

Pure Russellianism

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Abstract: According to Russellianism, the content of a Russellian thought, in which a person ascribes a monadic property to an object, can be represented as an ordered couple of the object and the property. A consequence of this is that it is not possible for a person to believe that a is F and not to believe b is F , when $a=b$. Many critics of Russellianism suppose that this is possible and thus that Russellianism is false. Several arguments for this claim are criticized and it is argued that Russellians need not appeal to representational notions in order to defeat them. Contrary to popular opinion, the prospects for a pure Russellianism, a Russellianism without representations, are in fact very good.

Russellianism and Fregeanism are the two most popular approaches to the nature of propositional attitudes, and while they differ markedly from each other, there is one thing they have in common: an appeal to 'modes of presentation' or 'guises' or 'ways of thinking' in order to solve certain familiar puzzles about propositional attitudes. Yet there has been little consensus, either among Russellians or among Fregeans, about exactly what guises or modes of presentation are; moreover, the various attempts to say what they are have been subjected to sustained and powerful criticism. In light of this, it seems prudent to explore other ways of accounting for some of the recalcitrant data surrounding propositional attitudes, ways that do not involve the postulation of guises or modes of presentation. Here I wish to focus on one of the problems involving propositional attitudes and sketch some of the ways that a Russellianism who does not wish to traffic in guises or ways of believing might pursue in order to solve it. My aim is not to provide a fully worked out solution to the problem but rather to point in what I think are some promising directions.

1. Russellianism and the Problem of Believing and not Believing

According to Russellians there is one proposition expressed (in a context) by the two sentences ‘George Eliot is a novelist’ and ‘Mary Ann Evans is a novelist’ (given that George Eliot is Mary Ann Evans). It has, as its constituents, the woman George Eliot and the property of being a novelist and can be represented by the ordered pair:

<George Eliot, being a novelist>.

Since Russellians hold that belief is a binary relation holding between a believer and a proposition (ignoring time and tense), there is likewise one proposition expressed (in a context) by the two sentences ‘Ralph believes George Eliot is a novelist’ and ‘Ralph believes Mary Ann Evans is a novelist’. It can be represented as the ordered pair:

<<Ralph, <George Eliot, being a novelist>>, believes>.

On this view, the two sentences:

1. Ralph believes George Eliot is a novelist
2. Ralph believes Mary Ann Evans is a novelist

cannot diverge in truth value, since they express the same proposition.

It is widely believed by both those sympathetic to Russellianism and those opposed to it, that (1) and (2) can differ in truth value and that since the Russellian holds that (1) and (2) express the same proposition, the Russellian view is in danger of lapsing into contradiction. For how else can the Russellian represent the situation envisaged when (1), say, is true and (2) false, other than as:

3. Believes (Ralph, <George Eliot, the property of being a novelist>)
4. ~Believes (Ralph, <Mary Ann Evans, the property of being a novelist>),

which is clearly contradictory, since it is the same object that is part of the ordered pair in both? Gareth Evans puts the point like this: ‘if our

only conception of Russellian thoughts is the ordered-couple conception, then we shall have no coherent characterization to give, in Russellian terms, of a variety of situations which are perfectly possible' (1982, p. 84; cf. 1985, p. 317). Evans actually goes on to give an example of only one type of situation; it is, however, one in which a person's psychological condition must apparently be described as his both believing and yet not believing, in some sense, one and the same thing—for example, a situation in which we seem driven to say that (1) is true and (2) false. Imagine that Ralph has read *Middlemarch* and *The Mill on the Floss* by one 'George Eliot' but is too benighted to realize that the author is female and is using a male pen name. Imagine further that he is familiar with the details of the early life of a young woman called 'Mary Ann Evans', in particular of her struggles with Christianity say, but that he has no idea that she grows up to become Eliot the famous novelist. Evans would describe this situation as one in which it is possible that Ralph is 'prepared to accept' the sentence 'George Eliot was a novelist' but is 'not prepared to accept' the sentence 'Mary Ann Evans is a novelist'. (1982, p. 84) With only the resources of the ordered-couple conception, we cannot, claims Evans, 'consistently describe the belief system' of Ralph in this situation (1985, p. 317). For on that conception, 'there is a single proposition or thought content—[<George Eliot, the property of being a novelist>]—to which the subject both has and fails to have the relation corresponding to the notion of belief'. Evans goes on to say that 'Not only does this fail to give any intelligible characterization of the subject's state of mind; it appears to be actually contradictory' (1982, p. 84). The troubling question facing the Russellian is this: Does Ralph, or does he not, believe that Eliot/Evans is a novelist?

The lesson inevitably drawn from this kind of example, by Russellians and Fregeans alike, is that reference to something more than the individuals, properties and relations that our thoughts are about is required in order to describe the situation in question. Generally and roughly speaking, this additional item or feature is some kind of concept or representation, either of the individuals, properties and relations in

question, or of the proposition consisting of the individuals, properties and relations in question. The literature is thus replete with ‘senses’, ‘vivid names’, ‘guises’, ‘modes of presentation’, ‘ways of thinking’, ‘ways of taking’, ‘ways of believing’, ‘vehicles’—all allegedly ‘under’ which, or by means of which, we think of things. Let us refer to all of these things as *representations* but note that while representations are often construed as intermediaries that interpose themselves between thinkers and the objects (or propositions) they are thinking about, rendering their thinking about the objects (or propositions) in question in some way indirect, this is not invariably true. Some Russellians do indeed think of these representations as quite literally *intermediary entities* (Braun 1998, p. 565), such as ‘belief states’ of individual thinkers, or ‘mental representations’ encoded in a language of thought, or natural language sentences—all of which are said to ‘determine’ or ‘mean’ or ‘express’ the proposition believed. The idea, briefly, is that a person believes a proposition in virtue of bearing some other psychological relation to a representation—by ‘accepting,’ in a technical sense, a natural language sentence, for example—that determines the propositions in question. Some Fregeans, however, notably Gareth Evans, reject this reification of representations as literally intermediary entities that make our thinking about reality indirect:

The fact that one is thinking about an object in a particular way can no more warrant the conclusion that one is not thinking of the object in the most direct possible fashion, than the fact that one is giving something *in a particular way* warrants the view that one’s giving is somehow indirect. (1982, p. 62)

For Evans, a ‘sense’ or ‘way of thinking’ is not an entity to which one might bear some psychological relation, but an ability to discriminate or single out an object or property to which one is informationally linked by perceiving it, recognizing it, or knowing a description uniquely true of it. As I shall use it, the term ‘representation’ is meant to capture both notions of whatever it is that is additional to the worldly objects, properties and relations that our thoughts are ultimately directed at.

Both Russellians and Fregeans agree that we cannot coherently describe the foregoing situation, in which (1) seems to be true and (2) false, without adverting to more than simply Ralph's relation of belief to the proposition consisting of the woman George Eliot and the property of being a novelist. Something more than the objects and properties that our thoughts are about is required, and this additional thing is a representation—either of George Eliot herself or of the proposition 'containing' her as a 'constituent.'

The Fregean holds that it seems as though (1) could be true and (2) false because (1) *can* be true while (2) is false; and according to Evans, the Fregean can describe this situation easily: Ralph 'believes one Fregean thought, and neither believes nor disbelieves another Fregean thought' (1985, p. 317). Applied to the case at hand, these Fregean thoughts are the 'senses' or 'ways of thinking' that are 'associated,' respectively, with the sentences 'George Eliot was a novelist' and 'Mary Ann Evans is a novelist'. Ralph accepts the former but does not accept the latter thus demonstrating that he believes the thought associated with the former and neither believes nor disbelieves the thought associated with the latter. Thus, for the Fregean, (1) and (2) do not express the same proposition (or thought) and so there is no problem about what Ralph believes: (1) is straightforwardly true and (2) is straightforwardly false. A view of belief as fundamentally a dyadic relation is thus maintained—though at the cost of multiplying propositions or thoughts by taking their constituents to consist of representations or concepts ('senses') of things rather than, or as well as, the things themselves. Since these representations are many-one related to the things they represent, there will be many more propositions containing them than there are Russellian propositions containing only the items represented. The Fregean has, as it is sometimes put, a 'finer-grained' conception of propositions than the Russellian, which allows him to treat belief as a binary relation between believers and propositions and at the same time account for the psychological condition of Ralph when (1) and (2) are allegedly true simultaneously.

The tendency has been for Russellians to pursue the opposite strategy of preserving a ‘coarse-grained’ conception of propositions and ‘analysing’ the binary belief relation as the existential generalization of a ternary relation—called ‘*BEL*’ by Nathan Salmon and others—among a person, a Russellian proposition and a representation of this Russellian proposition, often called a ‘propositional guise’ or ‘way of believing’ the Russellian proposition. The Russellian thus moves one step closer to the Fregean—at least when it comes to psychology as opposed to semantics—by borrowing the latter’s notion of a representation under which one bears a psychological relation to something. Salmon (1986, 111), to take a prominent example, proposes that

‘A believes p ’ may be analyzed as $(\exists x)[A \text{ grasps } p \text{ by means of } x \ \& \ BEL(A, p, x)]$

and that

‘A withholds belief from p ’ ... may be analyzed as $(\exists x)[A \text{ grasps } p \text{ by means of } x \ \& \ \sim BEL(A, p, x)]$.

Applied to the case at hand, this gives us:

$(\exists x)[\text{Ralph grasps } \textit{that Eliot/Evans is a novelist} \text{ by means of } x \ \& \ BEL(\text{Ralph}, \textit{that Eliot/Evans is a novelist}, x)]$

and

$(\exists x)[\text{Ralph grasps } \textit{that Eliot/Evans is a novelist} \text{ by means of } x \ \& \ \sim BEL(\text{Ralph}, \textit{that Eliot/Evans is a novelist}, x)]$,

which are compatible because each existential claim is made true by distinct values of x , namely, the ‘propositional guises’ that are functions of, respectively, Ralph and the sentence ‘George Eliot is a novelist’, on the one hand, and Ralph and the sentence ‘Mary Ann Evans is a novelist,’ on the other (Salmon, 1986, p. 117). So Salmon’s resolution of the puzzle consists in answering Yes to the pressing question: Does Ralph believe Eliot/Evans is a novelist or not? This follows directly from

the ternary analysis of belief; since Ralph stands in *BEL* to the singular proposition that Evans/Eliot is a novelist and some ‘way of believing’ that proposition, he believes that singular proposition. It is, therefore, strictly speaking incorrect to say that (2) is false (1986, p. 112). (1) and (2) express the same proposition and Ralph does indeed believe that proposition. Ralph’s non-belief with respect to whether Evans is a novelist is captured by the ternary analysis of ‘withholding belief,’ which, crucially, does not entail failing to believe. As Salmon points out, his analysis follows Kaplan’s (1968) highly influential proposal, as ‘the analysis in terms of *BEL* uncovers that there is yet a third position in which the negation sign may occur’ (*ibid.*), which is precisely what was lacking in (4) and which seemed to force the Russellian to put the negation in front of the whole attribution thus creating the contradiction with (3). Let us call this type of Russellianism, *Representational Russellianism*.

Both types of representational theory, Fregeanism and Representational Russellianism, face serious problems that have been discussed extensively.¹ It is not my aim to add to these criticisms here. Rather, I want to argue, first, against the Fregean and other non-Russellians, that the Russellian has so far been given no dialectically convincing reason to believe that (1) and (2) really can diverge in truth-value and, secondly, against both the Fregean and the Representational Russellian, that there is no need to invoke representations in order to make sense of the situations in which it is alleged (1) and (2) might differ in truth value. I thus aim to defend Russellianism Without Representation, or what I shall call Pure Russellianism. Paul Boghossian has observed that ‘Most philosophers write as if it’s merely obvious—and, hence, in need of no argument—that someone might be in a state truly described by [(1)] but not thereby in a state truly described by [(2)]’ (1994, p. 46). He goes on to argue that this is not obvious. Boghossian is surely right that it is often taken as an obvious datum, without need of

¹ See, e.g., Schiffer 1987, 1990, 1992, 2003; Richard 1990; Recanati 1993.

supporting argument, that (1) and (2) can differ in truth-value; in my view, he is also right that this is not at all obvious. Thus there should be some arguments for the claim, if it is to be accepted. Scattered around, and often lurking just beneath the surface, there are arguments to be found. I shall consider all the ones that I know of and show that a Pure Russellian response, one that does not appeal to representations, is available in each case.

2. The argument from beliefs about the truth-values of sentences

On what grounds, then, can it be claimed that Ralph believes Eliot is a novelist but does not believe Mary Ann Evans is one? Perhaps the most familiar line of thought here—one that Gareth Evans appears to have in mind in the passages cited above—is that Ralph understands the sentence ‘George Eliot was a novelist’ and believes it to be true and he understands the sentence ‘Mary Ann Evans is a novelist’ and does not believe it to be true; therefore he believes Eliot is a novelist and does not believe Evans is one. The two principles upon which this reasoning depend are:

(DP) S understands ‘ p ’ \rightarrow (S believes ‘ p ’ is true \rightarrow S believes p)

(QP) S understands ‘ p ’ \rightarrow (S believes p \rightarrow S believes ‘ p ’ is true).

‘DP’ stands for ‘Disquotation Principle’ and ‘QP’ for ‘Quotation Principle’; I take the former name from Kripke (1979) and the latter from Salmon (1986, appendix), though it is Kripke who first explicitly formulates versions of both (and whose conjunction amounts to a version of Kripke’s ‘strengthened biconditional form of the disquotation principle’). I have deliberately framed the consequents of (DP) and (QP) in terms of S’s believing the sentence ‘ p ’ true, rather than, as they often are, in terms of S’s publicly and verbally affirming or assenting to the sentence ‘ p ’. This is because what is of primary importance, for present purposes, is the systematic connection between an agent’s beliefs about the world and his beliefs about the truth values of sentences about the world—and those latter beliefs need not be publicly declared or

communicated verbally to a third party via speech acts such as assenting and asserting. It is what an agent thinks about a sentence, not what he is prepared to say in public about that sentence, that is relevant here.

The first argument against the Russellian that (1) and (2) can differ in truth value may then be framed as follows:

Argument (I)

- (a) Ralph understands the sentence ‘George Eliot is a novelist’ and believes it to be true.
- (b) If Ralph understands the sentence ‘George Eliot is a novelist’ and believes it to be true, then he believes George Eliot is a novelist.
- (c) Therefore, Ralph believes George Eliot is a novelist.
- (d) Ralph understands the sentence ‘Mary Ann Evans is a novelist’ and does not believe it to be true.
- (e) If Ralph understands the sentence ‘Mary Ann Evans is a novelist’ and does not believe it to be true, then he does not believe Mary Ann Evans is a novelist.
- (f) Therefore, Ralph does not believe Mary Ann Evans is a novelist.

The significant premises here are (b) and (e). (b) is an instance of (DP) and most philosophers, Fregeans and Russellians alike, would, I think, accept (DP) or something suitably similar and appropriately qualified with the necessary provisos, and hence, accept that Ralph does indeed believe George Eliot to be a novelist. The key premise in this first argument against the Russellian is thus (e), which is an instance of (QP)—or rather, something that follows logically from (QP), namely, that if S understands ‘*p*’ and S does not believe ‘*p*’ is true, then S does not believe *p*. It is by now well known that Russellians reject (QP) (Tye 1978, McKay 1981, Salmon 1986, Soames 1988, Braun 2003). As Richard

Gaskin has recently and succinctly put it, ‘What the Russellian must do is disjoin belief (in the truth) of a proposition from belief (in the truth) of sentences’ (Gaskin 1997, p. 137). The Fregean holds that understanding a sentence (i.e., understanding ‘ p ’) and believing what that sentence says (i.e., believing p) are jointly sufficient for believing that the sentence is true. The Russellian rejects this: he thinks that it is entirely possible to understand a sentence and to believe what it says, yet not believe that that sentence is true. This is the standard Russellian response to Argument (I) and it is, I think, correct. After all, for the Russellian, the contents of our thought are constituted by the objects, properties and relations that our thoughts are about, not by concepts or senses of them associated with words and sentences. (1) and (2) can no more diverge in truth value for the Russellian than can ‘Ralph danced with George Eliot’ and ‘Ralph danced with Mary Ann Evans’ (cf. Richard 1990, p. 111). On this view, nothing at all follows about what a person believes from consideration of which sentences he does not believe to be true (or is ‘not prepared to accept’, as Evans would put it). Moreover, as Kripke (1979) has shown with his puzzle about belief, (QP) can be used, without the assumption of Russellianism, to derive a contradiction (cf. Salmon 1986, appendix) and that is very strong independent reason to reject (QP). For these familiar reasons the Russellian rejects (QP) and thus premise (e) of Argument (I).

The Russellian cannot rest here, however, for he owes us an explanation for why it is that someone might understand a sentence, believe what it says, and yet not believe that it is true. If Ralph understands the sentences ‘George Eliot is a novelist’ and ‘Mary Ann Evans is a novelist’, and he believes what these sentences say (they both say the same thing, after all, according to the Russellian), why does he end up with such different beliefs about their respective truth values? Why does he believe the first to be true but does not believe the second to be true? The answer, for the Russellian, is really quite simple: Ralph does not believe that the names ‘George Eliot’ and ‘Mary Ann Evans’ designate the same thing. He does, of course, believe that ‘George Eliot’

designates George Eliot and he does believe that ‘Mary Ann Evans’ designates Mary Ann Evans. But—and this is the crucial point—he does not believe that ‘George Eliot’ and ‘Mary Ann Evans’ both designate Mary Ann Evans/George Eliot; that is, he does not believe that the two names are co-designative. Summarizing, while it is true that

Ralph believes that ‘George Eliot’ designates George Eliot

and that

Ralph believes that ‘Mary Ann Evans’ designates George Eliot,

it does not follow from these ascriptions, and it is not true, that

Ralph believes that ‘George Eliot’ and ‘Mary Ann Evans’ are co-designative.

It is the fact that this latter ascription is not true that explains why Ralph can have different beliefs about the truth values of the sentences ‘George Eliot is a novelist’ and ‘Mary Ann Evans is a novelist’. Were Ralph to acquire the belief that ‘George Eliot’ and ‘Mary Ann Evans’ are co-designative then he would no longer hold different beliefs about these sentences but would come to view their truth values as necessarily the same. He could acquire this belief by coming to believe that the sentence ‘George Eliot’ and ‘Mary Ann Evans’ are co-designative’ is true or by coming to believe that the sentence ‘George Eliot is Mary Ann Evans’ is true (given the truth of (DP) in both cases). One way that he could acquire these latter beliefs is by being told that these sentences are true. It is because he does not think that these other sentences are true that he holds different attitudes to the sentences ‘George Eliot is a novelist’ and ‘Mary Ann Evans is a novelist’. In short, then, the Russellian can coherently reject (QP) because he can give an explanation for why a person can come to believe that two sentences that say the same thing can have different truth values.²

² Wagner (1986) and Devitt (1989) argue that the Russellian is in fact committed to Ralph believing that ‘George Eliot’ and ‘Mary Ann Evans’ are co-designative. But this argument is

3. The argument from the impossibility of contradictory beliefs

In 'A Puzzle About Belief' (1979, p. 114) Kripke writes:

Why do we think that anyone can believe that Cicero was bald but fail to believe that Tully was? ... Well, a normal English speaker, Jones can sincerely assent to 'Cicero was bald' but not to 'Tully was bald'. ... Let us make explicit the *disquotational principle* presupposed here, connecting sincere assent and belief.

Kripke goes on to formulate his version of (DP), which differs from (DP) in that the speech act of assent to the sentence '*p*' ('S assents to "*p*"') replaces (DP)'s belief in the truth of '*p*' ('S believes "*p*" is true'). No harm ensues, however, if we substitute (DP) for Kripke's disquotation principle; we merely need to assume that instead of sincerely assenting to 'Cicero was bald' Jones simply believes the sentence to be true, and that instead of not assenting to 'Tully was bald' Jones simply does not believe the sentence to be true. Indeed, if what I have said above is correct, (DP) isolates the relevant link between language and thought more clearly than Kripke's disquotation principle, namely, the link between belief about the world and belief about the truth value of a sentence about the world (the speech act of assenting to a sentence is simply irrelevant). The thing to notice here is that (DP) states only that belief in the truth of a sentence is sufficient for belief in what it says—not that it is necessary. So we cannot infer from (DP) that Jones believes that Cicero was bald but *fails to believe* that Tully was; that is, we cannot infer that it is not true that Jones believes Tully was bald. Of course, Jones may also believe the sentence 'Tully was not bald' is true. Again, however, we cannot use (DP) to infer from this that it is not true that

well answered by Gaskin (1997, p. 140), who correctly points out that it depends on an assumption that the Russellian should reject, namely, that one can substitute definite descriptions such as 'the referent of "George Eliot"' for names such as 'George Eliot' in belief ascriptions. But there is no reason for the Russellian to hold that the sentences 'The referent of "George Eliot" is identical with the referent of "Mary Ann Evans"' and 'George Eliot is identical with Mary Ann Evans' express the same proposition; *a fortiori*, there no reason for the Russellian to think that the sentences 'Ralph believes that the referent of "George Eliot" is identical with the referent of "Mary Ann Evans"' and 'Ralph believes that George Eliot is identical with Mary Ann Evans' express the same proposition.

Jones believes Tully was bald. The most (DP) allows us to infer is that Jones *disbelieves* that Tully was bald, that is, believes Tully was not bald. From the fact that Jones believes both ‘Cicero was bald’ and ‘Tully was not bald’ are true and does not believe ‘Tully was bald’ is true, all we can infer using (DP) is that Jones believes that Cicero was bald and that Tully was not. We cannot conclude that Jones does not believe Tully was bald. With only (DP) in play it is possible that Jones believes both that Tully was not bald and that Tully was bald.

In order to arrive at the conclusion that Jones does not believe Tully was bald, we need to assume either (QP) or that Jones cannot rationally believe contradictions. Assuming (QP) gives us Argument (I) with which we have already dealt. Let us then turn to the latter assumption. If we assume Jones cannot believe contradictions, and that he believes Tully is not bald, then we can derive the conclusion that Jones does not believe Tully is bald. Indeed, it seems to be the assumption that ‘the speaker’s assent to the negation of ‘*p*’ indicates not only his disbelief that *p* but also his failure to believe *p*’ (Kripke 1979, p. 114) that Kripke has in mind as part of his explanation for why we think a person can believe Cicero was bald but fail to believe Tully was.³ Reverting to our own example, let us suppose that Ralph believes that George Eliot is a novelist and that he believes Mary Ann Evans is not a novelist. The second argument can then be set out as follows:

Argument (II)

- (a) Ralph believes that Mary Ann Evans is not a novelist.
- (b) Ralph is rational.
- (c) A rational person cannot have contradictory beliefs.

³ Effectively the same assumption is employed by Kaplan in his famous criticism of Quine’s account of belief *de re*. Where Quine (1956) had claimed, on fairly compelling grounds, that Ralph could believe, of Orcutt, both that he is a spy and that he is not a spy, Kaplan makes the contrary undefended assumption that ‘it seems natural to claim that [~Ralph Bel (‘x is a spy’, Orcutt)] is a consequence of [Ralph Bel (‘x is not a spy’, Orcutt)]’. The assumption, in both its *de dicto* and *de re* form, is in my view highly questionable.

- (d) Therefore, Ralph does not believe Mary Ann Evans is a novelist.
- (e) Ralph does believe that George Eliot is a novelist.
- (f) Therefore, (1) and (2) can differ in truth-value.

The key premise here is obviously (c), the ‘rationality assumption’. The situation with respect to the rationality assumption is puzzling. On the one hand, it is often assumed to be beyond question. Thus John McDowell writes that ‘if some notion like that of representational content is to serve in an illuminatingly organised account of our psychological economy, it must be such as not to allow one without irrationality to hold rationally conflicting attitudes to one and the same content’ (1986, p. 142), but does not explain why it is that not allowing this is required to map the ‘topology of psychological space’. Nevertheless, it is certainly an assumption shared by many philosophers, especially Fregeans (cf. Schiffer 1990 on ‘Frege’s Constraint’). On the other hand, many philosophers think it is equally obvious that the rationality assumption is false. Russellians, for example, generally reject it, holding that rational subjects can have contradictory beliefs (Salmon 1986, Braun 1998). Moreover, they offer explanations for why it is that rational subjects may end up with contradictory beliefs. The most familiar explanation draws upon the Russellian’s representationalist metaphysics of belief, which he grafts onto the ‘naïve’ Russellian semantic theory, and this essentially involves the aforementioned ternary analysis of belief with its postulation of ‘propositional guises’ (Salmon 1986) or ‘ways of believing’ propositions (Braun 1998). The explanation is simple: we believe propositions only by *BEL*-ing them under ‘guises’ and we may fail to realize that two different guises determine contradictory propositions, and hence, we may end up believing those contradictory propositions by *BEL*-ing their distinct guises. Since we can have good reason to *BEL* these distinct guises, a rational subject can end up with contradictory beliefs. This is precisely what happens to Ralph when he believes George Eliot to be a novelist, by standing in *BEL* to the guise that is a function of the sentence ‘George Eliot is a novelist’, and believes Mary Ann Evans

not to be a novelist, by standing in *BEL* to the guise that is a function of the sentence ‘Mary Ann Evans is not a novelist’.

It is important to appreciate, first of all, that one need not appeal to propositional guises or concepts or modes of presentation—representations—in order to reject the rationality assumption. Sufficient reason to reject the rationality assumption can be found in the obvious fact that a person may simply not be aware of all of his beliefs at any one time and so consequently may come to have a belief whose content is contradictory to the content of another belief he already has and not realize this. As Colin McGinn puts it,

Since a person is not simultaneously aware of all his beliefs, it is perfectly possible—indeed commonplace—that conflicts among beliefs go unnoticed; it is thus possible to believe something as well as believing its opposite, precisely through lack of omniscience about what you believe. (McGinn, 1996, p. 21)

The idea that we may not be aware of all the things that we believe has been expressed in a number of different ways by a number of different philosophers. David Lewis has claimed that ‘Belief is compartmentalised and fragmented’ (1986, p. 30) and gives the following example:

I used to think that Nassau Street ran roughly east-west; that the railroad nearby ran roughly north-south; and that the two were roughly parallel ... My system of beliefs was broken into (overlapping) fragments. Different fragments came into action in different situations, and the whole system of beliefs never manifested itself all at once. (1982, p. 436; cf. Stalnaker, 1984, p. 83)

In a similar vein, Christopher Cherniack (1981) has drawn a distinction between ‘active’ and ‘inactive’ belief sets on the basis on the ‘finitary predicament’ of human beings, namely the limitations on our cognitive capacities, especially our memories. I may simply be unable to recall a belief that I have that is inconsistent with a belief I am currently thinking about or am about to form, because it is located in an inactive subset of my overall belief set. Mark Crimmins (1992, p. 72f) and Sidney Shoemaker have argued, along related lines, that our beliefs may, at

certain times, for one reason or another, be ‘unavailable’ or ‘inaccessible’ to us:

[A] good example of this is the case in which, having put one’s watch in one’s pocket so as to wash the dishes, one looks all over for it before remembering that one put it there. In such cases one has a belief that is, perhaps only temporarily, not available for use as a premise, or as a guide to action. (Shoemaker 1996, p. 241)

Here one might come to believe the contradictory proposition that one’s watch was not in one’s pocket. In cases such as these, there is clearly no need to invoke proposition guises behind which to hide contradictory mental contents from the omniscient gaze of the subject, for the subject is not omniscient about what he believes.

However, while the fact that we are not omniscient about what we believe does show that the rationality assumption, as stated in premise (c), is false, it does not really help the Russellian with the case at hand. For in the case of Ralph, both of his contradictory beliefs are available to him at the same time. We can very well imagine Ralph thinking to himself, ‘George Eliot is a novelist and Mary Ann Evans is not’. Accordingly, the opponent of Russellianism can revise premise (c) to:

(c*) A rational person cannot have contradictory beliefs when those beliefs are simultaneously available or accessible to him.

Argument (II) can then be re-formulated with the additional premise that the beliefs mentioned in premises (a), (d) and (e) are simultaneously available to Ralph. Ralph has not forgotten anything here or failed to ‘put things together’; he is fully cognizant of the beliefs in question. So we cannot explain his rationally having contradictory beliefs by appealing to his ‘finitary predicament’.

Nevertheless, the Russellian has good reason to reject the revised rationality assumption as stated in (c*), because it is directly contrary to his externalist view of mental content, whereby the contents of our thought are constituted by the objects and properties in the world that they are about rather than any representations that are before the mind

and immediately graspable. The anti-Russellian's motivation for (c*) is that one can always tell whether the contents of the thoughts one is currently entertaining are contradictory just by thinking about them, or just by thinking them. In other words, the anti-Russellian accepts what Ruth Millikan calls *the epistemic givenness of meaning identity and difference*, namely, that 'A rational person has the capacity to discern *a priori* whether or not any two of her thoughts comprehend the same term or proposition, the same meaning' (1993, p. 287; cf. Boghossian 1994, p. 36 on 'epistemic transparency'). But the Russellian's externalism commits him to rejecting epistemic givenness, holding that there are some thought contents whose identity and difference can only be determined empirically by *a posteriori* knowledge of some features of the subject's context (see also Owens 1989). Since, on this conception, the mental contents of two different token thoughts may contradict each other without the thinker being able to detect this by *a priori* introspection, it may well happen that he comes to believe contradictory contents simultaneously, if he does not have the empirical knowledge of his context necessary to recognize that they are contradictory. The issues surrounding externalism are highly controversial and it is not possible to discuss let alone defend a position on them here. My purposes are served by noting that a Russellian who is suspicious of representations—like Russell himself—can use his rejection of epistemic givenness to reject premise (c*). The further development of the idea of rejecting epistemic givenness, and of an externalist view of mental content, is the Pure Russellian's counterpart of the Fregean's and Representational Russellian's development of their respective notions of mental representation (i.e., senses, guises, ways of believing).

4. The argument from suspension of belief⁴

The origins of our third argument against the Russellian can be found three decades ago in a famous paper of David Kaplan's (1968, section

⁴ Some of the material in this section and the following one is drawn from Crawford 2004.

XI) in which he introduced a puzzle about apparent suspension of belief or judgement that Nathan Salmon has described as ‘among the most difficult problems that arise in connection with propositional attitudes’ (1986, p. 101). The puzzle is used explicitly against the Russellian by Evans (1982, p. 84) and Salmon himself (1986, pp. 92-98), and by Stephen Schiffer on a regular basis (1987, p. 455f; 1992, pp. 508-9; 2003, p. 20f—to mention only a few instances of its deployment by him). This essence of this argument is that it is possible for (1) to be true and (2) false because Ralph might be certain that Eliot is a novelist but suspend judgement about whether Evans is a novelist. In order to suspend judgement about whether Evans is a novelist clearly Ralph must not believe that Evans is a novelist. It thus appears that we have here a case where (1) is true and (2) is false—a situation inconsistent with Russellianism. (2), of course, is just one half of the doxastic component of Ralph’s suspension of judgement, since to suspend judgement with respect to something is neither to believe nor disbelieve that thing; but the lack of belief, as opposed to the lack of disbelief, is the relevant half, since it causes the contradiction, and I shall concentrate primarily on it throughout. Setting the argument out more formally, we have:

Argument (III)

- (a) Ralph suspends judgement about whether Mary Ann Evans is a novelist.
- (b) Therefore, Ralph does not believe Mary Ann Evans is a novelist.
- (c) Ralph does believe George Eliot is a novelist.
- (d) Therefore, (1) is true and (2) is false.

Salmon’s (1986) response to this argument is to claim that premise (b) is false and that it is invalidly inferred from (a). Suspending judgement with respect to whether Elliot/Evans is a novelist does not entail failing to believe that she is. I agree with Salmon that Ralph believes Eliot/Evans is

a novelist, that (1) and (2) cannot diverge in truth-value, and that it is thus incorrect to say that (2) is false. But I do not agree that the Russellian must resort to the peculiar and unfamiliar notion of ‘withholding belief without failing to believe,’ as analyzed by Salmon in terms of *BEL* and propositional guises, or some similar notion (such as Braun’s ‘ways of believing’), to account for Ralph’s apparent suspension of judgement. The idea of analysing the commonsense notion of belief, as philosophically problematic as it undoubtedly is, in terms of the notion of ‘*BEL*’ and propositional guises seems to me a case of explaining the obscure with the more obscure. I also do not think that a ternary analysis of belief is required to create the extra place for the negation sign. Salmon, I contend, has misdiagnosed the error in (III). What the Russellian who rejects representations should say is that while Salmon is correct that (b) false, it is nonetheless validly inferred from (a). But (a) is false: Ralph has not in fact suspended judgement; he only thinks he has. But Ralph’s alleged suspension of judgement is the only reason for thinking that premise (b) is true. In short, the reason that (b) is false is not that suspending judgement does not entail not believing; it does, but no suspension of judgement has in fact occurred—at least not from the point of view of the Russellian.

What seems to have happened is rather this. Ralph is wondering whether or not Mary Ann Evans is a novelist. This process of wondering must terminate in the formation of some judgement or belief about the matter in question, about whether Mary Ann Evans is a novelist. The belief Ralph consequently forms about the matter in question—about whether Mary Ann Evans is a novelist—is the belief that he does not know whether or not Mary Ann Evans is a novelist, and hence does not believe that she is or disbelieve that she is. In other words, the lack of decisive evidence drives him, I am suggesting, to thoughts about his own epistemic perspective on whether or not Mary Ann Evans is a novelist, namely, that his epistemic perspective falls short of establishing whether she is and thus that he does not know whether she is. This is why in all the examples of predicaments like Ralph’s in which the protagonist’s

inner soliloquy or verbal utterance is described, he inevitably makes reference to himself and his lack of beliefs (or knowledge). For example, Salmon's character, who appears to be suspending belief about whether a certain criminal is dangerous, thinks to himself, 'I used to believe that he is a dangerous man, but now I'm not so sure ... I don't know what to think' (1986, p. 94). The same is true of Schiffer's character, whose verbal utterance is: 'I neither believe nor disbelieve ...' (1992, p. 509). The content of these expressions of belief, whether they are covert mental acts of thought or overt linguistic acts of communication, essentially involves the person himself and his supposed lack of possession of certain beliefs. What happens to Ralph is that his lack of conclusive evidence causes him to believe *that he does not believe Mary Ann Evans is a novelist*. This is not only a belief about Mary Ann Evans, it is also a belief about Ralph himself and his lack of a certain belief:

5. Ralph believes that he does not believe that Mary Ann Evans is a novelist,

which the Russellian can represent as:

6. Believes (Ralph, <<Ralph, <Eliot/Evans, being a novelist>>, does not believe>>).

(4) from Section 1, then, I am suggesting, is false and should be replaced by (6). Normally, believing that one does not believe (or disbelieve) *p* is sufficient for one not to believe (or disbelieve) *p*. But Ralph's case is unusual in that it is not true that he does not believe Eliot/Evans is a novelist, even though he believes that he does not believe this. For (3) from Section 1 is true:

3. Believes (Ralph, <George Eliot, being a novelist>).

(6) is consistent with (3) and their conjunction gives an adequate description of Ralph's state of mind. In (6), the binary relation of believing is stuck into the ordered pair that represents the content of Ralph's belief, and this opens up another place into which to insert the

essential negation sign. This, you will recall from Section 1, is just what is needed to represent the situation in a way that avoids the contradiction with (3). (6) shows, then, that there is no need for the Russellian to ‘go ternary’ and invoke ‘propositional guises’ or ‘ways of believing’ in order to capture the conclusion of Ralph’s deliberations about whether Mary Ann Evans is a novelist.

What is going on, then, psychologically speaking, is that Ralph is, at least in part, thinking about himself and his own thoughts. He believes that he does not believe that Eliot/Evans is a novelist—but, of course, he does believe this, for (3) is true. So Ralph has not in fact suspended judgement; he only thinks he has. Ralph believes he does not believe something he in fact believes. Is there something unacceptably counter-intuitive about this? Can a person have beliefs that he actively and genuinely denies having? Our fourth argument against the Russellian assumes that he cannot.

5. The argument from the infallibility of believing that one does not believe

Stephen Schiffer offers this closely related argument against the Russellian (1992, p. 509):

pointing to one mug shot, Thelma might say, ‘I believe that he is the culprit’, while pointing to another, she might say, ‘I neither believe nor disbelieve that this guy is the culprit; I simply can’t tell’. Intuitively, both of her utterances are true, even though, as it may happen, the same man is referred to in each utterance; but this, again, is incompatible with the proposal in question [i.e., Russellianism].⁵

Again, what is important here is the beliefs that Thelma expresses with her utterances, not the fact that she is willing publicly to produce those utterances. When she says ‘I believe that he is the culprit’ she expresses

⁵ Cf. Fodor 1990: ‘the intuition seems to be that “Pierre believes that Londres is pretty” is true and “Pierre believes that London is pretty” is false. (It is an argument for this intuition that if you say to him: “Pierre, do you believe that London is pretty?” Pierre says “But no!”, whereas if you say to him “Pierre, do you believe that Londres is pretty?” he says “But yes!”) (p. 165).

her belief *that she believes that he is the culprit*, and this is what counts. Let us then stick to Thelma's beliefs, as what she is prepared to utter is irrelevant. Replacing Schiffer's Thelma with our own protagonist Ralph, Schiffer's argument is then this:

Argument (IV)

- (a) Ralph believes that he believes that George Eliot is a novelist.
- (b) Ralph believes that he neither believes nor disbelieves that Mary Ann Evans is a novelist.
- (c) Ralph's belief reported in (a) is true.
- (d) Ralph's belief reported in (b) is true.
- (e) Therefore, (1) is true and (2) is false.

As premises (a) and (b) are surely beyond dispute, the crux of this argument is evidently premises (c) and (d), which jointly amount to the assumption that both of Ralph's beliefs are true. Before turning to this assumption, notice first that if what I have said in Section 4 is correct, that is, if Ralph's state of mind is not one of genuine suspension of judgement but rather one of believing one does not have certain beliefs, then, as I mentioned above, it is not surprising that Schiffer has Thelma say 'I neither believe nor disbelieve that this guy is the culprit'. The Russellian has no problem saying what the beliefs that Thelma expresses by her utterances are and thus no problem saying what Ralph's corresponding ones are. Ralph's beliefs, whose content partly involves him and what he does not believe, are the following:

- 7. Ralph believes that he believes George Eliot is a novelist
- 8. Ralph believes that he does not believe that Mary Ann Evans is a novelist and Ralph believes that he does not believe that Mary Ann Evans is not a novelist,

which can be represented, respectively, as follows:

Believes (Ralph, <<Ralph, <George Eliot, property of being a novelist>>, believes>)

Believes (Ralph, <<Ralph, <Mary Ann Evans, property of being a novelist>>, does not believe>) & Believes (Ralph, <<Ralph, <Mary Ann Evans, property of not being a novelist>>, does not believe>)

(In this case we have represented both ‘halves’ of the doxastic component of Ralph’s suspension of judgement, his denial of belief and disbelief.) (7) and (8) are consistent. Of course, *Ralph’s beliefs*, as reported in (7) and (8), are inconsistent, in the sense that the contents of his beliefs cannot both be true: he believes that he believes Eliot/Evans is a novelist and he believes that it is not true that he believes this. We have already seen in Section 3 that this cannot be used against the Russellian, since he has well-motivated reasons for thinking that there is nothing untoward about a rational person having contradictory beliefs, reasons which flow naturally from an externalist picture of belief according to which identities and differences among mental contents are not necessarily epistemically transparent to the subject.

Schiffer is right, of course, that the *truth* of both of Ralph’s beliefs is incompatible with the Russellianism. For if Ralph’s beliefs, as reported in (7) and (8), were both true, then the following would be true:

1. Ralph believes that George Eliot is a novelist
9. ~Ralph believes Mary Ann Evans is a novelist,

which are inconsistent on the Russellian view. But why should the Russellian accept that both of Ralph’s beliefs are true, that is, accept premises (c) and (d) of Argument (IV)? Schiffer says it is ‘intuitive’ that both (7) and (8) are true. Rather than swap mutually question-begging opinions about this, it is more productive to consider what the Russellian has to say in response to this ‘intuition’. Consider first the claim that Ralph’s first, positive belief is true, that is, premise (c). The assumption underlying premise (c) is that if a person believes that he believes *p*, then he does believe *p*. The Russellian has no reason to dispute this principle,

which is a good thing, since it does seem to be virtually unassailable; at any rate, the kinds of conditions that might defeat it are certainly not present here with Ralph—he is not, for example suffering from any kind of self-deception or pathological condition—and the Russellian, who anyway thinks that Ralph’s positive belief about what he believes is indeed true, need not deny it.⁶ But what about Ralph’s second, negative belief, that is, premise (d)? The principle underlying (d) is the very different principle that if a person believes that he does *not* believe p then he does not believe p . If any of the notions of the unavailability of a belief, the fragmentation of belief systems, or the denial of the epistemic givenness of meaning identity and difference are coherent, then the Russellian can very plausibly reject this principle, holding that a person can have beliefs that he genuinely denies having.

If a belief is unavailable or inaccessible, for whatever reason, then it is obvious that I may deny that I have a belief that I in fact do have. Similarly, the same thing can obviously happen if the identity and difference of the contents of our thoughts are not necessarily given to us *a priori* in the sense of being open to introspective examination and comparison. According to such a view, the contents of our thoughts are determined by the causally and historically contingent relations we bear to things in the contexts in which we find ourselves, and the nature of these relations and contexts is often not completely known by us at any one time. Since I can fail to keep track of the objects of my beliefs, owing to their movements through space and time and changes in appearance, and to my own movements into and out of different contexts, it can

6 Ruth Barcan Marcus (1983) argues that one can mistakenly claim to believe something that one does not in fact believe. Her idea, or intuition, is that where the belief in question has an impossible content (e.g., is contradictory) one cannot genuinely believe it, because only possible contents can be believed (she draws an analogy with the fact that only true contents can be known). Since to claim something is to express a belief, it follows from this that one may (mistakenly) believe that one believes something that one does not in fact believe. My own intuition, for what it is worth, is that the principle that if a person believes that he believes p then he does believe p is on stronger ground than the principle that if a person believes p then p is possible.

happen that I believe I do not have a certain belief about something when in fact I do have that belief about that thing. In the case at hand, it is evident Ralph has lost track of George Eliot; he has failed to trace her career as the young woman struggling with Christianity to the later author of various famous novels. It is this that is responsible for his thinking he is suspending judgement about whether a certain woman is a novelist when he is not. If he had not lost track of her, then his belief that he does not believe her to be a novelist would in all likelihood be correct and he would genuinely have suspended judgement. But as soon as he loses track of her, the possibility arises that his beliefs about what he does not believe may be incorrect.

The rejection of the principle that, if a person denies he believes p then he does not believe p , is in fact part of the rejection, discussed in Section 3, of the rationality assumption, that is, the principle that rational subjects cannot believe contradictions. Both the rationality assumption and the principle that if a person denies he believes p then he does not believe p , stand and fall together. For suppose that Ralph believes George Eliot is a novelist and believes that Mary Ann Evans is not a novelist. According to the Russellian, both of the following would then be true:

1. Ralph believes George Eliot is a novelist
10. Ralph believes that Mary Ann Evans is not a novelist

and Ralph would have contradictory beliefs, something we have already seen the Russellian has reason to maintain is perfectly possible. Now, since Ralph believes George Eliot is a novelist, arguably he also believes that he does not believe George Eliot is not a novelist; at any rate, he can easily come to believe this:

11. Ralph believes that he does not believe George Eliot is not a novelist.

If (1) and (10) can both be true simultaneously then there is nothing stopping (1), (10) and (11) from all being true simultaneously (even if no

relevant suspension of judgement is occurring). But (10) and (11) can only be true if the principle that, if a person believes he does not believe p then he does not believe p , is false. A Russellian has good reasons to embrace the idea that a rational subject can have contradictory beliefs. It should not be surprising that a consequence of this is that a rational subject may think he does not believe something when he does in fact believe it. Since a rational subject may not recognize a certain mental content as a content that he already believes—either because the identities and differences among the contents are not introspectively detectable or some of the contents are unavailable or in a fragmented ‘mental compartment’—he may come to believe that he does not believe the content.⁷ So Argument (IV) is, according to Russellian, unsound: premise (d) is false.

According to the Pure Russellian view I am defending, which treats belief as binary and irreducible to a more basic ternary relation and a notion of representation, (7), (8) and (1) are all true and (9) is false; moreover, (7), (8) and (1) amount to a perfectly intelligible characterization of Ralph’s state of mind in Schiffer’s version of the story, just as (3) and (6) do of Ralph’s in the story where he appears to suspend judgement but does not. There is no reason for thinking that a proper understanding of Ralph’s states of mind in either situation demand the respective truths of (9) and (4).

6. The argument from the explanation of non-linguistic behaviour

One recent author defends the view that it could, on the basis of non-linguistic behaviour, be true that, for example, Lois Lane believes that Superman can fly but false that she believes that Clark Kent can fly even though Superman is Clark Kent. He remarks that he could point to the fact that Lois assents to the sentence ‘Superman can fly’ but not to the sentence ‘Clark Kent can fly’. As we saw in Section 2, this move against

⁷ Yet further reasons for rejecting the principle that if a person sincerely denies believing p then he does not believe p are given by Richard (1990, pp. 117-19).

the Russellian is question-begging since it relies on (QP), which the Russellian has good reasons to reject. However, he continues:

But I could also rely entirely upon Lois's non-linguistic behaviour: Lois witnesses the flight of a mighty man in a super-hero outfit; she also observes the thoroughly ordinary, unspectacular behaviour of her mild-mannered co-worker. Lois trembles in the presence of things she has observed to fly, like the man dressed in the super-hero outfit; but she never trembles at work. Indeed, we would be just as inclined to attribute these beliefs to Lois if she was deaf and mute, or even (*pace* Davidson) entirely non-linguistic: Lois might be an observant cat, dog, or bird. (Moore 1999, p. 359)

What exactly is the argument here? It appears to be that the commonsense psychological explanation for Lois's differential non-linguistic behaviour *vis-à-vis* the super-hero/reporter, in various situations, demands that Lois Lane believe that Superman can fly but not believe that Clark Kent can fly. Is this true? In order to answer this question we need to focus, in a little more detail, on some specific behaviour of Lois's toward the super-hero/reporter. First, however, let us note some obvious facts. Lois has observed the super-hero/reporter flying *only when he is dressed up as a super-hero* and the super-hero/reporter being mild-mannered *only when he is dressed up as a reporter*. She trembles in front of the guy when he is dressed up as, and behaving like, the super-hero but not in front of him when he is dressed up as, and behaving like, a reporter. With these points in mind, the question can be put like this: In order to explain the fact that Lois does not tremble in front of the super-hero/reporter when he is dressed up as a reporter, must we say that she does not believe Clark Kent can fly? If the answer is Yes, then Pure Russellianism is doomed because according to it the following are true:

12. Believes (Lois, <the superhero/reporter, the property of being able to fly>)
13. Believes (Lois, < the superhero/reporter, the property of being mild-mannered>),

and it must represent Lois's not believing Clark Kent can fly with

14. \sim Believes (Lois, <the superhero/reporter, the property of being able to fly>),

which contradicts (12). I will argue, however, that the answer is No and thus that the Pure Russellian has nothing to fear from the explanation of non-linguistic behaviour. Let us first lay out the argument explicitly:

Argument (V)

- (a) Lois trembles in the presence of things she believes can fly.
- (b) Lois does not tremble in front of the superhero/reporter when he is dressed up as a reporter.
- (c) This behaviour of Lois's can be explained only if she does not believe Clark Kent can fly.
- (d) Her behaviour can be explained.
- (e) Therefore, she does not believe Clark Kent can fly.

The Russellian can resist this argument by targeting the crucial premise (c), which is false.

Notice, first, that while it is true that Lois believes the superhero/reporter to be able to fly and also believes him to be mild-mannered, it is not true that she believes that the super-hero/reporter is both able to fly and mild-mannered, that is:

15. \sim Believes (Lois, <the superhero/reporter, the property of being able to fly & being mild-mannered>).

In fact, something even stronger is true, for presumably no one is believed by Lois to have both those properties:

- $\sim\exists x$ [Believes (Lois, <x, the property of being able to fly & being mild-mannered>)].

Generally speaking, according to the Pure Russellian, from the fact that a person ascribes property *F* to an object and ascribes property *G* to the same object, it does not follow that he ascribes to the object the conjunctive property *F&G*, for he may have lost track of the object between each property ascription and thus not realize that it is the same object to which he is ascribing each property. Moreover, if the Russellian is right to deny the epistemic transparency of identities and differences of mental content, he cannot necessarily tell by *a priori* introspection of his thought content that the subject components of the ascriptions each refer to the same object. Consider further that the ascription of a conjunctive property can often motivate the action of, or cause certain kinds of behaviour in, an ascriber that the separate ascription of each property would not (think of what happens when Oedipus finally comes to ascribe the property *mother and wife* to Jocasta). This provides the key to answering the allegedly embarrassing question which Argument (V) challenges the Russellian to answer: If Lois does believe Clark Kent can fly and trembles when she believes she is in front of things that can fly and she believes she is in front of Clark Kent, why is she not trembling? The answer, according to the Pure Russellian, is that, although (13) is true, and although it is true that

16. Believes (Lois, <the superhero/reporter, the property of standing in front of her>),

it is also true that

17. \sim Believes (Lois, <the superhero/reporter, the property being able to fly and of standing in front of her>).

If Lois were, however, to come to believe that the super-hero/reporter can fly and is in front of her—if, for example, she were to observe the super-hero/reporter entering a phone booth dressed up as Clark Kent and flying out of it dressed up as Superman, that is, if she were to track him through his various changes in appearance and movements in and out of the two relevant contexts—then she would tremble in front of the

super-hero/reporter when he was dressed up as a reporter. (I assume for the sake of argument that this is how her behaviour would change, rather than, say, her ceasing to tremble any more in front of the super-hero/reporter when he is dressed up as a super-hero.) In short, then, according to the Pure Russellian, it is (17) and not (14) that is necessary to explain Lois's differential non-linguistic behaviour toward the super-hero/reporter in his various guises. Since there is nothing special about this example, it seems that this strategy—exploiting the fact that ascriptions like (12), (16) and (17) can all be true simultaneously—can be applied to any example of non-linguistic behaviour from which the anti-Russellian wants to infer that someone believes a is F but not that b is F even though $a=b$. So premise (c) of this final argument is false and we can conclude quite generally that the explanation of non-linguistic behaviour does not require the possibility of a divergence in truth-value between (1) and (2) and their kin.

7. Conclusion

We have reviewed a number of arguments against the Russellian and found them all wanting. The idea that (1) and (2) can diverge in truth value cannot be taken for granted by the critics of Russellianism. The potential for a Pure Russellian response to these arguments, a response that eschews representations, relied on one of the implications of the Russellian's externalist notion of belief and other attitudes: namely, that the identity and difference among their contents may not be detectable *a priori*. I suggest that this is the idea that the Pure Russellian ought to appeal to in place of representations—Fregean senses, Russellian ways of believing, etc.—to account for the various puzzling psychological data involving propositional attitudes. While I have not been able to develop the notion here in any great detail, I hope to have shown how it might be employed and thus that the prospects of a Pure Russellianism based on it are at least as good as a representational theory.

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