

Lecture 2: Frege's Logical Innovations

Philosophy of Logic and Language — HT 2017-18

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Works by Frege

The main piece this week is *Begriffsschrift*:

Begriffsschrift: Conceptual Notation and related articles, transl. and ed. by T. W. Bynum (Oxford: OUP, 1972). Originally published as *Begriffsschrift* (Halle: L. Nebert, 1879).

A useful later piece is 'My Basic Logical Insights' (1915). This is in *The Frege Reader* (along with selections from *Begriffsschrift*) and *Posthumous Writings*:

The Frege Reader, ed. by Michael Beaney (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997).

Posthumous Writings, ed. by H. Hermes, F. Kambartel, and F. Kaulbach, transl. by P. Long and R. White (Oxford: Blackwell, 1979).

Secondary Reading

Dummett (1981), explaining Frege's revolutionary account of quantification, is this week's key reading. Starred items (*) are introductory, and good places to start. Rumfitt (1994) and Dudman (1976) discuss ways in which Frege's logic is an improvement on the traditional approaches. Brandom (1994) takes Frege's criterion of identity for conceptual contents as a forerunner of his own *inferentialist* attempt to explain meaning in terms of use. Sullivan (2004) is a masterful discussion of all things related to Frege's logic, including problems with understanding the criterion in terms of modern notions of logical consequence. For an introduction to the Frege-Geach problem for noncognitivism, see Schroeder (2008). Hanks (2007) argues that it is a mistake to distinguish, as Frege and many others following him do, between the force of an assertion and its content. Oliver (2010) discusses Frege's functional conception of predicates.

Robert Brandom (1994) *Making It Explicit* (Cambridge MA: Harvard UP), Ch. 2.

- Victor Dudman (1976) 'From Boole to Frege' in M. Schirn, ed. *Studien zu Frege Studies on Frege*, vol. I (Stuttgart-Bad Canstatt: Friedrich Frommann Verlag).
- Michael Dummett (1981) *Frege: Philosophy of Language*, 2nd ed. (London: Duckworth), Ch. 2, esp. pp. 9-22.
- Peter Hanks (2007) 'The Content-Force Distinction' in *Philosophical Studies* 134(2), pp. 141-164.
- *Harold Noonan (2001) *Frege: A Critical Introduction* (Cambridge: Polity), Ch. 2.
- Alex Oliver (2010) 'What is a predicate?' in Michael Potter and Tom Ricketts, eds. *The Cambridge Companion to Frege* (Cambridge: CUP).
- Ian Rumfitt (1994) 'Frege's Theory of Predication: An Elaboration and Defense, with Some New Applications' in *The Philosophical Review* 103(4), pp. 599-637.
- Mark Schroeder (2008) 'What is the Frege-Geach Problem?' in *Philosophy Compass* 3(4), pp. 703-720.
- *Mark Textor (2011) *Frege on Sense and Reference* (London: Routledge), Ch. 2 and 3.