

## 'It's True but I don't Believe it'<sup>1</sup>

by A.N.Prior.

[Suppose a person says 'I think it's raining though of course it isn't really'; or 'It really is raining; though of course I don't']<sup>2</sup>

Suppose a person says 'I think it's raining --- though of course it isn't really'; or 'It really is raining, though of course I don't think so' (or 'though of course I think it isn't'). It would be generally agreed that these are odd pairs of statements for anyone to make; but philosophers have been strangely hard put to it to say just what is wrong with them. They are not, it is clear, simply self-contradictory; in fact, both members of any of these pairs might be true. For example, I might sincerely & truly say that I think that it is raining, & insincerely that it really isn't; & it might nevertheless be really not raining, so that my second statement also would be true, though unintentionally. [So it is not the laws of ordi]<sup>3</sup> Hence, it would seem, it is not by the laws of ordinary logic that such conjunctions as these are to be condemned; what they contravene must be some special 'logic of belief'.<sup>4</sup>

[Prior's note: Bottom left margin contains a list

“10.36

10.53 for Square

11.13 for Paper.”]

{1}<sup>5</sup>

[There is]<sup>6</sup>

Suppose a person says 'I think it's raining - though of course it isn't really'; or 'It really is raining; though of course I don't believe it is'; or 'Though I believe it isn't raining, it really is.' It would be generally agreed that these are odd statements for anyone to make; but philosophers have been strangely hard put to it to say just what is wrong with them. They are not, it is clear, simply self-contradictory; in fact, any one of them might actually be true. For I might, e.g., say

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<sup>1</sup> This text has been edited by Fabio Corpina, Adriane Rini and Peter Øhrstrøm. It has been written on papers from University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand.

<sup>2</sup> This has been crossed out in the original MS.

<sup>3</sup> This has been crossed out in the original MS.

<sup>4</sup>[Prior's note:] Bottom left margin contains a list

“10.36

10.53 for Square

11.13 for Depart.”

<sup>5</sup> [Transcribers' note:] The next page appears to be an earlier draft of above.

<sup>6</sup> This has been crossed out in the original MS.

sincerely that I think it is raining, & insincerely that it really isn't, & it might nevertheless be really not raining, so that in saying that it isn't I would have inadvertently told the truth. {2} So it is not the laws of ordinary logic - say, of the 1s<sup>7</sup> propositional calculus - that statements of this sort violate, & it might well be thought, & has been sometimes thought, that what they contravene is some special logic<sup>8</sup> {3}

$$T(f)xp = KTxpNp$$

$$D(f)xp = KTxNpp$$

$$Fx = \Sigma p AT(f)xpD(f)xp.$$

$$T(i)xp = \wedge KTxp[N]BxNPxTxpNBxp.$$

$$D(i)xp = \wedge KTxNp[N]Bx[N]p.$$

$$[KTxNpNBxNp.]^9$$

$$Ix = \Sigma p AT(i)xpD(i)xp.$$

$$(1) \quad CKTxpTxBxNp$$

$$- AKTxpBxNp \quad \text{---} \quad T(i)xp$$

$$- KTxBxNpNBxNp. \quad \text{---} \quad T(f)xBxNp.$$

$$(2) \quad CKTxNpTxBxp$$

$$- AKTxNpBxp \quad \text{---} \quad D(i)xp.$$

$$- KTxBxpNBxp$$

$$T(f)xp.$$

$$(3) \quad CKTxpTxNBxp$$

$$AKTxp[BxNp]^{10}NBxp. \quad \text{---} \quad T(i)xp$$

$$- KTxNBxpBxp \quad \text{---} \quad D(f)xp.$$

$$[CKTxNpTxNBx]^{11}$$

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<sup>7</sup> This word is unclear.

<sup>8</sup> This word is unclear.

<sup>9</sup> The text in [] has been crossed out in the original.

<sup>10</sup> The text in [] has been crossed out in the original.

[  $CK\delta p\delta\gamma NpAK\delta p\gamma NpK\delta\gamma NpN\gamma Np$

$CK\delta Np\delta\gamma pAK\delta Np\gamma pK\delta\gamma pN\gamma p$ ]<sup>12</sup>

$CKpqAKprKqNr$

$CKpqAKprKqNr$

$CKpqAKpNrKqr$

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<sup>11</sup> The formula in [] has been crossed out in the original.

<sup>12</sup> The formulae in [] has been crossed out in the original.