

**MR2124407 (2005k:03008)** 03A05 03B65

**Cogburn, Jon** (1-LAS-Q)

**Tonking a theory of content: an inferentialist rejoinder.**

**(English. English summary)**

*Logic Log. Philos. No. 13* (2004), 31–55.

The aim of this paper is to explore Christopher Peacocke's theory of "manifestationism without verificationism", which is in the center of the debate in contemporary philosophy of language between realism and inferentialism.

Peacocke tried to craft a realistic theory of content that accommodates the Wittgensteinian belief that our grasp of language must be manifestable in behavior (inferentialism). Peacocke's ideas are defended from recent criticism of Neil Tennant, but, as the author explains, "this involves explicitly generalizing the theory into recursive form. Unfortunately though, the generalization reveals a serious problem of any approach embodying Peacocke's core ideas. With the help of a logical operator I call 'quonk', I am able to show that the generalized account cannot provide an adequate answer." In addition to undermining Peacocke's theory, "quonk entails further stringent success conditions on any theory aspiring to the epistemic advantages of inferentialism".

The paper has the following sections: Introduction; (1) Peacocke's explanatory Desiderata; (2) Normative acceptance conditions; (2.1) Observational contents; (2.2) Logically complex contents; (3) Generalizing the account; (4) Tonking the theory; (4.1) Quonk; (4.2) Two objections; (5) Manifestationism without verificationism?; References.

Jaime Nubiola (Pamplona)