Belief attributions state relations between believers and the propositions they believe. A dilemma about those propositions.

Individual truth-value judgments suggest they should be extremely *fine*-grained—since for almost any two sentences S and S', one can rationally believe that S without believing that S'. E.g. one can believe the Pope will arrive in a fortnight without believing he will arrive in a couple of weeks.

General theory of belief content suggests belief should be a relation to something *coarse*-grained—for beliefs get their content from the kind of external condition they covary with, and necessarily equivalent conditions (ones holding in the same possible worlds) covary with the same things.

Four assumptions create this conflict: (0) belief is a relation thinkers bear to propositions;   (1) necessarily equivalent objects of belief are identical (propositions are sets of worlds), (2) sentences *P* and *Q* are necessarily equivalent, (3) it is possible to believe that *P* while doubting whether *Q*.

The most common response (Frege) is to reject (1) and treat belief contents as finer-grained than sets of possible worlds. The second most common response is to reject (3) and insist we believe *P* iff we believe *Q* (Salmon, Soames). The third most common is to reject (0) and conceive belief as a three-place relation between believers, contents, and belief-states (Crimmins and Perry). Stalnaker has a new response: accept (0), (1), and (3), but reject (2). Insist that *P* and *Q* are not in context necessarily equivalent. *Hesperus is Mars* for instance is not in context (after *X believes that*) necessarily equivalent to *Hesperus is Mercury*.

Suppose Daniels says *O'Leary thinks Hesperus = Mars,* and I say *O'Leary thinks Hesperus = Mercury*.   A two part strategy.

(A) Ask yourself in which worlds, intuitively speaking, is O'Leary correct. as Daniels sees it? In which worlds is O'Leary correct, as I see it?   The first set P1 is the proposition expressed by *Hesperus = Mars* in *O'Leary believes that Hesperus = Mars,* the second P2 is the one expressed by *Hesperus = Mercury* in *O'Leary believes that Hesperus = Mercury.* (B) Look for a semantic mechanism that maps *Hesperus* = Mars sentence to P1 and *Hesperus = Mercury* to P2.

Now clearly, (A) P1 is the set of worlds where Hesperus-appearances are due to Mars. P2 is the set of worlds where they're due to Mercury. But (B) is harder. P1 and P2 sound a lot like the diagonal propositions expressed by *Hesperus = Mars/Mercury.*

 But that can't be quite right, because the diagonal proposition is defined only on

worlds in the context set; and the context set I share with Daniels contains no P1-worlds or P2-worlds. Daniels and I agree that Hesperus-appearances are due to Venus. "There are no possible worlds compatible with the background presuppositions of *our* conversation in which the solar system is arranged so that Mars appears where [we agree] Venus in fact appears" (M, 466). Something has to give.

"We ask something like the following question: If Daniels were to utter the sounds he is uttering in a world compatible with O'Leary's beliefs, what would the content of those sounds be?....If we extend the propositional content in this way, defining it for the situations that might, for all Daniels and I are presupposing, be compatible with O'Leary's beliefs, then the diagonal of that propositional concept will be the proposition that seems, intuitively, to be the one O'Leary is said to believe" (M, 466).

So, our utterance of "O'Leary believes that S" is true iff O'Leary stands in the belief relation to the proposition that S expresses, not in the world as it is, *but in the world as O'Leary thinks it is.*   This is basically to say that S after "O'Leary believes that" expresses what O'Leary would have asserted had she uttered S in a world in her context set.

"What if O'Leary speaks a language other than English?" "The propositional concept we construct is the one not for the sentence as O'Leary would use or understand it, but for the sentence as the speaker and addressee would understand it if they were in the possible worlds relative to which the propositional concept is being defined." Try this out on examples.

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