BELIEF AND ACCEPTANCE

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When asked what I believe, I typically respond with a sentence, or a sentence embedded in a that-clause: that the Giants will lose; that life is short; that philosophy is noble. I would use the same sentences to describe the world to others, and in my own thinking about it. I shall say that I *accept* them.[1]

I think acceptance is not belief and not analyzable in terms of belief; rather, it is an important component of belief. It is the contribution the subject's mind makes to belief. One has a belief *by* accepting a sentence. Which belief one thereby has also depends on who the believer is and when the believing takes place—factors that need have no representation in the mind. What one thereby believes is not a sentence, nor a sentence meaning, nor one of Frege's thoughts—an abstract object with a sentence-like structure. It is rather, as Russell thought, a complex of objects and properties—objects and properties that are part of the world, not part of the mind (except in rare instances).

In saying that acceptance is the contribution the subject's mind makes to belief, I mean this. When we believe, we do so by being in belief states. These states have typical effects, which we use to classify them. In particular, we classify them by the sentences a competent speaker of the language in question would be apt to think or utter in certain circumstances when in that state. To accept a sentence S is to be in a belief state that would distinguish such speakers who would think and utter S from those who would not. Thus my conception allows an animal or a preverbal child to be meaningfully said to accept a sentence.

How sentences designed to describe a public world can have this secondary role of describing minds is an interesting question, but one I shall not pursue here.[2] In this paper I merely want to argue that acceptance is not belief, and not reducible to it.

I think confusing acceptance with belief has wreaked havoc in the philosophy of belief, in the philosophy of mind, and in metaphysics generally. It requires that we see what is believed, and so what is true and false, on the model of what is accepted; belief is thus treated as a relation to a sentence or sentence-like entity. When we come across an ineluctably ordinary belief—a belief that some object has some property—we invent a

[1] A handy word to use for our attitude toward sentences, "accepts" has been given various technical meanings by various authors. I apologize for appropriating it but ask that the reader avoid reading more into it than I have put, except insofar as is required by ordinary standards of sympathetic understanding.

[2] This question is addressed in Barwise and Perry 1981a.

special name for it ("*de re* belief") and wonder how it is possible. The conflation of acceptance and belief creates the sort of tension in which metaphysics is inevitable. We want *what is believed* to classify belief states for purposes of explaining thought and action—the proper role of what is accepted—while at the same time being objectively true or false, the common objects of belief for different persons at different times. This requires that the subject's mind conceptualize its own perspective on the world, a condition that cannot be satisfied; at this point we stop just short of an inarticulate groan and begin to talk of "intuition."

My focus shall be on context-dependent sentences.[3] The acceptance of context-dependent sentences is a matter of some importance. That I accept "This paper is due today" explains, together with certain facts about my work habits, my frantic activity. Section I argues that such sentences are not *what is believed*, and I suspect most will agree with that conclusion. But there remains the possibility that acceptance of context-dependent sentences will be viewed as a by-product combining two things: (i) one's understanding of words like "I" and "now," (ii) beliefs in Fregean thoughts or context-independent sentences, which capture what it is to locate oneself as a certain person at a certain time and place in the world.

In sections II through VI, I try to show that this picture is topsy-turvy by showing that no analysis of acceptance of context-dependent sentences is possible in terms of such *de dicto* beliefs. My goal is negative and limited: acceptance will not be given an iron-clad definition; my positive views will be ill-explained and largely undefended; *de dicto* belief will not be totally banished. My hope is merely to establish that acceptance is an important phenomenon, involved in the structure of belief, and involved not as a by-product but as a central component.

I

Frege says, "If someone wants to say the same today as he expressed yesterday using the word 'today', he must replace this with 'yesterday'" (1918/1967). I think he is making a correct point about one familiar sense of "say." If I uttered to M. B. tomorrow the same sentence I produced today, viz., "This paper is due today," he could legitimately complain: "That's not what you said yesterday. Yesterday you said that it was due then." And if I say to him tomorrow, "This paper was due yesterday," it would be quite appropriate for him to agree: "That's what you said yesterday." In the first instance, I would have produced the same sentence on successive days yet said different things; in the second instance, I would have produced different sentences but said the same thing. Thus it seems clear that, in this common sense of "say," what is said is not the sentence produced. I produce a sentence,

[3] I would define context-dependent sentences as those that when accepted by different people or at different times result in different beliefs. Thus if you and I both accept "I wrote this paper," we believe different things. This definition prejudges the issue in section I, however. So until section II we may rely on the definition that context-dependent sentences are those that may be true as uttered by one person at one time, but false as uttered at another time or by another person. A context-dependent term is one that stands for different things as used by different people or at different times.

and my producing the sentence is crucial to my saying something: it is just what I do *in order to* say something. But the sentence itself is not *what* I say.

The problem is not that we are dealing with lifeless sentences instead of their vital meanings. The meanings, like the sentences, were the same in the first instance and different in the second. "This paper is due today" will have the same meaning tomorrow as it has today, and "This paper was due yesterday" will never come to mean the same as "This paper is due today," barring a radical change in the language.

Now if belief involves, at least paradigmatically and for reasonably articulate adults, saying or being disposed to say sentences to oneself and to others, it would not be surprising if the same points carried over. And they do. If tomorrow I am disposed to say to myself and others "This paper is due today," I will believe something different from what I now believe; I will have changed my mind. And if I do not change my mind, I will be disposed to say to myself and others, "This paper was due yesterday." Acceptance of the same sentence today and tomorrow indicates that I believed different things; acceptance of different sentences is required to believe the same thing. So it seems that what is believed is not a sentence (nor the meaning of a sentence).

Now in these last remarks, in speaking of what I say to myself and others, I have been using "say" in a sense that contrasts with that used in the quote from Frege. In this sense it seems that what is said *is* a sentence. There clearly is a sense in which, had I uttered "This paper is due today" on the successive days, I would have said the same thing. Now one might think that this is a more "strict" or "literal" sense of "say," from which the sense discussed before has developed as a strictly unnecessary but practically useful way of grouping sentences that are, for certain purposes, only irrelevantly different. And one might further suppose that any of the verbs denoting activities in which the production of sentences or the disposition to produce sentences is a crucial part would admit of a similar strict or literal sense.

But this would be a mistake. For a particularly clear case, consider promising. My brother first drew my attention to these issues by making a promise to me with these words: "I will give you a dollar tomorrow." The next day, when I asked for my dollar, he laughed and said, "I promised to give you a dollar tomorrow, and I will." This kept up for several days until I got what I thought was the point: that tomorrow never comes. I am now sure that the point my brother was after was the difference between the sentence used in promising and what is promised. For, of course, when he said "I promised to give you a dollar tomorrow," he was not right, as he well knew. To make that promise, he would have had to say, originally "I will give you a dollar the day after tomorrow." So what is promised, like what is said, cannot be identified with the sentence used in promising. The point is that unlike "say," "promise" has no sense in which what is promised is a sentence. Certainly a writer might promise to write a sentence, or rewrite one, but then writing or rewriting the sentence is promised, not the sentence itself.

In this particular, believing is like promising and not like saying. I can discover no sense in which what is believed is a sentence. We can believe a sentence to be true, but that does not make the sentence *what is believed*, any more than the fact that we can believe an automobile to be rusty means that automobiles are sometimes *what is believed*.

In constructing reports of beliefs, we use that-clauses containing sentences. When people report their current beliefs, they will put in the that-clause just the sentences they accept. Thus I now report that I believe that this paper is due today using the very sentence I accept: "This paper is due today." This fact suggests the view that this sentence, or something intimately connected to it, perhaps its meaning, is what is believed. If, in thinking about belief, we concentrate on the beliefs we have now, this suggestion will seem compelling.

But the facts of first-person, present-tense reports of beliefs are quite special. In reporting beliefs of others, or our own past beliefs, we will not generally be able to produce a singular term denoting what is or was believed by prefacing the sentence accepted with "that." You now accept, let us suppose, "I did not write this article." If I report "You believe that I did not write this article," I get it wrong. By accepting "I did not write this article," you believe that you did not write this article, not that I did not. Yesterday I accepted "Nothing is due today." I cannot now report the belief I had by saying "I believed that nothing is due today." It is not my purpose in this paper to say much of anything about the nature of what is believed. But I hope a convincing case has been made for the negative claim that what is believed is not in general the sentence accepted.

II

These arguments show that acceptance and belief must be distinguished where context-dependent sentences are involved. One might still try to dismiss acceptance as an important notion in the philosophy of belief by maintaining (i) that for context-independent sentences, acceptance may be identified with belief; (ii) that acceptance of context-dependent sentences may be analyzed in terms of belief in context-independent sentences and certain other notions, such as *understanding* and *meaning*.

I shall not argue against (i) here, though I think it is wrong; I concentrate on (ii).

Now a natural suggestion for carrying out the analysis called for in (ii) is that acceptance of a context-dependent sentence is no more than the belief that the sentence is true by one who understands what the sentence means. If I accept a sentence, and have the concepts of a sentence and of truth, it is natural to suppose that I believe it to be true. Nevertheless, accepting a sentence and believing it to be true are quite different things.

Acceptance is a relation a person has to a sentence at a time. The person is the person who accepts, the time is the time that he does the accepting. Believing to be true is a more complex relation. Someone has to do the believing, and he must do it at some time. But that is not enough. A person and a time have to come in again. For most sentences are not simply true or false, but true or false *as uttered by some person at some time*.

Consider "I am the President." The sentence as such has no truth-value, and no one who understands it would suppose that it does. It would be true if said by Carter now, false if said by him ten years ago, or by Jerry Brown now. To believe it *simpliciter* makes no sense. Thus acceptance is a three-place relation, while believing-true is a five-place relation.

This shows that acceptance and believing-true are different things, but not that they are very different. There might be an analysis of acceptance in terms of believing-true in which the extra argument places are absorbed by appropriate terms.

The simplest possible move would be this:

(A) At t, X accepts "S"
iff
For some τ and some α, at t X believes that "S" is true for α at τ.[4]

This is, of course, not plausible. I believe that "I am President" is true for Carter on July 4, 1979, but I do not accept "I am the President."

The problem, it seems, is that "Carter" and "July 4, l979" do not designate the right person and time. Suppose we add, then, that α must designate X and τ must designate t:

[4]The letter S is a schematic letter in such displayed formulas, while used in the main text as a metalinguistic variable. τ and α are variables ranging over *terms*, which may be thought of either as expressions or as concepts or senses, depending on what sort of thing is taken to be *what is believed*. They are supposed to function appropriately after "believes that." Thus, if we suppose Fregean thoughts are believed, "X believes that 'S' is true for α at τ" means that X believes the thought composed of the sense of "'S' is true for," α, the sense of "at," and τ. "Designates" will be used later for the relation between terms and what they stand for, and so will share the ambiguity of "term."

(B) At t, X accepts "S"
iff
There are α and τ such that:(i) At t, X believes that "S" is true for α at τ; (ii) α designates X and τ designates t.

The idea is that acceptance of a sentence—that is, being ready to use it to describe the world and to characterize one's own beliefs—is just the state one is in whenever one believes that sentence to be true for oneself at that moment. One might, of course, believe this of certain sentences that one does not understand and so is hardly prepared to use. So I shall assume that the believer understands the meaning of S.

However, (B) does not work. Let S be "My meeting starts now." If I know on July 4, l979, that my meeting is scheduled for noon, July 4, 1979, then I may well believe right at noon on that day:

"My meeting starts now" is true for J. P. at noon,
July 4, 1979.

And yet I might not accept "my meeting begins now" right at that moment, having lost track of time (or, less probably, having lost track of who I am).

III

The problem is clearly that for any context-independent α and τ, my thinking that "my meeting begins now" is true for α at τ does not guarantee that I think the sentence true for *me now*—as I would have put it at the time. It is natural, then, to try to work the "me" and the "now" into the right side of the biconditional:

(C) At t, X accepts "S"
iff
There are α at τ such that:
(i) At t, X believes that "'S' is true for me, now" is true for α at τ.
(ii) α designates X and τ designates t.

But this condition fails, for the same reason as (B). From the fact that I believe at noon, July 4, 1979, that the sentence

"'My meeting starts now' is true for me, now"

is true for J. P. at noon on July 4, 1979, it simply does not follow that I then accept "My meeting starts now."

IV

Rather than engage in further futile semantic ascent, we might try an epistemic condition.

(D) At t, X accepts "S"
iff
There are α and τ such that:
(i) At t, X believes that "S" is true for α and τ.
(ii) α designates X and τ designates t.

(iii) At t, X believes that *he* is α and it is *then* τ.

I think, on an ordinary reading of (D), it is true—at least if values for X are restricted to those who understand the locution "true for ... at ...." (D) is true because we ordinarily would take the emphasized "he" and "then" in (iii) to be what Hector-Neri Castañeda calls quasi-indicators (1967). Used as a quasi-indicator, "he" performs two functions. First, like a pronoun, it picks up the reference to X. But it also tells us how the believer thinks of X. "He" tells us X thinks of X as *himself*. He thinks of himself in the way that we think of ourselves when we use the word "I." Similarly, "then" tells us that at t, X thought of t as "now."

(D) does not succeed in analyzing acceptance in terms of believing-true, however, for the belief predicate in (iii) is not "believes-true." "Smith believes that *he* is Smith" does not mean that Smith believes that "he is Smith" is true, or believes that it is true for Smith, as reapplications of the arguments and examples used above will show.

I think that when we use quasi-indicators we combine a remark about what Smith believes with a remark, or a hint, about *how* he believes it. In the case of "he," the second bit of information is roughly that he believes what he believes *in virtue of* accepting a sentence with "I" in it. That is, "Smith believes that *he* is α" tells us that Smith believes Smith to be α in virtue of accepting "I am α." More precisely, it tells us that he accepts it in virtue of being in a certain belief state, which in English-speaking adults typically results in the utterance, in appropriate circumstances, of "I am α."

If this is correct, (D) does not succeed as an analysis of acceptance in terms of belief, for the biconditional is true only because of an implicit remark about acceptance on the right-hand side. But another type of account of quasi-indication is possible and must be considered.

V

The second possible explanation of the quasi-indicators "he" and "then" supposes that they go proxy for context-independent terms. "Smith believes that *he* is Smith" tells us that Smith believes that α is Smith, where α is a term that plays a very special role in Smith's thinking, though not in anyone else's. α plays the same role in Smith's thinking that "I" plays in the thinking of English-speakers, so that if Smith believes that α is so-and-so, and speaks English, he will accept "I am so-and-so." On this conception, "I" can play this role in the thinking of each of us *because* it is linked in our thinking to *some* such context-independent term.

Similarly, "At t, Smith believed it was then time to leave" tells us that at t, Smith believed that it was time to leave at τ, where τ is a term that at t, but not at other times, played a very special role in Smith's thinking. τ played the very same role in Smith's thinking, at t, that "now" plays in the thinking of English-speakers at all times. And it is supposed that "now" plays this role, at any given time, by being linked in our thinking to some such context-independent term.

It is clear that α will have to designate Smith, unless he is wrong about who he is, and so each of us will have to have our own special term. This, in the view being considered,

explains the usefulness of the quasi-indicator. Often it will be clear to us that a person is thinking of himself with his "special term," though we do not know what term it is.

It seems clear that for many of us, our own proper name will come close to being such a special term for ourselves. Actually, most of us are aware, through hearing of namesakes or through studying Tyler Burge's theory of proper names, that few of us have names that are unique to us. But each of us probably went through a period of time when we were not aware of this. During that time, our proper name played the same role that α is supposed to play for Smith. Indeed, although I have met namesakes *and* studied Burge, this biconditional is probably almost true:

I accept "I am so-and-so" iff I believe that John Perry is so-and-so.

Of course, the special role that "John Perry" and "I" play in my thinking goes far beyond their interchangeability. When I accept "I am to be slugged," I feel terror, for example. (See Essay 2.)

The relation between "I" and my proper name appears to me to be this. "I" has this peculiar role in the thinking of everyone who understands it. Its having this role is tied to its meaning—not the special meaning it has for each of us, but the common meaning it has for all of us. "John Perry," on the other hand, does not have this special role in my thinking in virtue of what it means. It means the same for all of us as it does for me, but plays the special role in question only in my thinking. It has this special role in my thinking because I was taught, when young, to come when I heard the words (roughly) "John Perry better get over here," to say "John Perry is hungry" when hungry, and so forth. *In a sense* "John Perry" has this special role in my thinking because it stands for me, for if it did not stand for me, my parents would not have trained me in this way. But it is the training that is crucial. They could have trained me, perhaps as a patriotic joke, to respond to and use "Dwight David Eisenhower" in this way, and then that name would have played this special role in my thinking. Yet this would not have made "Dwight David Eisenhower" stand for me, even when I used it. (To see this, imagine my parents had taught me wrongly that the state we lived in was California. "California" would then have played a special role in my thought and action; I would have worried about earthquakes more than I did when I heard that California had many of them. This would not mean that "California" stood for Nebraska but that I was wrong about where I was.)

I suspect that my own name acquired a special role in my thinking before I learned that "I" always stood for the person using it, and accepted "I am John Perry." Now, on the other hand, I, like most adults, use "I" rather than my own name to think about myself. It is conveniently short, and we have learned to use it when speaking to others. And at least for philosophers, "I" has a certain epistemic advantage over their own name, since it is easier to imagine one's parents playing a cruel joke about one's name than to imagine being systematically misled by one's whole community about the meaning of "I."

The importance of "I," then, is simply that, thanks to its context dependence, we can all be trained so that it plays the same role in our thinking, while being right about who we are. We could probably get along without "I," or some other context-dependent way

of referring to ourselves. On the other hand, our proper names seem dispensable in favor of "I," too.

Now let us return to the account of quasi-indication under consideration. When I say "Smith believes that *he* is so-and-so," it is supposed that I am saying that there is some context-independent term α that plays a special role in his thinking, and that he believes α is so-and-so. Although there may be such context-independent terms for some people some of the time, there is no reason to suppose that there must be such terms for all of us all of the time. Even if I forget my name, or have such a fit of skepticism that I am not sure I have a name, I can still believe things of myself by using the word "I" in my thinking.

But I have admitted that there is nothing inevitable about the word "I." There could be a person who only thought of himself with his name. Is not the account put forward in the last section disproved by this possibility?

I think it is not. The importance of the word "I" is not that everyone who has beliefs about himself must use it, or an indexical like it, to think of himself. Rather, it is that because its role in thinking is tied to its meaning, it can be used to *characterize* that cognitive role in a general way. To *accept* "I am so-and-so," a person need not understand the word "I," but only be in a state that, were he to understand "I," would lead him to use "I am so-and-so."

Suppose a one-and-a-half-year-old, with no mastery of "I," says "Joey wants Post Toasties." We say "he says *he* wants Post-Toasties," where the "he" is a quasi-indicator. We mean he is in a state that would lead him, if he had mastery of "I," to say "'I'" want Post-Toasties."

As far as I can see, it is unnecessary, for such quasi-indexical attribution, that the child have any term for himself at all. I explain a visually disoriented child's ducking when objects are tossed well to one side of him saying, "He sees them as coming toward him." The "him" is a quasi-indicator. He would, if he were an adult, say "They are coming at me." But he is not thinking of himself with a name or under a description or with an indexical. He is simply perceiving things in a certain way that leads naturally to the ducking behavior. We can use the first-person "pronoun" to help describe such ways of perceiving and thinking, not because it is universally present but because, in virtue of its context-dependence, it is universally suitable.

The account of quasi-indication under consideration in this section seems even less plausible when extended to "then," for there do not seem to be the special terms available to make it work. There is not enough *time* to train people to use context-independent terms for times in a special way in their thinking, for they would need a new term for each time. Perhaps I could teach my child to say "Joey wants to eat on September 20 at 5 P.M." if at 5 P.M. on September 20 he wants to eat. But I shall have to teach him something else to use an hour or a day later. What a lot of effort! Much simpler to give him a formula he can produce whenever he is hungry: "I want to eat now!" The meaning of "now" ensures he will have said exactly what he wanted to say. When we want verbal behavior to replace natural behavior, context-independence is our only hope.

VI

I have argued against three proposals for analyzing acceptance of a context-dependent sentence in terms of belief, understanding, and meaning. Let me now give a general argument.

Suppose there were a context-independent sentence S such that (i) I now accept "I am hungry now" if and only if I believe that S and (ii) this is so simply in virtue of my understanding of S. It seems that S will have to consist of context-independent terms that designate me and the present time, and some two-place predicate—for example, "____ is hungry at ..." or "'I am hungry now' is true for ____ at ...." Let α and τ be the terms and H be the predicate, so S is $H(\alpha,\tau)$.

The problem is that if my belief that S leads me to accept "I am hungry now," at t, simply in virtue of understanding its meaning, why should it not also lead me to accept it later, at t + ten minutes? None of the meanings would have changed; S would still be true, since it is context-independent, even if I had had a ham sandwich at t + five minutes. And you might well believe that S too, since it is as true for you as for me, being context-independent. But if my belief that S and my understanding of S suffice to explain my acceptance, then if you understand it and believe that S, you should also accept "I am hungry now," even though you are stuffed. My acceptance of "I am hungry now" cannot be completely explained by my belief that S and my understanding of the meanings of "I," "now," α, and τ, for otherwise these other acceptances, which did not occur, would have.

The additional facts needed in the explanation, the facts that separate me at t from me at t + ten minutes, and me from you, are these: I accepted "it is now τ" at t, but not later, and I accept "I am α," and you do not. Acceptance plays an irreducible role in belief.[5]

Postscript

Essay 3 is an attempt to clarify the difference between accepting a sentence, in my sense, and believing that a particular sentence is true. I also discuss the relation between the meaning of the word "I" and its ability to express thoughts about ourselves; contrary to what some assume from the title of Essay 2, I do not think that having a first-person

[5]Jon Barwise, Michael Bratman, and John Etchemendy gave me detailed and helpful comments on (several) penultimate drafts of this essay.

pronoun in one's vocabulary is necessary to having such thoughts. Given that it was written with the intention to clarify, the paper has not been particularly successful, but the basic argument still seems correct to me. Let me do a bit more clarifying.

I am not thinking of the concept of acceptance as an *analysis* of the mental states involved in belief. In particular, I am not saying that a belief state consists in a relation to an internal sentence of mentalese that translates the accepted sentence. The concept of acceptance is neutral on this issue. It simply provides a method of classification. People who believe the same thing are doxastically similar in one way. People who accept the same thing are doxastically similar in a different way. People who accept the same thing are similar in a way that depends less on circumstances outside the believer. The notion of acceptance is still a very rough and ready way of getting at belief states. But, for certain purposes, it is a better way of classifying believers than by what they believe.

My use of the term "state" has confused some readers. Philosophers use this term in a variety of ways. I think it almost always connotes the properties a thing has at a time in virtue of a subset of its properties, roughly those that would survive if its internal configuration stayed intact but its relations to things other than its own parts were changed. But one can mean by "the state of x at t" either a more or less concrete particular event involving x, or some complex universal that x at t exemplifies, possibly in common with other objects at other times. And, in this second sense, the state might be partial, or it might comprise all of the relevant properties. I meant belief states to be universal and partial. Suppose, that is, that Rip van Winkle and his neighbor Harold who has just woken him up both say "Yesterday was a fine day." I want to say that there is a belief state they are both in. Since they are both in it, it is a universal. And since they are doxastically dissimilar in many ways, it is partial.

One way in which Rip and Harold differ is beliefs about their context—that is, beliefs about the objects that are involved in the interpretations of indexicals and demonstratives they might use. Rip, we may suppose, believes that it is June 20, 1770, while Harold knows that it is June 20, 1790. These differing beliefs about the context will lead them to different behavior in certain circumstances. If we could persuade them to take a trivial true/false test, Rip would check "Today is June 20, 1790" false, while Harold would check it true. Their total belief states are not the same, but they still have something in common.

To determine what someone said, we consider the meaning of the sentence they used and the facts of the context in which they said it. To explain *why* they said what they did, we would need to consider the meaning of their sentence and their beliefs about their context. This is what will determine what they think they are saying. Consider a version of an example from David Kaplan. He is giving a lecture in a familiar seminar room; he gestures behind him where he believes there to be a picture of Rudolph Carnap, and says "That man is the greatest philosopher of the twentieth century." We will assume, for the sake of the example, that he believes that Carnap is the greatest philosopher of the twentieth century, that he wants to convey to the audience that he believes this and thinks saying it is the way to do that, that he thinks that "that man" refers, in a context, to that man who is most salient in the context, and that because of his gesture and the picture, he believes Carnap is the man most salient in the context. All of that explains why he speaks

as he does. But if the picture has been changed without Kaplan's noticing it to one of Dan Quayle, he will not have *said* that Carnap was the greatest philosopher of the twentieth century, but merely tried to; he will have said something he did not intend to say.

This suggests that things do work in just the way I say they do not work in the paper. In the example, Kaplan has beliefs about his context and beliefs about English and beliefs about the history of philosophy. These beliefs explain his acceptance of "That man is the greatest philosopher of the twentieth century." But what I deny in the paper is that belief, conceived as a relation to context-independent sentences or Fregean thoughts, explained acceptance. When we press on this example, we will see that it does not count against that claim. Kaplan's beliefs about his context, for example, have to be what I call self-locating beliefs. He is not motivated to speak as he does merely because he believes that David Kaplan is in a position to express the proposition that Carnap is the greatest, but because he believes this in a certain way. He believes it by being in such states as the one I characterize as accepting "The picture behind me is of Rudolph Carnap."