Why Correspondence Truth
Will Not Go Away

GERALD VISION

Abstract   From the popular view that the property of truth adds nothing not already inherent in its bearers it has been inferred that classical theories of truth are thereby refuted. Taking as representative a version of deflationism based on a certain way of interpreting the Tarskian schema convention T—and popularly called "disquotational"—I argue that the view is beset by fatal difficulties. These include: an unavoidable awkwardness in handling indexicals; an inability to accept anything more than a too anemic notion of a truth condition, leaving it defenseless against clearly inadequate alternatives; and an incapacity to show that its characteristic biconditional can support any acceptable dependency claims (made evident by replacing the biconditional with 'because'). Finally, were there no predicate on the order of 'is true', this would not annihilate the property of being true or the current grounds for philosophical inquiries about it. This is an important clue to why deflationary approaches in general are dead ends.

1   Armstrong writes, "Two theories of truth…fight in the breast of any right-minded, not to say clean-living, philosopher. I, at any rate, have oscillated between the two for many years. The first is the Correspondence theory. To say that p is true is to say that this proposition corresponds to reality. The other is the Redundancy theory. To say that p is true is, fundamentally, to say no more than to say p" ([1], p. 435). Inner peace is restored when he concludes that they are compatible. But the predicament is intelligible only because the views appear to be inconsistent with each other. What accounts for this appearance? The redundancy theory (hereafter "redundancy") is usually regarded as a member of a group of closely related *deflationary* views. Subject to later qualification, deflationism maintains

(D)   truth is not a property,

more specifically, not a relational one. Closely connected with this is the usual subsequent claim that

(D_M)   the theory of truth engages no metaphysical issues (viz., about the conditions making a bearer true).

It may be unclear whether (D_M) is intended as a separate defining feature of deflationism or as an implication of (D)—say, with some allegedly indisputable principles—but in either case it is integral to all forms of deflationism. On the other hand, the correspondence theory (hereafter "correspondence") implies, *inter alia*, that truth is a property attaching to a bearer when it is related to a certain state of the world. There is certainly a conflict between deflationism and correspondence. The only remaining question is whether we can detach redundancy from deflationism without eviscerating the former. I argue shortly that we cannot.

The remainder of this paper is an extended argument to the effect that most popular forms of (D) collapse. Moreover, we may locate much of their failure by a closer reading of the very constructions deflationists regularly cite as the strongest evidence for their view. To summarize a large part of my claim, (D) relies on an impossibly slight interpretation of those formulas. However, before seriously mooting these issues, a number of preliminary remarks are in order.

2   A pure form of the redundancy theory harks back to Ramsey's oft-quoted "It is evident that 'It is true that Caesar was murdered' means no more than that Caesar was murdered" ([25], p. 142). Setting aside differences between the operator 'it is true that' and the predicate 'is true', another instance is Ayer's claim that "in all sentences of the form '*p* is true,' the phrase 'is true' is logically superfluous. When, for example, one says that the proposition 'Queen Anne is dead' is true, all that one is saying is that Queen Anne is dead" ([2], p. 88).[1] In its currently most popular version redundancy utilizes a theorem schema drawn from Tarski which he called *convention T*:

s is true (in language L) if and only if *p*

in which *s* is to be replaced by a structural description of a sentence of the relevant object-language. Let us call the part of convention T, and instances occurring left of the connective, its 'target sentence'. The claim is: it is a condition of material adequacy for any theory of truth that it contain as theorems all (true) instances resulting from replacing '*s*' and '*p*' with a structural description (/name) of a sentence of L and the sentence of L thereby named, respectively. Call the results thereby obtained 'T-biconditionals'.

To arrive at a T-biconditional an atomic sentence must satisfy clauses for names and predicates. I shall ignore these prior steps (as well as relativization to language and strict punctuation) to simplify the exposition and to prevent us from being sidetracked by issues orthogonal to our main purpose. Utilizing this machinery should carry no implication that Tarski himself subscribes to redundancy, or for that matter any other form of deflationism. Nevertheless, as is well known, many deflationists have incorporated related aspects of Tarski's work into their own views. Unsurprisingly, convention T becomes central just where the focus changes from truth operator to truth predicate.

Again ignoring differences between a predicate and an operator, let us summarize redundancy for handy retrieval as the claim that

(R) 'is true' contributes nothing (new) semantically to that of which it is
      predicated.

However, we shall concentrate not on redundancy, but on a variant (or at least a first
cousin) recognizable under the title "disquotationalism." For the disquotationalist,
the most revealing versions of convention T and T-biconditionals are those in which
s, the structural description, is supplied by a quotation name of the sentence of which
'is true' is predicated, and in which the metalanguage in which the T sentence is
framed includes its own object language.[2] Thus, the translation of the quoted sen-
tence into the metalanguage is homophonic. For disquotationalism this makes man-
ifest the more exact relation between the target sentence and the right-hand side. To
wit,

(T) '*p*' is true if and only if (=iff) *p*.

Examples of T-biconditionals include

(TB1) 'dogs bark' is true iff dogs bark,
and
(TB2) 'Zagora is 52 days by camel from Tombouctou' is true iff Zagora is
        52 days by camel from Tombouctou.

Indeed, all appropriate sentences will have a true biconditional for each sentence of
which 'is true' (or its translation) is predicated. The right-hand side is obtained in
each case by two simple removal operations on the target sentence: of its predicate
and of the quotation marks from the quotation name. The disquotationalist's leading
point is that this procedure preserves "the same assertoric content" as the target sen-
tence in the disquoted sentence, thus displaying again the superfluidity of the truth
predicate.[3] For a handy summary of disquotationalism I choose the following.

(Q) For all instances of sentences of the form ' "*p*" is true', the sentence
      obtained by removing the quotation marks and deleting 'is true' has
      the same assertoric (or informational) content as the original.

Theorists may prefer more careful statements of their doctrines, but these unqualified
summaries will serve us at this stage. Qualifications can be entered as needed.

    As stated, both (R) and (Q) conspicuously lack deflationary consequences. We
obtain them by adding that (Q)—or (R)—is a complete account of truth, or at least a
complete account of the fact-stating contribution of 'is true' in T-biconditionals. (Call
this 'the completeness qualification'.) Being complete, the view leaves nothing for
classical theories of truth to supply; in particular it does not omit any further condition
that would, in conjunction with the bearer in question, make that bearer true (or false).
This then brings us once again to

(D) truth is not a property.

What follows is a laundry list of preliminary comments about (Q), (D), and (R), and
their interrelations.

    First, given (Q)—or (R), hereafter understood—together with the completeness
qualification, a more immediate consequence than (D) appears to be

(D$_P$)   the predicate 'is true' expresses no property.

Thus, we might suppose that the inference from (Q) to (D) is mediated by (D$_P$). But (D$_P$) might be true even where (D) is false: that is, truth might be a property even if its correlative predicate does not express it. (D$_P$) is basically a semantic claim, while its alleged consequence (D) is a metaphysical thesis.[4] We can imagine the semantics of 'is true' going a certain way even if the world (including truth) does not. If this were the situation, deflationism would have to confront the issue of truth-conditions directly, rather than indirectly (as is the current practice) by way of seeing what can be extracted from a consideration of uses of a truth-predicate. Other than noting this difference between (D) and (D$_P$) for future reference, let us provisionally ignore it. Thus, would-be deflationists who frame their views in terms of something like (D$_P$) may be taken to be making claims bearing on (D). The slack between the theses looms larger in Section 6.

Second, while (R) applies to propositions, (Q) mentions sentences. Certain disputes between these forms revolve about that difference: say, over the place of substitutional quantification, over predicating 'is true' of what we do not understand, and over the range of variables in formulas that replace truth with the help of quantifiers. But we may sidestep those issues here. The points pressed below concern problems that cannot be eluded by switching versions.

Third, it should not be supposed that in calling the content in (Q) "assertoric" I am acquiescing in the occasional disquotationalist characterization of (Q) as showing that the target sentence asserts just what the right-hand sentence does and nothing more, that the two sentences have the same assertive force. The link between the disquotational procedure and assertion is at most incidental. What matters is a similarity of content. It is qualified here as 'assertoric', occasionally 'informational', because there appears to be a paucity of alternatives for describing it that are not in their own way as misleading as those terms. Various disquotationalists may suppose the connection with assertion to be more intimate because the embedded sentences are both indicative. Even so, they could be used for acts other than asserting. (E.g., someone about to rent a camel might exclaim in an incredulous tone, "Zagora is 52 days by camel from Tombouctou?" a familiar conversational short form for "Do you mean to say that…?" Similar cases can be conjured for whole target sentences.) Thus, if we may separate the content of a speech act from the indicator of the speech act performed with it,[5] we might put it that whatever similarity of the sides is unearthed by the disquotational procedure is that of content not, save derivatively, of assertion (or any other speech act). Some take the disquotational procedure to have consequences only for the practice of asserting. But for reasons just given the procedure as such has no immediate consequences for assertions, much less confining itself to the practice of asserting. Assertoric content is not the same as assertoric practice. Thus, the following, though perhaps correct, seems to me too narrow for (Q) as well as inviting misconstrual:

(QA) to assert that 'p' is true is to assert no more than that p.

No reason is discoverable in the T-sentences themselves to compel us to conceive of their embedded sentences as (implicit) assertions.[6]

Fourth, it is well known among disquotationalists that the procedure in (Q) is not always available. Two sorts of cases are customarily cited: those in which the

sentence in question is not displayed, as in 'What David said about the Cretaceous extinction is true', and those in which we universally quantify over sentences as in 'Whatever the Pope says is true'. Let us label such cases in which the procedure in (Q) will not work—for whatever reason—*exceptional*, and the other cases *successful*. I shall highlight another sort of exceptional case in the next section. At present I want to concentrate on disquotationalist strategy for the acknowledged exceptional cases.

While it is as a rule admitted that the existence of exceptional cases blocks a reductive analysis of 'is true', such cases are taken to illustrate a more general deflationary point: namely, 'is true' is no more than a device for semantic ascent, for talking about bearers of truth rather than for talking directly about those bearers' subject-matters. Reading back into the everyday case, disquotationalists may adopt this as an official account of what 'is true' achieves whenever it is predicated, with T-sentences showing why the accomplishment is normally dispensable.[7] Then for successful and exceptional cases alike, the choice between talking in these contexts about the world and words becomes negligible (e.g., saying that the sky is blue rather than that 'is blue' is truly predicable of what 'the sky' denotes). For this reason the target sentences of (TB1) and (TB2) no more introduce a property of truth than do the other sides of their biconditionals. This is not, as it were, an independent thesis which may be optionally attached to disquotationalism; rather it is integral to the way disquotationalists view the upshot of disquoting in the successful cases. As such, it is a major reason for including the completeness qualification as part of the original view, and it may be a source of what I later describe as their systemic misreading of T-biconditionals.

Fifth, in connection with the last point it should be mentioned that some regard (Q)—or (R)—as compatible with correspondence. These may be correspondence theorists who concede (Q), but they are never (Q)'s died-in-the wool advocates. At the outset we noted Armstrong's version of this compatibilism for (R). Searle ([28], ch. 9) promotes it for (Q).[8] As for the true blue advocates of (Q)—and most commentators—they regard the completeness qualification (and thereby deflationism (D), which is certainly incompatible with correspondence) as an integral part of the view. Someone may give various reasons for including (D) inside the position. It may be believed that a form of (Q), perhaps with the help of uncontroversial premises, implies (D), or perhaps the completeness qualification is intended as an original, if separable, part of the disquotationalist doctrine. Others seem to see no genuine distinction between (Q) and (D).[9] I agree with compatibilists that (Q) does not, in fact, imply (D), not even with the help of any uncontroversial premises with which I am familiar. This was foreshadowed in earlier remarks about the gap between the former's semantic standing and the latter's metaphysical status. Nevertheless, it seems beyond dispute that a more fleshed out disquotationalism should be taken as a deflationary view (viz., with the completeness qualification), however a defender thinks that gets accomplished. Without that article (Q) is not a very interesting doctrine, and it is hard to imagine why serious thinkers would have gone to the trouble of emphasizing it. For shorn of that implication all it says is that in many instances in which 'is true' has been used, the statement made can be reformulated with a different utterance in which 'is true' does not appear. The simple retention of content while reformulating one's sentences is a rather humdrum occurrence, perhaps of significance

for diplomats and advertisers but sustaining no particular philosophical interest. It acquires significance when the rephrasal supplies a lesson about the missing phrase. This is the job of philosophical analysis, reductive or merely elucidatory. If we do not credit (Q) with that much, it is hard to see the point of trying to accommodate it. Thus, whether or not the implication holds, I shall take (D) as an integral part of the view here and, except where stated otherwise, I understand (Q) as amended by the completeness qualification.

Sixth, I am not concerned with attempts to show that a substantive concept of truth is free of semantic primitives. While that is a perfectly legitimate enterprise, it is scarcely a *sine qua non* of a theory of truth. Correspondence involves semantic notions, and it is indifferent to its ultimate acceptance whether they can be generated nonsemantically.

Seventh, while redundancy and disquotationalism are prominent varieties of deflationism, they do not exhaust the possibilities for (D). There is also, for example, a prosententialist theory which suggests treating the target sentence on the left-hand side of (T) along the lines of a demonstrative.[10] In addition some argue for (D) by attacking the sensibleness of the bearer-independent worldly items such as facts, which appear to be needed by substantial theories. (This strategy is also occasionally employed by classical nondeflationist competitors of correspondence, e.g., coherence. Here we note only its role as a supplementary argument for deflationism.) Again some proceed directly to give a "noncognitivist" analysis of the truth predicate as a substitute for considering target sentences as involved in fact-stating discourse. Yet others have pursued a mixture of these strategies. I concentrate largely on (Q). This survey could not hope to cover all the varieties in the field, so I have opted for the most celebrated and widely held as representative. (Q) also cedes nothing in plausibility to other forms. While not every problem I shall expose attaches, *mutatis mutandis*, to each of the other forms, (Q)'s problems are representative enough to provide a glimpse into potential deficiencies of other versions of (D). (Recall that despite their troubled logical relations, I am considering (Q) only insofar as it is supplemented by (D).) Connected with this, we might mention another deflationary tenet:

(DA)   the truth-predicate is merely a device for (one or another of a variety of) endorsements of sentences, or, alternatively, merely a device for semantic ascent.

(D) does not imply (DA): rejecting a predicate's metaphysical aspirations does not commit one to any particular view about its actual role. Nevertheless, if it is to be plausibly maintained that 'is true' is not a factual predicate, the account is greatly enhanced by at least some notion of what role the predicate does, in fact, play.

Finally, (D) is often qualified (by supporters and critics alike) in various ways. Some deflationists do not deny outright that truth is a property, but claim only that it is not a "substantial" one.[11] As Wright puts it, it is "metaphysically lightweight" rather than "metaphysically heavyweight." Others may argue, not that truth is not a substantial property, but only that our account of the truth-predicate does not commit us to its being so. All such thinkers are to be thought of as covered by these deliberations although I shall continue to use the simpler claim (D). We cannot delve deeply into the qualifications. I shall satisfy myself with two brief comments. First, whatever substantiality amounts to, certainly the correspondence claim that there are worldly

conditions for a bearer's being true counts as substantial. Second, even if 'is true' were to have, as some expressivists have claimed, noncognitive functions—such as expressing a stance or attitude, or standing by, agreeing with, underwriting, seconding, or supporting a sentence, or satisfying a norm—it would not follow that it did not also convey something about a substantive property. Indeed, it might do both.[12] (D) is not entailed by showing that 'is true' performs one of the tasks awarded it by (DA).

Thus far we have said very little about the main victim of deflation—the correspondence theory of truth. Correspondence maintains that a bearer is made true by virtue of (= its truth is constituted by) a relation to something in the world.[13] Bearers cited in the literature have included beliefs, sentences, propositions, statements, ideas, and judgments; things in the world have included facts, states of affairs, situations, and sets of individuals (with or without properties). It would be a distraction here to elaborate the view further. The deflationist takes issue not with the details of particular versions, but the very project correspondence sets itself. And the project is something correspondence shares with classical competitors such as coherence. Correspondence is selected as a foil for (D) because, insofar as the project of inquiring into truth-making conditions is concerned, correspondence has the edge over its classical competitors. However, according to the deflationist, the task of discovering what substantial features make bearers true should not even get started, because convention T, as interpreted by (Q) and the completeness qualification, tells us all there is to know about the predicate 'is true'. For succinctness, I shall write below as if (Q) and (D) are being played off against correspondence, but all that the latter requires in this setting is the legitimacy of its project, not a completed or detailed formulation.

Some have complained that this sketch glosses over the pivotal difference between antirealism and correspondence: namely, whether all truths are such in virtue of a single type of thing; that is, for correspondence—or so it is claimed—there is a single account of truth for every kind of belief. Although this seems to me to place an unjustified burden upon that view, we need not broach the issue here, for (D), or at least (D_M), implies that *no* truth—not even a single case—is constituted in the way described by correspondence.

A major thrust of the remainder of this paper is that (Q) is not a minimal rendering of a truth theory onto which correspondence and its competitors would have to be added; but rather it is either nothing or a competing (not neutral) and implausible understanding of (T). Since a number of writers have viewed (Q)'s reading of (T) as saying something "minimal," below the level at which traditional theories get introduced, or as neutral between various truth theories,[14] this calls for some elaboration.

If we consider (T) as containing a left-hand side, a connective, and a right-hand side, it is fair to state that much attention has been paid to the first two constitutents, and a good deal less to the third. Regarding target sentences, the literature on the proper bearers of truth is profuse. Will sentences suffice? If not, what more is needed? The current situation here seems to be one of tolerant pluralism. Also, theorists have disagreed about the strength appropriate to the connectives if they are to apply to natural language: are they material conditionals, indicative conditionals (if that differs from the material), conditionals supporting, or identical with, subjunctives? When we turn to the right-hand side, there has not been nearly the same intense controversy

over various readings of (T) it might mandate. To the extent that options have been vetted at all, they seem to be confined to the syntactical properties of the right-hand medium. Of course, we find there a string of words, a sentence with a syntax. But suppose we ask, "How must this part of the formula be understood to operate to supply an adequate account of 'is true' in natural language?" Some minimalists (recent descendants of deflationists, see note 13) have satisfied themselves with the thought that we need *nothing more than* to recognize that the two sides share assertoric content. But any further consideration of what is needed for the right-hand side to have that content, beyond the fact that it is a sentence, has been scuttled. Let me elaborate.

Subsequent parts of this paper pose a series of problems which any interpretation of (T) must solve if it is to cover natural language. The problems are not esoteric; in fact, they are scarcely problems at all for correspondence and coherence, but merely part of what those theories are designed to address. As will become evident, deflationists themselves have addressed some of them. They involve such matters as methods for choosing indices (Section 3), grounds for rejecting clearly unacceptable, but extensionally equivalent, alternatives to the biconditional (Section 4), and accounting for why T-biconditionals are systematically mirrored by a set of *because* statements (Section 5). They are issues deflationists cannot avoid, but, I argue, that they are ill-equipped to handle. One way to solve them would be to tie the right-hand sentence to a (actual or possible) worldly state. This is unavailable to the disquotationalist, who sees on the right-hand side, say, only a syntactic *something* capable of being negated, conditionalized, and perhaps embedded in intentional contexts.

A useful way of viewing my later results is to pose the following trilemma for the deflationism integral to (Q) and (R): for the aforementioned problems, assuming that they are genuine (and no one has to my knowledge seriously challenged that) viewing the right-hand side as no more than a sentence whose content can be compared for similarity or difference with that of the target sentence's yields a clearly mistaken solution, specifying a worldly state of affairs which that sentence expresses is unavailable, and there is nothing intermediate. A view without further options is doomed.

None of this challenges (T). Rather the point of the exercise is to show that what deflationists regard as a minimalist reading of it is, as of yet, no reading at all, at least not until we know more about what the right-hand side conveys. And once we know what deflationists as such *must refuse to acknowledge* about it, their view either has yet to express a proposition or expresses one that is patently implausible. This is not the only charge I lay at disquotationalism's doorstep, but it is a thread that runs through much of the following critique.

Another useful way to view the issue is to compare the right-hand side of (T) with a photograph, which is in turn contrasted with the scene of which it is a photograph. We can describe the contents of the original scene directly as 'dark blue vase with lilies on a mahogany table'. But we have a choice with the photograph. We can describe its content just as we described its original scene, and when doing this the words following 'it is a photograph of…' constitute as much a description of the scene as of the photograph. This seems the most natural kind of photographic description. In it the describer ignores the medium (e.g., the gloss or matte finish of the photographic paper, the singular way in which depth is photographically represented). She "looks through" its properties *qua* medium and describes it in terms of

what it represents, perhaps subject to certain restrictions regarding the way a photograph *can* represent things. We have a similar option for understanding (T). (Q) and (R) maintain that we can get along largely ignoring the *actual* representational features of the right-hand side—noting only *that* it represents (has assertive content) and that whatever its content may be, it is the same as that on the other side. But nondeflationists construe the right-hand side in terms of *what* is represented via the medium appearing there. My twofold contention is (1) that this is no more an unnatural way of taking (T) than is the analogous description in the case of photographs, and (2) that various considerations adduced in the sequel force upon us the nondeflationist reading: that is, only attention to what is represented by the right-hand side will give the desired reading of (T).

As just noted, Sections 3–5 contain reasons for the second of these claims. A concluding Section 6 argues that an initial mistake, playing into disquotationalist hands, may have been to allow the entire issue about a truth property to rest on analyses of its correlative predicate 'is true'.

3   Thus far we have supposed that cases in which a target sentence is present are successful for (Q), those in which it is absent are not. This would appear to imply that all T-sentences are successful. But sentences with indexicals falsify that view. The exception is generally acknowledged, but its full significance is often missed. Consider an example of such a sentence: 'I am not a crook'. We would not want its T-biconditional to be

'I am not a crook' is true if and only if I am not a crook.

Because of the context-dependent (and conversational) way in which its truth-condition has been specified, putting it forward hampers "the plausibility of the claim that what has been defined [here] is truth" (Davidson [4], p. 34). Rather we need something delivering generalized truth conditions, as in

(TB3) 'I am not a crook' is true if and only if the utterer is not a crook (at the time of utterance, say, t_1).

But "the utterer is not a crook (at t_1)" does not disquote the relevant part of the target sentence. What are the options for bringing this case in line? We might try to transport the indexical elements to the left-hand side. That—and other local patch-up jobs—fail for a simple reason: namely, the right-hand side must present a general, noncontext-bound statement of the conditions making the quoted sentence on the left-hand side true. Disquoting a context-bound sentence cannot achieve this by itself. That does not mean that (T3) cannot serve deflationism: it is still a formula in which 'is true' is absent from the right-hand side. But that is insufficient to dispel some serious misgivings. One of them concerns whether the emendations for T-sentences dictated by the cases preserve the virtues that led one to sign on to (Q) in the first place. Another one, not unconnected, is whether these sorts of changes are favorable to a disquotationalist, or even a deflationary, reading of the end product.

As for the first misgiving, we begin with the plain observations that we cannot always obtain the desired replacement by the straightforward method indicated by (Q) and that this has nothing to do with 'is true' being predicated of sentences which are unknown, not understood, or instantiated infinitely. But suppose the disquotationalist

rejoins as follows: "Little has been lost other than a mechanical way to apply the procedure. Truth theory will now require additional clauses for speakers and locations, but with the same result. The process from which disquotationalism derives its title is only that used in the simplest cases." Why doesn't this dispel the doubt?

Well, for one thing, the various forms of (D) cannot merely claim to get rid of 'is true' in whatever way is available on the occasion. (D) draws its plausibility from the systematic character of the method it proposes, be it disquotationalism, redundancy, prosententialism, or whatever. This is because deflationism proposes to deal with a truth-*predicate* without introducing any (substantial) truth-*property*. In a sense which is difficult to make as precise as desirable here, this includes dissociating the syntax of the predicate from its semantics. This may require a broad notion of syntax, but (D)'s advertised discovery is, roughly, that the semantic treatments of classical truth theories are replaceable by syntactical ones.[15] But syntax, however broadly construed, is nothing if not rule-governed and mechanical. Given its resources, there is simply no other way to insure that its formulas can be extended to unexamined cases. It loses that feature and its touted advantage over classical theories when it concedes that it cannot get along without devices that are neither anticipated nor explained by its method. This brings us to the second concern.

While we cannot foreclose on additional clauses for indexicals, interjecting them seems to undo whatever advantage may have accrued to the disquotationalist's claims for an unmetaphysical reading. The kinds of changes forced upon (TB3) and its kin make correspondence-type explanations naturally appealing in ways that it is difficult for deflationary explanations to match. Correspondence theorists can argue plausibly that when we decide what clauses to introduce and how to frame them, we are compelled by a desideratum that the right-hand side yield the worldly truth-condition for the target sentence. Worldly truth-conditions cannot have truth sensibly predicated of them. We are deprived of anything like an analogue of the mechanical explanation that (Q) supplies for the successful simple case, and we are thrown directly into considerations of how the sentence (on this use) matches the world. Although for reasons discussed shortly, the disquotationalist is not absolutely forced to acknowledge that we can only eliminate the indexical by considering worldly conditions, the correspondence theorist's hand is, nevertheless, strengthened. The foregoing explanation gives substance to the claim that the appearance of a sentential something on the right-hand side is insignificant and accidental (dictated by the rules of Indo-European syntax, not by truth theory): what matters is that a worldly item of a certain sort be specified. No doubt this option has been there all along, but its virtues clearly emerge in indexical cases. For while we need not complicate correspondence just to account for the sorts of elements required in (TB3), as additions to (Q)—or (R)—they are cast in an unflattering light as ill-fitting (if not *ad hoc*) addenda.

There are of course possible escape routes for the deflationist here, although they may only defer a fatal reckoning. For example, it might be maintained that a cognizer (speaker) associates each indexical with a mental file drawer containing names, descriptions, and even other (ultimately eliminable) indexicals with which to complete the right-hand side (see Field [8], pp. 280–81). The connections are between indexicals and other linguistic items, and thus nonsemantic. No semantic relations have been introduced.

It is unclear how this will work. For one thing, it takes a detour through the theory of content for a cognizer, and despite the popular assumption of some such connection, it is not obvious how the requirements of truth-theory are tied up with those for theories of content and meaning (that is, other than through the fact that truth is itself one among other semantic notions). Even if we grant the connection, the solution has various drawbacks as a component of a theory of content, for it is doubtful that a theory, one of whose main goals ought to be to preserve content in its substitution formula, will not introduce new content (and perhaps eliminate some old content) when replacing an indexical by a description or even a name. Even the normal case is problematic, much less the special ones to which philosophers have drawn attention when we try to replace 'I' by 'Richard M. Nixon' or 'Rene Descartes' or 'John Perry'. Still, once again, the maneuver may be a delaying tactic rather than a solution, for there is yet no sign of a plausible supporting argument about how these file drawers get filled without word-world connections.

But we can put all those objections aside for now. The main point is that to get this strategy off the ground the deflationist must supplement the method of T-biconditionals with an independent tenet. It is no longer the T-sentences themselves that do the work, but a theory of content. Once again, given the limits of this project we cannot attend to every deflationary supplement coming down the pike. For that reason our original aim was simply to see whether the initial method alone was adequate, because it is the one on which the disquotationalist in particular places great emphasis before troubles arise. With that restriction on our inquiry, an appeal to the addition of mental file drawers raises a white flag.

It is a further advantage of this observation about indexicals that the truth-predicate in the target sentence has secondary importance. What is crucial is the presentation of realistic truth-conditions for the target sentence *and* for its quoted portion if that has the same assertoric force. Nonindexical cases may lull us into complacency by making things too easy for the disquotationalist. They encourage an inordinate concern with eliminating a certain predicate. Once accomplished, disquotationalists have less inducement to take seriously the question what sort of a beast we have on the right-hand side. Thus, it is easy enough to get off with the breezy answer "an embedded sentence having the same assertoric potential, period!" However, the contemplated changes on the right-hand side are dictated not by the truth-predicate *but by elements contained wholly inside the quotation marks of the target sentence*. Their indispensability for achieving the desired noncontextual conditions is indifferent to the presence or absence of the predicate 'is true'.

4   Let us briefly compare accounts of truth with those of causation. Just about everyone, even regularity theorists, acknowledges a distinction between causal and noncausal lawlike connections. For example, while an ongoing manufacturing process may be a reliable indicator of smoke leaving the factory chimney, the former is not the cause of the latter; they are each effects of a single cause. The reliability with which A signals B (combined with, say, factors such as temporal priority) is insufficient for A to be the cause of B. This is not to say that there is not a large overlap between causal and lawlike connections, but we can draw a *conceptual* distinction: cases in which the different connections are dissociable would simply facilitate our drawing

it. Is there a comparable conceptual distinction in the offing for truth-indicators? In particular, can we distinguish between

   (a) necessary and sufficient conditions for the truth of P, and

   (b) conditions that make P true, or that are constitutive of P's truth?

Of course, any instance of (a) may also be one of (b), but it is crucial that it also may not. The distinction could turn out to be nothing but conceptual (with complete overlap of cases). But it is important to ask whether despite the possibility of extensional equivalence such a distinction is enforceable, since (a) and (b) appear to specify different notions of a truth-condition. If it can be shown that the concept embodied in (b) is independently sensible, then if there are truths it is an easy step to infer that they must satisfy it. Thus, the vital question is whether such a distinction can be sustained at a conceptual level.

Call the thesis that there is nothing to (b) over and above what is contained in (a) 'the no distinction view'. What are its credentials? Although proponents of the no distinction view are not all that scarce, arguments for it are. As just noted, the considerable overlap between the two sorts of cases will not suffice to establish it. Perhaps it will be asserted on the basis of a deflationary reading of convention T. But that is not helpful because the no distinction view is instrumental, perhaps indispensable, in justifying that very deflationist reading. I have not been able to discover more than this in the literature by way of an explicit defense.

Suppose we put the shoe on the other foot: what reasons are there for believing that there is such a distinction? One answer is our occasional unwillingness to count something satisfying (a) as a truth condition.

Consider omniscient beings. We need not believe there are any; nevertheless, we can say what conditions for their existence might be. If we were to attempt a characterization of what it is to be an omniscient being in the style of (T), there seems no better starting point than saying that a condition of material adequacy for A being omniscient is the satisfaction of every sentence of the following pattern:

   (O) 'P' is true if and only if A knows that P.

I doubt that anyone would accept (O) as yielding a truth-condition for all its target sentences. 'P' might be any sentence. Few sentences are about cognizers, many fewer yet about omniscient ones. An omniscient being knowing that dogs bark could scarcely be a truth-condition for ' "Dogs bark" is true'; nevertheless, and despite its introduction for a different purpose, the satisfaction of all instances of (O) by an omniscient cognizer yields a necessary and sufficient condition for ' "P" is true'. In fact, it even displays a necessary and sufficient condition for plain 'P'. Why prefer (T) to (O)?

Here is another way to view the unique contribution of (O). Various theorists will reject (O) as a kind of T-sentence because it fails further criteria met by (T): say, that it is not free of intentional or semantic primitives, that it does not support subjunctive conditionals, or simply that it is a nonstarter as the basic theorem for a general semantic theory. For the sake of argument I grant all complaints of this ilk. Now suspend your belief provisionally and suppose, what seems quite imaginable, that all the problems were solvable so that (O) satisfied all relevant *formal* criteria for a T-sentence. In

other words, suppose that all such complaints are no longer relevant considerations. Now would (O) be an acceptable truth-condition schema? The answer, or so it seems to me, remains clearly negative. For this reason it does not appear to me that one can sidestep the problem that (O) poses by dwelling on those various other flaws, for the one outstanding feature which attracts our attention here is that it *does* achieve what (a), read strictly, requires: that is, it supplies an extensional equivalent for our target sentences.

This in no way impugns the importance of convention T for truth theory, but simply reminds us of the more selective reasons for which it was wanted. If we cannot distinguish on grounds internal to the view the virtues of (T) from (O), then we cannot appreciate the value of convention T; if we cannot appreciate what (b) delivers beyond (a), we cannot distinguish on grounds internal to the view the virtues of (T) from (O); but if we appreciate what (b) delivers beyond (a), we have gone beyond deflationism to correspondence. From this it follows that if we appreciate the value of convention T, we have gone beyond deflationism to correspondence (that is, more properly, to its project).

The correspondence theorist can see in convention T and its T-biconditionals a telescoped way to elucidate his own view. (Special problems arise for the disquotationalist version (C1) adopted below—see note 19—though I'll provisionally ignore them.) When, as he might put it, the synecdoche is removed from convention T, what it tells us is something on the order of

(C1)   " 'P' is true if and only if 'P' corresponds to the facts" ([32], p. 25).

This is not to claim that formulas such as (C1), even if we admit them, settle the issue against (D). The deflationist will no doubt offer a different, deflationary reading of (C1), one intended to take away its "merely apparent" potency. In Section 5 we will examine Wright's effort to do precisely that (though we cannot, in this venue, canvass the whole spectrum of attempts to offer similar alternative treatments for the wide variety of correspondence's factative vocabulary). However, that does not detract from the ability to read convention T as a correspondence theorist. Attempting to deflate what is on its face a correspondence-looking formula such as (C1) is a very different enterprise from interpreting (T) as on its surface not involving us in substantive truth conditions. The present point is only that we are driven toward something that could not be more directly expressed than by (C1), and away from a deflationary interpretation of (T), by the need to admit truth conditions of type (b).

5   Another way to shed light on the need for substantive truth-conditions, and on what correspondence contributes to the reading of convention T, is to consider the schema

(BT)   *s* is true *because p*

which, we might maintain, really yields the force of *p*'s status as a truth-condition for '*s* is true' but resists handy deflating. This has not escaped deflationists' notice. Thus, after fleshing out the objection, I explore deflationary attempts to domesticate (BT) constructions and explain why they fail. Why has this proved important enough even for deflationists to take note? There are several reasons; here I provide only a single basic one.

T-biconditionals state a sort of *covariation*. The latter's strength does not matter for our purposes; it varies with the modality of the biconditional. The point here is that covariation by itself, of whatever strength, is not explanatory. To become explanatory it must at a minimum imply *dependence*. But it is notorious that covariation assures neither mutual dependence nor that of one covariant upon the other. For example, we have cases in which A and B covary because they are both dependent on a third thing C. Even deflationists seem to agree that T-biconditionals display a kind of dependence, which they then go on to claim (perhaps implicitly) is minimal and is all that we need. Without construing them as holding this much it is hard to see the point of their arguments. Once again, covariation needs to be a sign of dependence in order to be explanatory. (This is a necessary, not a sufficient, condition. Dependence by itself may not be explanatory.) Of course, it helps when the covariation is asymmetric—as it is *not* in T-biconditionals—but even this does not rule out both terms being dependent only on some third thing: for example, in a case in which A covaries with B but B makes finer discriminations that do not covary with A, both may still depend only on C. Consequently, what we want is not merely covariation (in our case, T-biconditionals), but an indication that those covariations yield the sorts of dependency relations that we have some grounds to regard as explanatory (in our case, BT-sentences). The issue is all the more pressing in the present case, in which there is a natural suspicion that there is a third term C in the offing: viz., a truth-making fact or a related pair of them.

Relations such as *because* and *in virtue of* crystallize this dependency.[16] Perhaps this is why even deflationists have felt the need for their accounts to accommodate the (BT) formula, although they underemphasize its importance—conceivably for strategic reasons. It is also for this reason that realists about truth may allow that T-biconditionals serve as partial definitions of 'is true'. Put otherwise, they may take the displayed covariation as indicative of a dependency relation that when exposed forces upon us a realistic reading of the right-hand side, for covariation is an indicator of dependence, even if it is not of one covariant upon the other. In fact, this angle on our issue not only motivates our inquiries into correlative (BT)-sentences, but supplies an additional motive for the distinction between types of conditions vetted in Section 4.

(BT)'s apparent threat to deflationism lies in the difficulty of dismissing the right-hand side's claim to being a substantial truth-condition. For example, that the right-hand side supplies an opportunity for rephrasing or asserting the same thing as *s* is a clearly inadequate justification for its appearance. Thus, for starters it seems that (BT) reintroduces a factor deliberately omitted in deflationist treatments but at the heart of the correspondence project.

Deflationists appear to agree, in letter if not in spirit, that *p* specifies a truth-condition.[17] But while it was agreed in Section 4 that they are entitled to maintain on their own terms that *p* is a necessary and sufficient condition for the target sentence of (T), it was also shown why that is not enough to make it responsible for the target sentence being true. If 'because' has any distinctive force in (BT), it certainly imposes this stronger understanding of *p*. Accordingly, we are once again confronted with the question of how the deflationist, who disdains truth-conditions of this sort, can account for instances of (BT). If we look at what disquotationalist treatments bar

us from implying about the right-hand side of (T), there is nothing approaching a plausible answer. To begin with, it is patently clear that *s* is not true *because of* the presence of alternative ways of formulating it. Nor does the fact that the right-hand side shares the assertive content of the left-hand side move us any closer to knowing how the former is the 'because' of the latter. (This last gap nicely illustrates the differences between covariation and dependence.) Moreover, *pace* minimalism, it is not the case that *s* is true *because of* a construction which is the lowest common denominator, and therefore neutral, between deflationist and correspondence readings. Thus, deflationism has yet to show how it can account for (BT) without going over to the correspondence project. Let us pursue the matter further.

Formulas on the order of '*p* because *q*', including (BT), need not be narrowly causal. In addition, *q* might constitute *p*, or might bear one of a limited number of what we might call logical or entailment relationships. (For example, "81 is the highest square expressible in only two digits because… .") But 'because' is not altogether without restrictions: for one thing, it excludes reflexivity. '*p* because *p*' is not acceptable unless it is construed as a clumsy way of saying that *p* needs no reason. Suppose we probe what it is about 'because' that, while allowing a wide collection of roughly explanatory relationships, precludes reflexivity. The crude outlines of an answer might start by mentioning that the force of 'because' is to provide a 'reason for something's being so-and-so'. (The *Oxford English Dictionary* gives as a rough synonym "for the reason that".) And however broadly we interpret *reason* here, a thing cannot be a reason for itself—and that on some of the same grounds that we balk at the notion of self-causation. Perhaps nothing is inherently absurd in something's having no reason whatsoever: indeed, it is arguable that there are instances of it, but that is not the same as a thing's being its own reason. However, once we see the basis for ruling out '*p* because *p*', we see that the prohibition extends to would-be cases in which what follows 'because' has its standing in the formula only because what precedes 'because' is part of it: that is, for cases of *partial* identity. Although '*p* because it is part of *q*, and *q*' is marginal at best, '*p* because (*p* and *q*)' seems to me beyond the pale. Some may not wish to adopt this restriction on the solidity of these intuitions alone. But we have also given a robust explanation for them which is harder to set aside. Moreover, the explanation tells us something about what 'because' must be conveying in (BT). It places an adequacy condition on any claim, deflationist or nondeflationist, to interpret (BT).

This adequacy condition may explain why (BT) seems to elude deflationism. It resists attempts to impose on it a thesis modeled on (Q_A)—the view that the relationship between the connected sentences is exhausted by the similarity of their assertoric potential. The right-hand *formula* of (Q_A) or (T), whatever else it may be, cannot in general be the reason why its target sentence is true. An alternative, more abstemious, way of saying something, even if it could show that a predicate is dispensable, is in general irrelevant to the reason why what is said is true. (This is a first step toward distinguishing two achievements that deflationists, and some nondeflationists, confuse: namely, showing the dispensability of a truth predicate and eliminating a truth property. We return to this matter in Section 6.) Moreover, to the extent that deflationists rely on the partial identity of the formulas in the successful cases, as encapsulated in (Q), that right-hand sentence is disqualified from playing the corresponding role in

(BT). Now I do not seriously suggest that the deflationist would offer the explanations I have just put into her mouth. But then it is incumbent upon her to tell us what more there is about the right-hand side that enables it to yield true instances of the form (BT) *without conceding just the sorts of metaphysical implications correspondence insists upon*. It is here that (BT) gets its bite. Consider the asymmetric BT specimen

> (BT1)   'snow is white' is true because snow is white.

If the right-hand side yields a reason why the left-hand side is true, then, on deflationist principles (in which all that matters in (T) is the sameness of assertoric content and that the sides are reversible), we might ponder why we should not also accept

> (BT1+)   snow is white because snow is white.

How could the mere presence or absence of 'is true' make a crucial difference for the deflationist? But, in fact, it does. This may not be immediately evident, in part because there may be a way of reading (BT1+) so that it makes sense and does not violate the prohibition of reflexivity. However, its price is to give up the deflationist reading. We might bring out this interpretation in the following way:

> (BT1++) snow is white because snow IS white.

Here we can regard the two sides as functioning differently. For example, we can take the left-hand side merely as an asserted sentence, and the right-hand side as specifying a cognitively independent state of affairs for that sentence. This is not as implausible as it may at first seem, for with the 'because' formulas (but not, it must be noted, with 'if and only if') it is quite indifferent whether we put the matter as in (BT1++) or in either of the following ways:

> snow is white because of snow being white.
> snow is white because of the fact that snow is white.

The oft-ignored fact that should interest us about these last two rephrasals is that in neither one is the right-hand side suitable for pressing into service as an assertoric utterance (and certainly not for disquoting the left-hand side of (BT1)). Still (BT1++) may seem strained. In suggesting, nonetheless, that it is intelligible, I am relying on a distinction between the representational medium (left-hand side) and the represented (right-hand side) drawn in Section 2 via the comparison with a photograph. The similarity of expressions used in the specifications of each is no guarantee that the one thing is simply making two appearances. Similarly, suppose the left-hand side of (BT1++) is intended as a form of words having a content (but still not more than a form of words, however qualified), while the right-hand side is the specification of a potential fact described in terms of the would-be fact it specifies: that is, the former is a form of words with a content, while the latter is a content (or potential fact) *presented* by a form of words. We should not be misled by the similarities of the constructions into not grasping the dissimilarities of the items flanking 'because', but our use of that possibility to make sense of (BT1++) despite the prohibition of reflexivity is not something of which the deflationist can avail herself.

What of deflationists who confront this issue? I shall examine two such efforts: those of Horwich and Wright. Each calls his view minimalism, and, although the title means something slightly different in the two cases, they agree sufficiently for our

immediate purposes about the relation of their views to (D). For both, the treatment is in strict accordance with deflationist principles which, both maintain, can encompass (BT) without crossing the line into substantial truth.

I begin with Horwich. He makes two claims. First, (BT1) merely raises a question of the order of explanation ([17], pp. 111–12), and this can be part of deflationism. The order of explanation begins with "such things as basic laws and the initial conditions of the universe." From those we explain by familiar methods particular things such as snow being white. That explanatory potency transfers to the right-hand side of (BT1), which together with the principles governing (Q), explains the left-hand side. Thus we obtain (BT1). Second, to reinforce the intimate connection between our 'because' and explanation, Horwich maintains that the following are no more than trivial reformulations of (BT1).

> (ET1) 'snow is white' being true is explained by snow being white.
> (MT1) 'snow is white' is made true by the fact that snow is white.

Let us discuss these points in turn. First, the 'order of explanation' reasoning of Horwich's first claim finesses rather than accounts for the role of 'because' in (BT1). As Wright ([32], pp. 26–27) observes, the realist will complain that ' "snow is white" is true' is not being explained *in terms of snow's being white*. There is no distinction between the levels at which the left- and right-hand sides of (BT1) get explained. Let us elaborate.

Basic laws together with initial conditions are supposed to explain (the fact that) snow is white. Granting that, those laws and initial conditions also explain the truth of the sentence 'snow is white' (the left-hand side). Horwich claims that *only after* we have explained that snow is white "do we deduce, and thereby explain why… 'Snow is white' is true" ([32], p. 111). But there are no grounds for interjecting the right-hand side of (BT1) as an intermediate step in the latter explanation. One would be hard put to show that the right-hand side was explanatorily more fundamental for physics or chemistry than the left-hand side, whatever the situation for semantics and metaphysics. Thus, its mediation in a physico-chemical explanation is out of place. The result of Horwich's failure is that the relation *because* between the two sides remains unaccounted for.

We may cast the same point in a slightly different light. Horwich alleges two stages in the explanation: one from basic laws plus initial conditions to (the fact that) snow is white, the second from (the fact that) snow is white to ' "snow is white" is true'. It is the force of this top-down explanation that accounts for the strength of the apparently problematic connective *because*. But if that explanatory force is introduced at the first stage, as seems reasonable, then (T) is superfluous. We might just as well proceed directly from the basic laws and initial conditions to the target sentence of (BT1). On the other hand, if it enters at the second stage, which would be puzzling, then the basic laws, and so forth, are superfluous, and this account of *because* falls apart. It is difficult to see a mediating role for the right-hand side of (BT1) in either case. Neither alternative is acceptable: is there another? Only, it would appear, the mysterious claim that the explanation is somehow the product of the two stages combined. But we need not take this seriously in the absence of some hint about how the elusive explanatory force gets divided and reassembled.

In sum, on the above account the very same laws plus initial conditions that would explain why snow is white would explain why 'snow is white' is true. Disquotation is not an extra step in the same explanatory setup. If we imagine a ridiculously inconvenient but otherwise conceivable language in which it was impermissible to say 'snow is white', but we could only say ' "snow is white" is true', the explanation would fare just as well despite the elimination of the detour through the right-hand side of (BT1).

Turning to (ET1) and (MT1), it was suggested that they are trivial reformulations of (BT1). Although *being a (trivial) reformulation of* may not be strictly an equivalence relation, we should be suspicious of this claim if only because (ET1) and (MT1) are clearly not reformulations of each other. While the 'is explained by' of (ET1) is certainly intensional, the 'is made true by' of (MT1) is not.[18] Thus, a tornado so described may explain the devastation, although described as the most memorable event in the history of Hadleysburg it will not. In spite of that, under any description it may very well be the cause of the devastation, or even may be what created or made the devastation. More to the point, neither is a trivial reformulation of (BT1), and exploring just why may further illustrate how this version of minimalism is unresponsive to correspondence's attachment to (BT).

Perhaps the more plausible case for trivial reformulation can be made with (ET1), since 'because' and 'is explained by' both create intensional contexts. However, this is insufficient for their equivalence: 'knows that' and 'believes that' are both intensional but not equivalent. Intensional expressions, even those with identical ranges, may differ in their classes of allowable substitutions *salva veritate* and in the reasons for their restrictions upon permissible replacements. Both sorts of difference show up when comparing 'because' and 'is explained by'. For example, 'because' is intimately linked to singular causal *statements*, which license certain substitutions of codesignative expressions for the cause and effect that are prohibited in singular causal *explanations* (see Davidson [3]). Thus, whenever we can truly say that A caused B, we ought to be able to say that B because A. But explanations appear to have further restrictions—for example, regarding palpability or context—not contemplated for 'because'. Philosophers widely disagree about what counts as an explanation. But all seem to accept some of these restrictions which would distinguish that phenomenon generically from a *because* statement.

Furthermore, consider changes to the pattern of (BT1) that Horwich must make to the right sides of (ET1) and (MT1) to obtain intelligible specimens. They make evident just how far he has gone beyond (D). (These remarks, and the discussion of Wright to follow, show that similarly damaging conclusions should be drawn for (MT1)'s phrase "the fact that snow is white.") (ET1)'s 'snow being white' is a noun clause, not a sentence. Any pretense that the right-hand side could merely supply an utterance equivalent to the left-hand side, preserved in (BT1), has been abandoned. It is hard to see how anything short of a realist rendering of the right-hand side could do the formula justice. 'Snow being white' can be interpreted as being formally capable of designating the state of affairs which, were it to obtain, would make the left side true but scarcely as a sentence having the same truth-condition, much less the same assertive content, as the left side. This does not result from an ill-chosen example. The point can be made with a similar gloss on an earlier example, say,

(ET2)   'dogs bark' is true is explained by dogs barking.

The formulas

* 'snow is white' is (/being) true is explained by snow is white.
* 'dogs bark' is (/being) true is explained by dogs bark.

are construable only as misstatements for (ET1) and (ET2), respectively. The short-comings of disquotational readings of (T) are, if anything, even clearer in an 'is explained by' paraphrase of (BT).

Wright offers a different deflationary reply. Although like Horwich he declines the title 'deflationist', also like Horwich, he holds that his view "may be elicited from reflection on the distinctive thesis of deflationism about truth, that the content of the truth-predicate is (all but) fully explained by the role it plays in the Disquotational Schema" ([32], p. 33). Earlier we noted a formula to which Wright refers as a "platitude": namely,

(C1)   'P' is true if and only if 'P' corresponds to the facts.

(He also repeatedly uses "trivial" to describe this and like formulas ([32], p. 34). The suggestion is that anything they convey can be accommodated by the deflationist.) He deposes that nothing is lost by paraphrasing it as *the correspondence platitude*: to wit,

(CP)   'P' is true if and only if things are as 'P' says they are ([32], p. 25),

given (T) and ' "P" says that P' (CP) is derivable.[19] Wright also asks us to accept the equivalence of the expressions ' "P" corresponds to the facts' and 'things are as "P" says they are'. Although the former strikes me as too careless a characterization of correspondence and the latter as introducing an unfortunate mixture of actual truth-making circumstances and (typal) sentential meaning conditions, let us grant the equivalence for the sake of argument. From there Wright concludes that "there is no difficulty, once (CP) is secured, in saving [BT1] for minimalism (or deflationism) as well" ([32], p. 27). The whole of his direct argument follows immediately.

> …given that 'P' says that P, the question why things are as 'P' says they are is quite properly—if rather trivially—answered by citing its being the case that P. Whence, given (CP), the truth of 'P' can quite properly be explained by citing the fact that P. ([32], p. 27)

It is unclear to me just how this is supposed to work. Certainly the two things Wright claims can be "cited" as answering and explaining, respectively,

1. its being the case that P, and
2. the fact that P

look as if they invoke just the sorts of worldly states of affairs which correspondence declares are necessary for a sentence's truth and for instances of (BT) and which deflationism is invoked to prohibit. But let us examine more closely what Wright could have in mind. We might gain insight by replacing two phrases in (CP): ' "P" is true' by 'the fact that P', and 'things are as "P" says they are' by 'its being the case that P'. The replacements are just the "answers" Wright commends to us in the recently quoted passage. The result, making minor changes for the sake of grammar, reads:

(CP*)   it is a fact that P if and only if it is the case that P.

It is hard to believe that this could be what Wright intends to show, since this triviality is beside the point. We could have achieved a much quicker triviality, 'P if and only if P', from (T) directly, but once again it reveals nothing of interest about the issues being mooted here. Nor could Wright be recommending

it is a fact that P *because* it is the case that P.

That fails for prior reasons concerning the irreflexiveness of *because*. On the other hand,

'P' is true because of the fact that P

and

'P' is true because of its being the case that P

may be exemplary ways of restating (BT), but each re-raises (BT)'s sort of objection to deflationism rather than answering it. Thus, it is difficult to see how Wright can set out these phrases as consequences of the minimalist's acknowledged precepts. And Wright's original answers/explanations

things are as 'P' says they are because of its being the case that P

and

'P' is true because of the fact that P

are no less questionable in this respect. This deflationist minimalism is based upon the notion that 'truth' can be defined solely in terms of syntactic constraints on expressions that allow certain sorts of subsemantic operations such as embedding in conditionals and negation (e.g., [32], pp. 27–28, 35–36). The leading idea is that it can be shown how we are entitled to correspondence's *phrases* without taking on its representational commitments ([32], p. 27). However, if the foregoing formulas do not embody just the sorts of claims (and in lieu of further argument the right interpretations of them) that the deflationist critiques, I confess I no longer know what is at issue. Wright introduces the idioms 'being the case that' and 'fact that' in his solution, but nowhere shows how a modest reconstruction is entitled to them.

Wright's use of the phrase "can be quite properly explained by" in his second sentence (see quoted passage) hints that he glosses the *because* relation as the converse of explains: that is, '*p* because *q*' as roughly equivalent to '*p* is explained by *q*'. The discussion of (ET1) showed that the fit is not perfect, but let us provisionally accept their rough equivalence. We may then reiterate our earlier objection by noting that Wright's solution does not work if we excise from his language (and subsequent interpretation) "its being the case that" from his first sentence and "it is a fact that" from his second: that is, for plain 'P', without the distinctive contribution (implied or otherwise) of such prefixes, the answer falls victim to our earlier condition that *because* be irreflexive. This prevents our taking ' "P" is true because (of) P' as if the right-hand side eliminated something from the target sentence without introducing anything novel. *Qua* product of disquoting, the right-hand side tells us nothing while as a fact or as being the case it delivers a substantial truth-condition. This is a clear indication that the prefixes in question are not merely ornamental; they do seem to

contribute something vital to the so-called "explanations." The chosen phrases (despite the difficulties they raise for Wright's view) are not accidents of incautious formulation. "[T]he fact that P," a noun phrase rather than a sentence (as is "its being the case that P"), as a minimal filler, drives home the point that nothing less than the instantiation of what is represented by the sentence will suffice for (BT). Indeed, the problem goes beyond the irreflexivity of 'because', for it is also questionable whether *for the general case* (and not just special ones depending on contingencies of the target sentence's content: say, that we are discussing rules of logic) a linguistic formula can be true *because* of another linguistic formula. Conceding that the relevant sentences make sense, they cannot have the kind of sense minimalism requires.

Suppose instead we had concluded that (T) together with some uncontroversial (and nonmetaphysical) premises implied (BT). Given what has been shown in the past three sections of this essay, the proper conclusion to draw would not be the platitudinousness or metaphysical levity of 'is true', but the impropriety of a deflationary interpretation of (T) or of ' "P" says that P'. I earlier argued that their metaphysical, as distinct from their deflationary, reading is quite natural. Subsequent argument has shown why it is unavoidable, but I believe there is a deeper reason as well.

If, as Wright contends, (C1) ends up being too platitudinous to state correspondence, it is difficult to see how anything else could succeed where it has failed. This is not solely because of (C1)'s admirable straightforwardness (cf. the remarks from Searle, note 13, and the opening quotation from Armstrong), but also because any attempt to state the view in the end will need to use phrases such as 'the fact that P', 'the state of the world', or close relatives. And if such phrases can be rendered "weightless" as they appear in (C1), have we not been given the outline of a no less potent strategy for similarly deflating this whole family of phrases wherever they occur, including in more convoluted, detailed, and specific efforts to formulate correspondence? Isn't that precisely what Wright attempts in his subsequent uses of the phrases "the fact that P" and "things are as 'P' says they are" ([32], p. 27)? Thus, if Wright's arguments were cogent, not only would it be the case that minimalism is preserved, but the correspondence theorist would be deprived of any means of even stating her view. More than a defense of minimalism, this is fatal to correspondence as a formulable option. That consequence is so astonishing that we should be gravely suspicious of any strategy employing the modest tools of Wright's argument to carry it off. (Indeed, the whole method of argument, once we cut through its details, might be said to boil down to the *truly* platitudinous observations that we must use language to state the view, and that language is just words.) Quite generally, any claim to the effect that the most straightforward way of formulating a view—without misstatements—does not, in fact, state that view is an extraordinarily strong claim. It should be greeted with the severest critical solicitude.

I conclude that 'because' always carries with it the notion of what *makes* the thing preceding it so. Thus, it may yield the cause of that thing, the character of it, how it is constituted, or even (in a sense embracing the *a priori*) the reason for it, but another assertion is not a candidate for bearing any of those relations, say, to ' "snow is white" is true'. Deflationists have failed to eradicate this feature from any sensible reading of (BT).

6   Earlier, it was stated that there is a custom of approaching the question

(1)   Is truth a property?

through another question

(2)   Is 'is true' a genuine (ineliminable) predicate?

(See the comparison of (D) and (D$_P$) in Section 2.) This prompts the question, What is it for "is true" to be *eliminable*? Two sorts of answers have gained currency. First, it is for sentences without that predicate to contain the same informational (/assertoric) content. If this can be accomplished in a systematic way—as it might be claimed, say, by (T) for disquotationalists and other formulas for other kinds of deflationists—then 'is true' is elminable. Second, it might be for the predicate's explanatory function to be performed without using 'is true'. *Explanatory function* is not a transparent phrase. For our subject matter it might include such things as the nature, success, or reliability of belief, or this might be restricted to scientific belief, or it might be broadened to cover the explanation of behavior other than belief (e.g., [6] and Schiffer [26]). Because the notion is so feral, occasionally the demand that 'is true' have an explanatory function will seem too restrictive, whereas a different set of expectations will make it seem childishly easy to meet. Thus, I propose to ignore it here and concentrate on the first kind of eliminability: viz., that in which we have systematic ways of conveying the content, if any, imparted by 'is true' without actually using it.

But that does not end all need for clarification about how the issue precisely raised by (1) can be probed by posing (2) in its place. To illustrate the continuing problem consider Ayer's typical deflationist sentiment that "[t]he traditional conception of truth as a 'real quality' or 'real relation' is due, like most philosophical mistakes, to a failure to analyse sentences correctly" ([2], p. 89). Although deflationists are generally receptive to this diagnosis, it stands badly in need of further interpretation. By the sentences to be analyzed Ayer no doubt meant those with the predicate 'is true'. His remark may be understood as presupposing the failure of an imagined relationship between those sentences and an alleged real quality (or relation), and there is more than one option to consider. What more exactly is the general relationship between the existence or eliminability of a predicate and the status of its property that would do Ayer's work?

In raising this question I do not mean to suggest that there may be no connection between our practice of predication and our commitment to properties. (We need not probe further into the details of the nature of properties. The only issue before us is whether we lack a necessary condition for the commitment to, or possess a sufficient condition for the noncommitment to, a certain property. This can be determined while leaving open the remaining features of propertyhood.) There seems little doubt that predication in general has something to do with our reasons for acknowledging, or at least defending, a class of properties, and in particular cases the availability of a predicate may be *prima facie* evidence for its correlative property. But more than this is needed to assure us that we can trade in (1) for (2) without changing the subject. The issue calls for some delicacy. For example, making the simple existence, or ineliminability, of a predicate necessary for that of a property would be making the existence of a property—say, being reptilian—depend on the availability of a certain

vocabulary. That's logomachy run amok. Indeed, the dependency implication makes it implausible even for those who may think of language as an eternal Platonic entity (cf. Lewis [20]). In the other direction, debates about the ontological argument indicate that the mere presence of the predicate 'exists' is not enough, at least without further argument, for a commitment to a property of existence. Such cases remind one of the occasional gulf between talk of properties as in (1) and talk of predicates as in (2).

However, it appears Ayer's only concern is with predicates in hand, so the question of the existence of a predicate need not delay us. Rather the issue seems captured by the question, Is the predicate 'is true' *eliminable* without altering the conventional information conveyed in the pruned utterance? Whereas an answer may help reveal whether the property ascription carries a semantic load, an affirmative answer is still not a decisive reason for allowing (2) to stand in for (1). (For the sake of argument I grant an affirmative answer. Elsewhere I would challenge it (cf. [31]). In particular, it is indecisive in the case of truth just because that property enters our deliberations not only by way of the predicate 'is true' and the operator 'it is true that', but also by way of the notion of a truth-condition. I now consider that a bit further.

Some bearers are true, others are not. It appears that most deflationists, save for some in the expressivist camp, agree. Deflationists may hold that nothing accounts for the distinction, but, the aforementioned exception aside, by and large such a distinction is not rejected outright. They are certainly correct that the distinction's justification is not to be discovered in the availability of a predicate such as 'is true', for if a distinction is drawable, it could obtain even were there no such predicate. If there is such a distinction, it must be justified by the notion of a *truth-condition*, a condition which classifies a bearer by meeting or failing it. Occasionally deflationists will first deal with the predicate 'is true' and then extend the treatment to an account of truth-conditions. But this seems to me to get things the wrong way around. In the order of things, truth-conditions make possible the distinction which is in turn a condition for the utility of predicates such as 'is true' and 'is false'. But truth-conditions are not bits of language. They are not easily deflatable by a formula in which the predicate 'is a truth-condition' or 'has a truth-condition' appears. (T) *expresses* the truth-conditions for sentences, but it does not *say* anything about truth-conditions. Not only is

'dogs bark' has a truth-condition if and only if dogs bark

clearly false, but I know of no replacement formula that would do for 'has a truth-condition' what disquotationalists believe (T) does for 'is true'.

Deflationists have not ignored truth-conditions. We have seen in Section 4 how they may reject the distinction between (a) and (b): specifications of necessary and sufficient conditions for truth vs. conditions making a bearer true. But the conclusions of Sections 4 and 5 give as strong a grounds for separating (a) and (b) as they do for rejecting (Q). In any event, if (D) *begins* with an attack upon distinction (a) – (b), the result must be a radically different, much less plausible, deflationism than an approach featuring disquotationalism up front.

The problem with trading in question (1) for (2) is that even if we have dispatched the predicate 'is true' from the target sentence, we have not discharged the obligation to account for the remaining content's truth-conditions. This persisting

concern is indifferent to the predication of truth, or whether such a predicate exists. Thus, it can be raised about 'P' as easily as it can about ' "P" is true'. However, the truth-condition question does not lend itself to the methods of disquotationalism or redundancy. We are not asking whether 'P' or 'that P' is restatable in a more economical way, for even if they were that would not yield further insight into the nature of truth or our commitment to it. No doubt, we can rephrase questions about P's truth-condition into questions about what it is for P to be true: that is, to have the property or to have the predicate 'is true' correctly attached. But once priority is given to the query about a truth-condition, the question when phrased about a truth *predicate* can have no priority over one about the truth *property*. If we find the latter doing indispensable work in truth-conditions, the former's status is impotent to nullify that result.

This is not to say that asking about truth-conditions is any less to ask about a predicate—'has (or is) a truth-condition'—than it would have been to frame the question in terms of 'is true'. Nevertheless, the predication of 'has a truth-condition' does not lead to a treatment paralleling a disquotationalist reading of (T). Accordingly, while a critic would be within her rights to complain that the inquiry being suggested is no less about a truth-conditional predicate than our original was about a truth predicate, the important differences cancel out any ontological advantage to be had from adopting the parlance of predicates. No question is begged by inquiring directly into the nature of truth-conditions. But the deflationists task becomes more burdensome; if she persists, she may be thicker with old-style idealists than she cares to acknowledge.

NOTES

1. Cf. the earlier quote from Armstrong. The examples are about what 'it is true that' *means*, or what it is *to say* that something is true. It should be at least curious that they are thought to have implications for the existence or dispensability of a *property*, being true. (I state, advisedly, 'should be', not 'is', for it is well known that contemporary philosophers almost universally assume that the conditions making something an *X* can be probed only by way of an examination of the meaning of '*X*'. Nevertheless, the differences between the targets of the inquiries should alert careful readers to the dangers of this blanket assumption.) For exposition's sake I provisionally ignore these complexities. The claims expressed in the foregoing quotations certainly have an antimetaphysical intent as is presently made clear. But note that Armstrong's claim that redundancy is consistent with correspondence relies on a distinction between what it is to say that *p* is true and what it is for *p* to be true.

2. I begin with what Field ([6], p. 58) calls a "pure" disquotational theory. Any plausible account of this form would have to be modified in light of what are called below 'exceptional' cases. Some exponents take disquotationalism as applicable only to certain formal theories, and regard its extension to natural language as, minimally, problematic. As such they are concerned exclusively with formal theory. The current issue has its shocking metaphysical implications only when we regard natural language truth-predicates as, at least, approximations to that in (T). There is no lack of supporters of disquotationalism in this thicker sense, and it is their view which is now being examined.

3. Quine [23] writes, "To say that the statement 'Brutus killed Caesar' is true, or that 'The atomic weight of sodium is 23' is true, is in effect simply to say that Brutus killed Caesar, or that the atomic weight of sodium is 23" ([23], p. 24). Despite the fact that he is

generally regarded as the view's most prominent forerunner (and name coiner), Quine's relationship to disquotationalism remains problematic. While on the one hand, praising Sellars's disappearance theory of truth ([24], p. 11), he also steers clear of (D), which I shall argue is integral to disquotationalism, with remarks such as "Truth hinges on reality" ([24], p. 11) and "The sentence 'Snow is white' is true, as Tarski has taught us, if and only if real snow is really white" ([24], p. 10). Tracing Quine's more exact location on the map of these positions would require more exposition than is warranted here.

4. Some take correspondence et al. to be theories about the meaning of 'is true', 'it is true that', and so on. Those who do so will tend to find it more difficult to distinguish our two formulas. The issue was already broached in note 1 but is larger than we can do justice to in this place. Briefly, correspondence is about the conditions making a bearer true. It is not primarily a view about the meaning of 'is true', save where the meaning thesis is construed to coincide with one about conditions for the truth of a predicate. This has not always been the case. For more detailed reasons for holding that correspondence should not be regarded primarily as a theory of the meaning, see Vision ([31], ch. 2).

5. The content-indicator distinction is, for all practical purposes, similar to that in Searle ([27], ch. 3) between proposition and function-indicating device, that in Hare ([16], ch. 2) between phrastic and neustic, and that which Dummett [5] attributes to Frege between the sense and the force of a proposition.

6. This isn't intended merely to police loose talk. Not everyone using (QA) takes it this tendentiously (e.g., Tarski [29], p. 71 does not). However, Wright says that "standing just behind (T) is the basic platitudinous connection of assertion and truth: asserting a proposition—a Fregean thought—is claiming that it is true. The connection is partly constitutive of the concepts of assertion and of truth" ([32], pp. 23–24). Perhaps truth is partly constitutive of assertion, but nothing in (T) or its theorems shows that we can only understand truth via assertion. Even were (QA) to follow with the aid of uncontroversial premises from (Q), its message would be insufficiently general and misplaced.

7. The redundancy theorist, whose efforts are directed toward a predicate (and property) of propositions or statements rather than sentences, has a different but not notably less efficient method for handling cases in which the relevant proposition is not presented. To glimpse it, suppose we suspend any compunction about employing propositional variables, not merely their names. Then 'What David said about the Cretaceous extinction is true' could, as a first shot, have the truth predicate eradicated by substituting the formula

$(\exists\ p)$ (David said p & p is about the Cretaceous extinction & p)

while 'Whatever the Pope says is true' can be rendered as

$(\forall\ p)$ (The Pope says that $p \supset p$)

strengthening the conditionality as one sees fit. Normally this is conceived as warranting a substitutional interpretation of quantifiers, but Grover [10] illustrates how propositional variables might interact even on a domains and values interpretation.

8. Kirkham may be another example, see [19], ch. 10.

9. Thus, Putnam, although neither a disquotationalist nor a deflationist, writes, "To call a sentence 'true' is not to ascribe a property, truth, to a sentence; it is just another way of asserting the sentence. (This is a 'disquotational view' in the jargon of Davidsonian philosophers of language.)" ([22], p. 62).

10. This view has been pursued, perhaps most notably, by Grover (and coauthors) in a series of articles including Grover, Camp, and Belnap [14] and Grover [11], [12], and [13].

11. E.g., Forbes [9], p. 29; Wright [32], p. 13; Putnam [22], p. 62.

12. There are hints of views that go directly from 'having a noncognitive function' to (D), but no instances whose interpretations as such aren't controversial. Questions of attribution aside, it is worthwhile being inoculated against the inference.

13. Why not accept the simpler characterization, "A statement is true if and only if it corresponds to the facts" (see [28], p. 201) or Armstrong's earlier one, and leave it at that? Because as we shall see, minimalism, an *au courant* brand of disquotationalism, claims to be able to incorporate the same words without carrying correspondence weight. We avoid giving the appearance of begging the question by deferring this characterization until after the minimalist challenge has been met.

14. E.g., Gupta and Belnap ([15], p. 27).

15. I hope readers will not come down too hard on the rough-and-ready notion of philosophical syntax employed here. I know of no precise account of it. Nevertheless, I use it because it is a handy way of summarizing a common feature of all deflationary views: namely, the claim to complete a treatment of a truth-predicate without drawing on any (independent) features of a truth-property.

16. Note the revealing, and very close, parallel with Kim's discussion of the philosophical uses of supervenience: see especially [18], §4, pp. 142–49. Here also the question is getting from covariation, a defining character of supervenience, to dependence. Furthermore, ([18], p. 147) marks the dependence in terms of having a supervenient property *because* or *in virtue of* having its base properties. The issues are mirror-images of each other.

17. Field ([6], [7]) talks freely about disquotationalist truth-conditions (although at other places he writes as if correspondence raises the question whether sentences need truth-conditions). This may be innocent enough if one allows (a) to suffice for a truth-condition. But (BT) forces us to take 'truth-condition' talk with more gravity.

18. This may already be evident to readers, but for those desiring further defense, see Putnam ([21], pp. 292–98).

19. Two observations are apt. First, in addition to the biconditional relation there is the relation of corresponding to in (C1) and that of things being as…says in (CP). So neither is a version of (T). Second, ' "P" says that P' is a disquotational schema for meaning (Van Cleve [30]). I cannot find Wright's estimate of the status of this formula (though see a brief and obscure note 6 in Wright [33], p. 916), but if sentences don't have their meanings necessarily it is at most a true empirical generalization and more probably simply false. If false (or even contingent) (CP), derived here only with its help, would be problematic as would disquotational versions of convention T (our (T)). I let that pass here because I want to discuss other, at least equally basic, difficulties for Wright's view.

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Department of Philosophy
Temple University
Philadelphia, PA 19122
email: vision@vm.temple.edu