the logical conditions for equivocal predication and an antimetaphysical rule. It also loses its partisan appearance.

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NOTES

2 Ibid., p. 265.
3 Miss Haack has attempted to produce counterexamples (Analysis, 28:159–65 (April 1968)), but I have argued in "Sommers’ Rule and Equivocality" (Analysis, 29:58–61 (December 1969)) that her examples are either ill formed by reference to the conditions set by REA, or if well formed are not counterexamples.
5 I apply here to particulars Sommers’ criterion for an individual (ibid., p. 279). I shall borrow from Strawson and assume that "historical occurrences, material objects, people and their shadows are all particulars; whereas qualities and properties, numbers and species are not" (P. F. Strawson, Individuals (London: Methuen, 1959), p. 15).

More on Assertion and Belief

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In a paper appearing some time ago in this journal I argued that a speaker could not make an assertion by uttering a sentence of the form "p, but I believe not-p" given that the speaker spoke honestly and literally. Robert Imlay has criticized some things I said in that paper. I hope to show that his criticisms are mistaken.

In my paper I explained my use of "assertion" in the following passage: "If I produce 'It is raining' in the course of playacting, or in joking, or in quoting, or in translating from a foreign language into English, then I am not making a truth-claim. However, in producing the sentence I might be making a comment or a statement, a conjecture, an assumption, or an assertion. In these cases I would be making a truth-claim. These examples, I hope, make my use of 'truth-claim' sufficiently clear. Some philosophers use 'assertion' to mean the same as 'truth-claim.' But I am not using 'assertion' in this way. If a man makes an assertion, he makes a truth-claim; but the converse does not hold."
Imlay has two criticisms of this passage. First, he says that since I have failed to describe the defining properties of a truth-claim, "one is left wondering what it is and strongly suspecting that Sayward has explained the obscure by the equally or more obscure." Second, he says that the word "claim" as I use it in "truth-claim" is a colloquialism. And as such "it is taken to mean no more or no less than an assertion. As a result, it is not to be confused, as Sayward confuses it, with either a conjecture or an assumption."

In answer to Imlay's first objection I need only draw attention to my purpose in making a distinction between a truth-claim and an assertion. The point was to distinguish the following two theses:

(1) A speaker S can make the truth-claim that both it is raining and S believes it is not raining (i.e., can either assert, assume, or express this proposition in some other way) by uttering "It is raining, but I believe it is not raining."

and

(2) A speaker S can honestly assert that both it is raining and S believes it is not raining by uttering "It is raining, but I believe it is not raining."

On the surface, at least, (1) seems to be an obvious truth. Consider, for example, a case in which S begins a conversation in the following way: "It is raining, but I believe it is not raining. Assume this conjunction to be true, and consider what follows. First . . . " Common sense tells us that (1) is satisfied in this case. On the other hand, it seems plausible to think that whatever can be assumed by the utterance of a sentence x can be honestly asserted by the utterance of x. And generally

(3) (1) entails (2)

seems to be a plausible thesis to maintain. In my paper I argued that (2) is false. If I was right, then either (1) or (3) is false.

Imlay's first criticism is based on a misunderstanding of what my purpose was in drawing a distinction between a truth-claim and an assertion. Had my purpose been to provide necessary and sufficient conditions for saying when an assertion is made, his objection would have been justified. But my purpose was simply to distinguish (1) and (2). I thought my explanation of "truth-claim" was adequate for this purpose. But, in any case, a more precise explanation can be given. Consider any term that can be meaningfully substituted for "_____" in "The _____ Smith made by his utterance is true." Such a term can refer either to a speech act or to the result of such an act. Taken in the act sense the term will refer to the act of making a truth claim. No term that cannot be meaningfully substituted for "_____" in the formula above will refer to the act of making a truth-claim.