

Ontological Commitment and Contextual Semantics

Terence Horgan's "contextual semantics" is supposed to be a means to avoid unwanted ontological commitments, in particular commitments to non-physical objects, such as institutions, theories and symphonies. The core of contextual semantics is the claim that truth is correct assertibility, and that there are various standards of correct assertibility, the standards of "referential semantics" being only one among others. I am investigating the notions of correct assertibility, assertibility norms and indirect reference. I argue that closer inspection reveals that contextual semantics ultimately amounts - contra Horgan's intentions - to a paraphrase strategy. I defend an ontological commitment to theories and symphonies.