

# Content and Inference

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Presented February 2018 at the First CUNY-Milan  
Workshop in Philosophy; special topic: Belief

## Abstract

I defend a version of content holism that relies on inferential dispositions that hold among intentional states, along with relations such states have to perceptions and volitions. I argue that this theory can explain referential content, but an exclusively referential theory cannot explain the content properties that hold among various thoughts.

I address various objections: that content has no bearing on inference, that since people have different beliefs they would never have the same contents, that we can't isolate the relevant inferences, that content is externalist, that content holism undermines compositionality, that it offends against common sense, and a few others. And I offer an independently motivated account of inference that does not rely on any theory of content.

I close with various unexpected but salutary results of the theory, that it dispels any need for psychologically real fragments for belief, that it helps explain rationality, that it sustains the use of charity in interpreting others, and that it explains how we're aware of our conscious thoughts in respect of their content.