-supporting circumstances used in formal characterizations of truth with respect to a context and a circumstance. Stalnaker explored a different approach in After providing a naturalistic argument that semantic contents must be sets of metaphysically possible world-states, he suggested that counterexamples could be avoided by i allowing for exceptional cases in which attitude

ascriptions report relations to propositions other than those expressed by their complement clauses, and ii resisting the claim that the agent believes the conjunction of p and q in many cases in which the agent believes both conjuncts. These suggestions are rebutted in later work by Mark Richard and Jeffrey Speaks forthcoming. Structured Propositions, Millianism, and Descriptivism The problems posed by attitude ascriptions for possible worlds semantics have led many theorists to characterize the semantic content of a sentence S as a structured complex the constituents of which are the semantic contents of the semantically significant constituents of S. A variant of this position, growing out of the possible worlds framework, was championed by Rudolf Carnap For Carnap, two formulas are intensionally isomorphic if and only if they are constructed in syntactically the same way from constituents with the same intensions functions from world-states to extensions. In effect, semantic contents of syntactically simple expressions are identified with intensions, while semantic contents of syntactically complex expressions are structured complexes the constituents of which are the semantic contents of their grammatically significant parts. This view was criticized by Alonzo Church , who argued that semantically complex, but syntactically simple, expressions require a stronger notion of synonymy than sameness of intension. In the late s the assignment of structured semantic contents to sentences was given a neo-Russellian twist by David Kaplan , , Nathan Salmon , and Soames On the Russellian picture structured propositions are recursively assigned to formulas, relative to contexts and assignments of values to variables. The semantic content of a variable v relative to an assignment f is just f v , and the semantic content of a closed directly referential term relative to a context C is its referent relative to C. Semantic contents of n-place predicates are n-place properties and relations. In this framework the attitude ascriptions 1a and 1b express structured semantic contents in which the relation of asserting or believing is predicated of a pair consisting of an agent and the structured proposition semantically expressed by S. The semantic theory is completed by specifying the intensions determined by structured semantic contents, including the truth conditions of structured propositions in all possible world-states. The signature commitment of this approach is to the possibility of asserting and believing singular propositionsâ€"which include as constituents the very objects they are about. On this approach to believe de re of an object that it is F is to believe the singular proposition about that object, which says that it is F. Sentences like 4 , involving quantifying-in, are quintessential examples of de re belief ascriptions. Salmon and Soames take this a step further, arguing for the Millian view that the semantic content of an ordinary proper name is simply its referent. One potentially problematic consequence of this view is that since Ruth Barcan and Ruth Marcus are coreferential, 5a is characterized as semantically expressing the same proposition as 5b and hence as having the same semantically determined truth value, even though it seems evident to many that it is possible to believe that Ruth Barcan was a modal logician without believing the Ruth Marcus was: Different Millians respond to this problem in different ways. Salmon and David Braun argue that the intuitions that 5a and 5b can differ in truth value are mistaken because speakers tend to confuse the identical beliefs ascribed to John by these ascriptions with the different manners of holding these beliefs associated with their different sentential complements. Soames , a argues that even though the semantic contents of these sentences are the same, assertive utterances of them may indeed result in assertions of propositions with different truth values. While neither advocating nor denying the Millian view, he argues that substitutivity problems of the sort illustrated here are independent of Millianism and indicate a breakdown of the basic principles underlying our belief-reporting practices. This argument is not easily avoided by rigidifying candidate descriptions. Since this is obviously incorrect, names can neither be nonrigid descriptions, nor descriptions rigidified using the actuality operator. However, now a different problem arises. The point, after all, is not simply to assign different belief objects in these cases, but to explain the different information one gathers about John from utterances of 5a and 5b. As Soames b argues in Reference and Description: The Case against Two-Dimensionalism , it is hard to see how these egocentric, metalinguistic descriptions could, realistically, contribute to this. This encourages the thought that such ascriptions can always differ in truth value. An early and influential version of this approach was developed by Donald Davidson â€" , who argued that 6a should

be understood on the model of 6b , in which that is treated as a demonstrative, utterances of which refer to utterances of the independent sentence that follows it: These are abstract, syntax-encoding structures that contain both the expressions occurring in sentences and their referential contents. Abstracting, one has here a version of the structured propositions approach in which linguistic expressions are included in the propositions sentences express. Since some such substitution clearly does preserve truth value, the problem is a daunting one. As indicated by Soames , the evaluation of this view crucially depends on identifying similarity standards present in contexts and assessing their impact. Although there are certain evident problems here, opinions of their import vary. Finally, a different sort of context-sensitive view, advocated by Mark Crimmins and John Perry , takes belief ascriptions to report that an agent believes a structured, Russellian proposition by virtue of having ideas of a certain sortâ€"where these are mental particulars in the mind of the agent that are either implicitly demonstrated, or implicitly characterized as being of a certain type, by the one uttering the ascription. This view is usefully criticized by Jennifer Saul Intensional "Transitive" Verbs Example 2a , in which assert occurs as an ordinary transitive verb operating on the extensions of its noun-phrase arguments, shows that not all attitude ascriptions contain sentential clauses. The examples in 7 show that there are also verbs, the grammatical objects of which are not overtly clausal, which are intensional in nature: The relationship between these examples and ordinary propositional attitude ascriptions is a matter of ongoing investigation. How is it that 7a to 7d can be true even though there are apparently no real entities described by their postverbal arguments? Are some or all these sentences covertly clausal? For example, are 7a and 7b to be assimilated to 8a and 8b? These and related questions have been discussed by philosophical logicians and linguistic semanticists including Richard Montague , Graeme Forbes , Richard , and Marcel den Dikken, Larson, and Ludlow Bibliography Barwise, John, and John Perry. University of Chicago Press, Classical and Contemporary Readings. Oxford University Press, Crimmins, Mark, and John Perry. Philosophical Review 57 La Salle , IL: Larson, Richard, and Peter Ludlow. Formal Philosophy, edited by Richmond H. New Haven , CT: Yale University Press, Cambridge University Press, Oxford University Press, a. The Case against Two-Dimensionalism. Princeton University Press, b. Scott Soames Pick a style below, and copy the text for your bibliography.

Chapter 4 : The best of all possible worlds by davide cavagnero on Prezi

2 The problem posed by propositional attitude ascriptions However, propositional attitude ascriptions pose a problem which many see as the funda- mental problem with possible worlds semantics.

Alex Grzankowski Non-Propositional Attitudes Intentionality, the power of minds to be about, to represent, or to stand for things, remains central in the philosophy of mind. In fact, questions about intentionality are perhaps more pressing than ever since many philosophers now hold that phenomenology and intentionality are intimately connected. In one formulation, the problem of intentionality is presented as concerning a particular class of properties, intentional properties. Intentional properties are those properties expressed by predicates formed from verbs of propositional attitudes. Indiana Jones fears snakes; Antony loves Cleopatra; Jane hates the monster 1 The nature of the connection is up for debate. For example, on one hand, there are intentionalists about experience who aim to account for the nature of experiences in terms of intentional facts. See especially Horgan and Tienson and Kriegal Despite being an important part of our mental lives, such states have received relatively little philosophical attention. Without careful examination of such states our philosophical understanding of the mind and of intentionality more generally are at best incomplete. The present paper explores non-propositional attitudes in an introductory but opinionated way that might serve as a helpful point of departure for future research. I first offer some intuitive remarks about the class of states in question and draw a range of distinctions aimed to precisify them further. Next, in section 2, I offer a couple of key reasons why non-propositional attitudes have been neglected by philosophers. In section 3, I briefly consider some of the most promising positive proposals one might offer for non-propositional attitudes. Finally, I close the paper by offering some suggestions for the way ahead. Characterizing Non-propositional Attitudes Indiana Jones fears snakes; Antony loves Cleopatra; Jane hates the monster under her bed; John likes the color red. Such states are intentional; they have aboutness; they are directed at things. In fact, the oft cited passage from Brentano includes cases of the sort under question: Every mental phenomenon includes something as object within itself, although they do not all do so in the same way. In presentation something is presented, in judgement something is affirmed or denied, in love loved, in hate hated, in desire desired and so on On one plausible view, the proposition that the artifact belongs in a museum is itself about the artifact and the museum and by being appropriately related to that proposition, one is in a state about the artifact and the museum. Suppose Jones likes the artifact. As we will see below section 3 , when it comes to giving a more positive account, there are various options open. It is perhaps helpful to continue contrasting non-propositional attitudes with propositional attitudes, since the latter are more familiar. One important point of contrast between them involves predication. Notice that states such as belief and other propositional attitudes are canonically ascribed with complete sentences in the object position of the verb, e. When one, say, loves that grass is green or believes that grass is green, one takes grass to have a certain property, to wit, greenness. In some sense, one predicates greenness of grass. Non-propositional attitudes, on the other hand, seem to make reference to objects, kinds, properties, and so on without predicating anything of them. Perhaps another 3 The view is common, but see Bealer for a helpful defense. I can think of a number, say the number seven, and not think anything more about it; I can simply bring the number to mind. Very often, the various types of evaluability are accounted for, at bottom, in terms of truth. For example, suppose that John loves Bill. When is it true or satisfied? Such questions seem misplaced. One might take concepts or modes to be, for example, mental particulars that one uses. This is distinct from getting an object in ming and predicating a property of it, say, being Superman. This is an important thought since we may want to allow that non-propositional attitudes individuate more finely than reference without collapsing them into attitudes that predicate properties of objects, i. Unless we individuate the mental states finely in at least some cases, it will be difficult to make sense of why for example Lex Luther runs away when he believes Superman is present but not when he believes that Clark Kent is present. A forthcoming answer appeals to the fact that he fears Superman but not

Clark Kent. On the present suggestion, it is the mode or concept of the object and its fine individuation that accounts for the fine grainedness of the non-propositional state â€" no predicate is necessary. The status of non-propositional attitudes with respect to predication and evaluability are likely related in important ways. The details of this connection must be set aside in the present paper. See Davidson for a recent discussion of truth and predication. First, it allows us to make sense of non-propositional attitudes that are about propositions. Let us take these points in turn, for getting clear on them leads to a more precise understanding of what non-propositional attitudes are and are not. Although this may very often be true, we need to be a bit more careful, since it seems possible to have a proposition as the object of a non-propositional attitude. I might love Sally because I believe she is kind and intelligent, but this is distinct from saying that my love itself is evaluable in the relevant sense. Rather, it might simply be that one state say, loving Sally depends in some way on the other say, loving that Sally is so-and-so. Providing a reason might be such a relation, though of course we might sometimes love, like, fear, etc. Propositional attitudes are not normally about propositions. One can of course have propositional attitudes about propositions I believe that the proposition that two is even is true , but my belief that grass is green is about grass and greenness, not a proposition. I like that proposition. If one were a realist about propositions but extremely pathological or very confused about what might cause one harm, it seems possible to fear a proposition. So, one can be in states that certainly seem to be non-propositional but which happen to be about propositions. Even if we suppose propositions are abstract objects we can hold onto this point. It is relatively uncontroversial that we can be in mental states about abstract objects such as numbers. I can believe that two is prime, for example. I can also think of the number two or like the number two. The same goes for a proposition. So some non-propositional attitudes can be directed at propositions. But can we make sense of this? Recall that whereas propositional attitudes have propositional content and are hence evaluable for truth, accuracy, or satisfaction, non-propositional attitudes do not seem to be. If I like the proposition that two is prime, this state is no more evaluable for truth, accuracy, or satisfaction than my state of liking John. But why pay close attention to these odd states? Although non-propositional states about propositions may be rare, non-normal, or whatever, their possibility is illuminating. In light of the possibility, we had better not say that non-propositional attitudes are intentional states that are about non-propositional things. Furthermore, in light of the 10And indeed, we learn a lesson about propositional attitudes here â€" they cannot simply be characterized as relations to propositions. We need to say more about the relation such that a state is a propositional attitude rather than a non-propositional one. If one fears the meeting, what she fears is the meeting. Both propositional and non-propositional attitudes have objects in this sense. Indeed, propositional and non-propositional attitudes can both have a proposition as their object, as we saw. In common cases, the object of a non-propositional attitude is a non-propositional thing such as a concrete object, a kind, or a property, but not always. But only propositional attitudes have content. For instance, when one believes that p, if p were true, things would be as one believes them to be. If one hopes that p, if p were true, things would be as one hopes them to be. Rather, it is a non- propositional attitude with a propositional object. So although non-propositional attitudes with propositional objects are odd cases, reflection upon them yields helpful points of comparison and clarity. Propositional attitudes have truth-evaluable content but non-propositional attitudes do not. The following two examples are not non-propositional attitudes in the sense intended in the present paper. Motivated by de se attitudes, David Lewis has argued that the contents of attitudes such as belief should be understood as properties rather than propositions. If I believe that John is the messy shopper then according to Lewis what I believe is the property of being such that John is the messy shopper. A second example can be found in Tyler Burge He has argued that de re attitudes have open sentences as their contents. But the attitudes, once placed in a context are evaluable for accuracy or satisfaction. For my purposes, this is sufficient to count them as propositional or at least not non-propositional in the sense at issue. Recall, as we are using the term, non-propositional attitudes have objects and aboutness but lack content. In the present section I wish to consider why. There are very likely a range of reasons. One reason may stem from the belief that non-propositional attitudes can be 8

reduced to propositional ones. A number of recent papers have forcefully argued that such a reduction fails. But even under that assumption, we might wonder why non-propositional attitudes have been neglected. I will explore two reasons that I think are especially interesting and important in some detail. The first is a bit of speculative history, but it is worth seeing how a certain set of very questionable assumptions allows one to ignore the non- propositional attitudes. The second consideration directly concerns the metaphysics of intentional states and pushes one to become wary of dealing in non-propositional attitudes at all. Interestingly, the paper also pushed non-propositional attitudes aside. In one circumstance, we are inclined to say that Ralph believes Ortcutt is a spy, but in the other, we are inclined to say that Ralph believes that Ortcutt is not a spy. But put Ortcutt and Ralph aside. What some readers might not recall is that 12 See Ben-Yami , Crane , Grzankowski forthcoming , Merricks , and Montague for a defenses of the position that there are irreducible non-propositional attitudes. Of present interest, however, are the notional readings and especially those in the non- belief examples.

Chapter 5 : Propositional Attitude Reports (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)

This problem is more pressing when one moves from indirect speech reports to other propositional attitude reports. For, as Schiffer b has stressed, whereas (16)'s truth plausibly does requires the existence of an utterance on Galileo's part, it is implausible to insist that the truth of (1) requires an actual utterance on Lois's part.

Context and the Attitudes: Meaning in Context, Volume I Published: Propositional attitudes, and in particular beliefs, have been one of the core topics of analytic philosophy of language and mind ever since they saw light with the work of Frege and Russell. Yet despite being one of the most discussed topics, they continue to be an area in which controversy abounds. The essays that constitute the present volume fall broadly into two groups: Most of the essays from the first group anticipate or further elaborate on the account that Richard put forward in his monograph, Propositional Attitudes, or defend this account against objections subsequently made by Mark Crimmins, Theodore Sider and Scott Soames chapters 7 and 8. There is more than one way of formulating the problem that attitude ascriptions pose for semantics. In other words, 1 is intuitively true while 2 is not. A different way of formulating the problem is to consider one and the same unambiguous sentence that, uttered in different contexts, appears to differ in truth value. Now consider the sentence: Is 3 true or false? The right answer seems to be that the truth value of 3 depends on the context. Once again, if the content of 3 boils down to expressing a belief relation between Odile and the proposition that Twain is dead, then there can be no such variation in truth value. The indexical component resides in the latter aspect: The first essay, "Direct Reference and Ascriptions of Belief", already points out that "ascriptions of belief not only imply that a proposition is an object of belief, but that it is believed in a certain way" p. It is easy to see how this sort of proposal solves the problem. The divergence in truth value that we seek for the pair 1 - 2 comes from the fact that the use of the name Samuel Clemens in 2 may give rise to a context in which Odile is reported as having a belief that Twain, i. Though Odile has the belief itself, her belief is not mediated by any sentence of the sort, hence 2 comes out false. As Richard puts it, "What varies across contexts. Richard was not the only one to defend an indexical approach to attitude ascriptions at the time. Other proposals along similar lines include the hidden-indexical theory of Crimmins and Perry , Crimmins , , and Schiffer Though the two approaches differ, how important is this difference? That is precisely the question that "Attitudes in Context" ch. For one thing, it aims to rebut two objections from Crimmins ; for another, it aims to raise a problem for the Crimmins-Perry account. The problem comes from a phenomenon that is tackled in several other essays, and which lies at the heart of chapter 8: Thus, in chapter 6, Richard is interested in inferences that appear to be logically valid, such as the following: Tom doubts that London is lovely. Richard notes that Crimmins and Perry do not say enough in order for us to see how their approach accounts for such inferences, then offers on their behalf a formalization of 4 on which it fails to be valid p. But it seems to me that the Crimmins-Perry approach has a straightforward handle on 4: Tom doubts p1 under r1. Richard is worried that on the Perry-Crimmins account, the sentence "Pierre doubts that London is lovely" may be used in reference to some mode of presentation under which Pierre does not doubt it. But the fact that there are contexts in which the sentence may be so used does not imply that there will be a context in which the sentence is indeed so used as it appears in the conclusion of the argument in 4. Whether or not propositional quantification is indeed a problem for Crimmins and Perry, it appears to be a topic of predilection for Richard, who devotes to it an essay with the same title ch. Richard extends his proposal from attitude reports to speech reports and invites us to consider inferences like: Blair said that John described a map. He defends an objectual account of propositional quantification, against substitutional accounts. On his account, very roughly, propositional quantifiers range over arbitrary sentences, paired with extensional semantic values. The reason for taking the objects over which such quantifiers range to be paired with their semantic values is to prevent the following inferences from coming out valid: James believes that he is hungry. Richard observes that 7 "can fail to be valid because of different demonstrata" p. But it is precisely with cases relevantly similar to 7 that the very

enterprise of accounting for logically valid patterns in propositional quantification runs the risk of going awry. James said that he was hungry. Blair believes that it is raining. In it unclear, however, that there are any robust, non-arbitrary criteria that would set aside cases such as 8 or 9 from cases such as 6. Insofar as we have strong intuitions about the logical properties of some portion of a language, we will want our semantic theory to validate these intuitions. When these intuitions are intuitions about formal validity -- and surely we do have such intuitions -- we shall want our semantic theory, all else being equal, to validate our intuitions by showing that the validity of certain arguments can be seen as a formal matter. However, intuitions about logical validity are often shaky, and when it comes to propositional quantification, the patterns of inferences that we want to view as a matter of logic are yet to be established. Most of the essays are written in a clear and engaging style, and even though the first one dates from more than thirty years ago, none of them is outdated.

Chapter 6 : Propositional attitude - Wikipedia

The problems posed by attitude ascriptions for possible worlds semantics have led many theorists to characterize the semantic content of a sentence S as a structured com-.

Chapter 7 : Problem Posed by Propositional Attitude Ascriptions - Oxford Scholarship

The best of all possible worlds Are we living in the best of all worlds? Let's face the problem posed by propositional attitude ascriptions, during the history of philosophy.

Chapter 8 : Propositional Attitudes - Bibliography - PhilPapers

Similar problems are posed by propositional attitude ascriptions. 'Every stu- dent in this class believed that all cordates are cordates' could be true, even.

Chapter 9 : Non-Propositional Attitudes (in Philosophy Compass) | Alex Grzankowski - blog.quintoapp.com

Insofar as knowledge is a propositional attitude, they are omniscient " Lewis's Two Gods " Still I can imagine them to suffer ignorance: neither one knows which of the two he is.