

Contrastive Belief, Full and Partial

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Workshop Full and Partial Belief
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Plan

Thesis Context-sensitive accounts of (rational) belief and doxastic contrastivism can help each other out.

Plan

- Context-sensitivity of (rational) belief:
 - Leitgeb (2013, 2014)
 - Clarke (2013)
 - Weatherson (2005, 2012, forthcoming)
 - Ganson (2008)
 - Sturgeon (2008)
 - Ross and Schroeder (2014)
 - ...
- Doxastic Contrastivism
 - Blaauw (2013a)
 - Swinburne (2001)

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- The challenge I aim to meet is *simply making sense of* contrastive belief.

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 - ① contrastive belief attributions make sense (they let us talk about a context-sensitive thing precisely, by specifying a context), and
 - ② there's a sense in which all belief is contrastive (it's context-specific, and a context implies a contrast).

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- 1 Contrastivism
- 2 Context-Sensitivity
- 3 Making Sense of Contrastive Belief
- 4 Problems Revisited

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- Maybe we can say something about how the set *Q* is chosen so that the condition comes out stronger than it seems.
 - Blaauw is hesitant to do so—but it is a very short paper.

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- But p & q should be incompatible, since q is a contrast for p .
- So the two contrastive beliefs have incompatible truth conditions, despite seeming perfectly consistent.

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 - (a) a Lockean threshold for full belief
 - (b) a partition on possible worlds.

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- Full and partial belief:
 - To rule out a possibility is to assign it weight 0.

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- Lets us account for *sincere assertion* (Clarke MS).
 - Principle: An assertion that p is sincere iff the asserter believes p .
- Eliminates the usual problems for belief = credence 1 (Clarke 2013).
- Accounts for the kind of cases epistemic contextualists & company like to talk about.

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 - “ S believes p rather than q ” here means that on the resulting partition, S believes p 's projected image.

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- Proposal: “ S believes p rather than q ” means S believes p in a context where $\{p, q\}$ induces a partition.
 - Contrastive credence? “ S has credence x that p rather than q .”

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- Contextual DC: Difference in contrast clause indicates difference in context.

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- Problem for DC: Can believe p rather than q and q rather than r , but would want these to have incompatible truth conditions.
- Contextual DC gives us the means to make sense of this.
- It makes sense to require consistency *within* each context, but not necessarily *across* contexts.

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