

2021

## Wittgenstein on Reasonable Doubt and Calling Bullshit

Frank Hernández

*The University of Texas at El Paso*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://commons.emich.edu/ac>



Part of the [Philosophy Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Hernández, Frank (2021) "Wittgenstein on Reasonable Doubt and Calling Bullshit," *Acta Cogitata: An Undergraduate Journal in Philosophy*. Vol. 9 , Article 8.

Available at: <https://commons.emich.edu/ac/vol9/iss1/8>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the History & Philosophy at DigitalCommons@EMU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Acta Cogitata: An Undergraduate Journal in Philosophy by an authorized editor of DigitalCommons@EMU. For more information, please contact [lib-ir@emich.edu](mailto:lib-ir@emich.edu).

# Wittgenstein on Reasonable Doubt and Calling Bullshit

Frank Hernández<sup>1</sup>

The University of Texas at El Paso

**Abstract:** In this essay I analyze a passage from Ludwig Wittgenstein's *On Certainty*. This excerpt contains the expression "O, rubbish!" (Ach Unsinn), which I consider to be closely related to the notions of "bullshit" developed by Harry Frankfurt and Gerald A. Cohen. The relevance of this essay is illustrated with lively examples, both related to contemporary society and identified by Wittgenstein about 70 years ago. The paper is organized in six sections containing 1) an introduction to the topic, 2) an explanation of "bullshit" as found in the works of Frankfurt and Cohen, 3) an explanation of Wittgenstein's work on certainty and propositions beyond doubt, 4) an identification of reasonable and unreasonable doubt and their connection to "bullshit", 5) an explanation of the different kinds of "bullshit" with the intention of mapping them in relation to each other, and 6) a summarizing conclusion. The main purpose of this paper is to expound on Wittgenstein's views on "bullshit" and relate them to contemporary philosophy of nonsense.

One might simply say "O, rubbish!" to someone who wanted to make objections to the propositions that are beyond doubt. That is, not reply to him but admonish him. (*OC* 495)

## 1. Introduction

Harry Frankfurt first investigated the phenomenon of 'bullshit' in his 1986 paper, *On Bullshit*, which later became a book of the same name in 2005. In this essay, I focus on Frankfurt's original paper as well as on Gerald A. Cohen's response in his 2002 paper, *Deeper into Bullshit*. My main purpose is to argue that already in 1951 Ludwig Wittgenstein conceived a very similar

---

<sup>1</sup> Frank Hernández graduated from The University of Texas at El Paso in December 2020 with a double major BA in Philosophy and Multimedia Journalism. He is currently an MA Philosophy student at the Central European University. He specializes in social epistemology, epistemic injustice and philosophy of language. A very special thanks to Alexandra Elbakyan for her commitment to making knowledge accessible to all.

phenomenon while dealing with different philosophical concerns. That is, he arrived at this idea after theorizing about the unreliability of certain kinds of skepticism. Nonetheless, ‘bullshit’, or ‘rubbish’ (Unsinn), as seems to be the case from Wittgenstein’s work, was fundamentally different to Frankfurt’s and Cohen’s ideas.

With that in mind, my three aims are to 1) explain a variety of concepts found in Wittgenstein’s philosophy relevant to the present discussion, 2) argue that Wittgenstein had a kind of ‘bullshit’ in mind when theorizing unreasonable doubt, and 3) argue that the kind of ‘bullshit’ that Wittgenstein had in mind is essentially different in meaningful ways from the kinds of ‘bullshit’ that Frankfurt and Cohen had in mind. I focus primarily on Wittgenstein’s last work, *On Certainty (OC)*, which covers primarily what is deemed Wittgenstein’s work in epistemology, especially the threat of skepticism and *Moorean certainties*<sup>2</sup>. Wherever I refer to other texts, I do so peripherally and only in order to justify my interpretation of *OC*.

## 2. What is bullshit?

The difference between ‘bullshit’ and ‘lies’, Frankfurt explains, is that the liar, when lying, says something they believe to be false with the intention of deceiving the audience into thinking that it is true, or vice versa.<sup>3</sup> For example, think of politicians who tell their constituents that a tax-cut will benefit them, even if all available evidence indicates the contrary (assuming that this is the case). It might turn out to be true that the tax-cut will benefit them (maybe it helps bring more jobs to their community, etc.) but because all the evidence known by the politician at the time of the utterance indicates that the tax-cut would actually harm the community and only by luck would this not be the case, we can say that the politician was lying.

The bullshitter, on the other hand, does not need to have an intention to deceive. For

---

<sup>2</sup> These are truisms that George Edward Moore identified in his famous papers *Proof of an External World* and *A Defence of Common Sense*.

<sup>3</sup> Frankfurt 2002, p. 3.

example, think of politicians who claim without any evidence that there was voter fraud during an election. The reason they are not lying is that they have no reason to believe that there was or not voter fraud (assuming that this is the case) because they have no evidence to back either claim. In backing any of these opposing views they are not intending to deceive, which would require them to promote a view that they know to be false (or vice versa). Rather they might have other intentions which have no connection to the truth value of their statements, e.g. they might be gathering support by energizing their base, etc. In this case the politician is not lying, but bullshitting.

It is worth mentioning that the bullshitter needs not completely lack an intention to deceive. Cohen pointed this out when arguing that “advertisers may not care whether what they say is true, but they do care about what their audience is caused to believe.”<sup>4</sup> This led him to conclude that some instances of (Frankfurtian) bullshit are not so different from lying. In responding to Cohen, Frankfurt argued that advertisers (or people who act in a similar manner) are liars only “incidentally or by accident,” but “their most fundamental commitment is as bullshitters” because they “generally decide what they are going to say [...] without caring what the truth is.”<sup>5</sup> In other words, some bullshitters might be lying when they deceive their audience, but they are not *primarily* aiming to deceive their audience. It just turns out that by deceiving them they reach whatever goals they may have (like selling their products, etc.).

This of course has nothing to do with the truth value of what they say. According to Herman Cappelen and Josh Dever, a way of distinguishing a liar from a bullshitter, is that the liar *must care* about the truth or falsehood of their statements, while the bullshitter “isn’t guided by or motivated by a desire to track the way the world is,” not even in order to deceive.<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> Cohen 2002, p. 331.

<sup>5</sup> Frankfurt 2002, p. 341.

<sup>6</sup> Cappelen and Dever 2019, p. 53.

Correspondingly, (Frankfurtian) bullshit is distinguished by the *lack of caring* for the truth value of a statement, or when this caring occurs only incidentally.

Cohen distinguished his account, known as “deep bullshit,”<sup>7</sup> from Frankfurt’s because, according to him, Frankfurtian bullshit is closer to “trivial or insincere talk or writing,” having an intentional nature, i.e. (Frankfurtian) bullshit is the product of (someone’s) bullshitting, where ‘bullshitting’ means saying something while not caring for its truth value. Cohen’s definition, on the other hand, has to do with instances of “nonsense” or “rubbish,” related to “the character of its output,”<sup>8</sup> i.e.  $x$  is (Cohenian) bullshit *iff* its output has the character of bullshit regardless whether the person who produced it was or not bullshitting. Cohenian bullshit is centered on the expression itself, as opposed to Frankfurtian bullshit which is centered on the intentions of those who utter it.

In Cohen’s view, those who produce bullshit need not be bullshitting at all. They might just be producing bullshit, while deeply caring for truth, or conversely might be purposefully transmitting falsehood, but bullshit is produced nonetheless. According to Cappelen and Dever, another way of characterizing Cohenian bullshit is as “gibberish” or “meaningless speech.”<sup>9</sup> What is said by Cohenian bullshitters is either “meaningless words” or a “meaningless combination of meaningful words.”<sup>10</sup>

Some have argued that Cohen’s characterization is misguided and illegitimately charges some speech as bullshit. For instance, Tom Burdge argues that “[Cohenian-bullshit] accusations are often instances of epistemic trespass,”<sup>11</sup> instead of legitimate accounts of bullshit. I do not delve into defending or criticizing Cohen’s view, rather I take it as a referent (in the same way

---

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 59-60.

<sup>8</sup> Cohen 2002, p. 325.

<sup>9</sup> Cappelen and Dever 2019, pp. 59-61.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid*, p. 60.

<sup>11</sup> Burdge 2020, p. 42.

that he takes Frankfurt's view) in order to locate Wittgenstein's view within what I call the 'bullshit plane'.

Thus, there are at least two kinds of bullshit: Frankfurtian bullshit, or F-bullshit hereafter, and Cohenian bullshit, or C-bullshit hereafter. The former is, as Cohen describes it, 'bull-centered' or based on the intentions of those who utter it. The latter is 'shit-centered' or based on the expression itself without a necessary connection to the intentions of those who utter it. The purpose of this paper is to identify Wittgensteinian bullshit, or W-bullshit hereafter, in relation to these two.

### 3. Certainty and propositions beyond doubt

In order to argue my case, I must a) define what 'certainty' means for Wittgenstein, b) explain the difference between 'subjective certainty' and 'objective certainty', and c) introduce the notion of 'propositions beyond doubt'. To begin, I need to clarify that 'certainty' is not the same as 'knowledge'. 'Knowledge' is taken to mean justified true belief. Even if this is not right, it is inconsequential for the purposes of this paper. Assuming it is true, and shedding light on the fact that 'certainty' is also a kind of belief, the main difference between them must lie on the remaining parts of the definition. Certainty is not justified<sup>12</sup> and is also not true:

Certainty is *as it were* a tone of voice in which one declares how things are, but one does not infer from the tone of voice that one is justified. (OC 30)

Wittgenstein intended to prove that the things that G. E. Moore claimed to know, such as 'the external world exists', are not really known by him but he is only certain of them.

Essentially, one does not infer from the existence of objects such as one's hands the existence of the external world. Actually doing so would be meaningless because to say that 'the external world exists' is to say nothing (meaningful) at all. Claiming to know, or claiming to hold a

---

<sup>12</sup> I have some reservations for outright calling certainty 'unjustified belief' just because W-bullshit might also fall under the same category, as will become clear from my argument.

justified true belief, that ‘the external world exists’ is senseless or a tautology (*TLP* 6.126, 6.1265). One can only be certain that ‘the external world exists’. The difference is that knowledge requires justification. Certainty on the other hand *is* the basis for all justification. I.e. We are not justified in believing that ‘the external world exists’, etc., but if we were to doubt it none of our justified beliefs derived from this basic belief would be coherent. In that sense, we must “[replace] Moore’s “I know” by “I am of the unshakable conviction”” (*OC* 86). For example, I cannot infer from ‘here is one hand’ that ‘the external world exists’, rather I must assume that ‘the external world exists’ so I can say things like ‘here is one hand’.

Danièle Moyal-Sharrock described this distinction as logical. Certainty has the property, according to her, that it is logically incoherent for it to be false, because if it were false it would be incoherent to say anything at all. For example, I wouldn’t be able to say ‘I am 23 years old’ if that ‘the world has existed for longer than 5 minutes’ were false. This impossibility of mistake makes justification futile or tautological: “it is in believing, not in knowing, that justification is optional,”<sup>13</sup> but by being optional it is also unnecessary: “That is the meaning of Occam’s razor” (*TLP* 3.328).

The difference between subjective and objective certainty, as explained by Wittgenstein, is that subjective certainty consists in a personal conviction, e.g. ‘I believe that I’m living in the year 2021’. While objective certainty consists in the logical impossibility of mistake, e.g. ‘2021 is a year’. Michael Kober described the former as “a kind of being sure, of confidence, or trust.”<sup>14</sup> But as Moyal-Sharrock emphasized, this is not what Wittgenstein prioritized: “although the certainty he is striving to define is a certainty that stands fast for us individually [...] it cannot be merely personal [...] The certainty in question, though in a way personal, is also a shared or

---

<sup>13</sup> Moyal-Sharrock 2004, p. 23.

<sup>14</sup> Kober 2018, p. 472.

collective certainty.”<sup>15</sup> Wittgenstein focused instead, according to her, on objective certainty (or “intersubjective certainty” as Kober preferred<sup>16</sup>), which is not a matter of personal conviction, but about being certain that some things are beyond doubt because doubt is logically impossible in those cases.<sup>17</sup> Objective certainty can be, according to Moyal-Sharrock,

a) a doxastic (belief) attitude that appears as

i) a disposition towards —, or

ii) an occurrence (taking-hold) of —, or

b) a category that appears as a foundational certainty consisting of —

rules or instruments of grammar.<sup>18</sup>

This complicates things in explaining the nature of W-bullshit, but for now I shall focus on the fact that objective certainty needs to be instantiated by actual certainties, or propositions beyond doubt. E.g. ‘the external world exists’, ‘green is a color’, etc.:

We know, with the same certainty with which we believe *any* mathematical proposition, how the letters A and B are pronounced, what the colour of human blood is called, that other human beings have blood and call it “blood”. (OC 340)

Propositions like ‘the external world exists’, ‘green is a color’, etc., serve as logical or grammatical rules, rather than falsifiable propositions. By virtue of their indubitability, because they rest at the bottom of our belief or epistemic systems, they are rather determinants of the truth value of other (empirical) propositions. In Moyal-Sharrock’s view, it is even wrong to call them ‘propositions’ because they lack the property of bipolarity.<sup>19</sup> In contrast, these

---

<sup>15</sup> Moyal-Sharrock 2004, p. 15.

<sup>16</sup> Kober 2018, p. 470.

<sup>17</sup> Moyal-Sharrock 2004, p. 73.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, p. 59.

<sup>19</sup> This property refers to the possibility of being either true or false.



propositions, which Wittgenstein deemed “grammatical propositions” or “hinges”, are relieved of their propositional status insofar as they are beyond doubt (*OC* 58, 341).<sup>20</sup> They take the form of “ready-to-use rules,”<sup>21</sup> which “condition our acts and thoughts.”<sup>22</sup> They are neither true nor false. According to Wittgenstein, they rather *set the tone* for judging the truth or falsehood of empirical propositions (*OC* 58, 94, 205, *TLP* 5.1363). In other words, they cannot be true nor false because they help determine what truth and falsehood are in the first place, and something cannot both determine what truth is and be true at the same time: “If the true is what is grounded, then the ground is not *true*, nor yet false” (*OC* 205). For the sake of consistency, I use ‘propositions beyond doubt’ when referring to these nonpropositional, grammatical claims, while acknowledging that they are not propositions in the correct use of the term.

Two questions follow from these remarks: 1) What is the difference between propositions beyond doubt and bullshit, if neither of them are said to be true nor false? 2) How are they different if both are nonsensical<sup>23</sup>? I proceed to answer the first question and will answer the second one further below: Bullshit does not lack truth value, as is the case with propositions beyond doubt. The latter have no truth value *at all*, whereas utterances of the former do have a truth value, but it is the *lack of caring* for this truth value that determines their bullshit-ness. In other words, if someone utters a proposition beyond doubt, they are saying something that is neither true nor false (which, according to Wittgenstein, means that they are not saying anything at all<sup>24</sup>). On the other hand, if someone utters bullshit, they might be saying something that is true or false, but their *lack of caring* for its truth or falsehood determines its being bullshit.

This of course is not the case with C-bullshit. Hence, we need another condition to

---

<sup>20</sup> Moyal-Sharrock 2004, p. 39.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid*, p. 40.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid*, p. 68.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 46, 90-91.

<sup>24</sup> This means that those propositions are ineffable, which is not the same as being unspeakable or unverbalizable (Moyal-Sharrock 2004, pp. 43-47, 97).

distinguish propositions beyond doubt from both F- and C-bullshit. Perhaps more importantly, propositions beyond doubt are regulative of their language games, whereas bullshit is not. In Wittgenstein's view, propositions beyond doubt determine the rules of grammar for a language game, such that if we doubt them or reject them we couldn't play a game at all. This is not the case with bullshit. For instance, if there was no bullshit in a language game we could perfectly play it. One might even say that a game is expected to be played without bullshit. Of course that is not to say that one cannot play a game if there is bullshit, rather that *ideally* there shouldn't be any bullshit if we want to play a game correctly; think here of people who play games without regard for their rules.

#### 4. Reasonable and unreasonable doubt

To arrive at the position where we can accept that Wittgenstein had in mind a kind of bullshit, I must differentiate between reasonable and unreasonable doubt. There are two ways of understanding this distinction: a) Wittgenstein distinguished between doubts that can and cannot be doubted by a reasonable person (*OC* 219, 220, 323). In this case we can say that a reasonable doubt is that which can be doubted by a reasonable person, whereas an unreasonable doubt is that which cannot. The question of who is a reasonable person is more or less neglected by Wittgenstein, but it can be said that anyone who has a rational attitude in relation to the collective world picture (*Weltbild*), which contains the collection of propositions beyond doubt, and is mentally stable, qualifies as a reasonable person. According to Moyal-Sharrock, it would be unreasonable for someone to doubt propositions beyond doubt because “[it] is logically impossible to doubt or be wrong about some beliefs whilst remaining within the ken of normal human understanding.”<sup>25</sup>

When we say that we *know* that such and such ..., we mean that any reasonable

---

<sup>25</sup> Moyal-Sharrock 2004, p. 74.

person in our position would also know it, that it would be a piece of unreason to doubt it. Thus Moore too wants to say not merely that *he* knows that he etc. etc., but also that anyone endowed with reason in his position would know it just the same. (*OC* 325)

b) At the same time, one can also read Wittgenstein's views on reasonable and unreasonable doubt without any regard for the kind of person who is doubting. Even though it is commonsensical to say that someone raising an unreasonable doubt is being unreasonable, we can think of cases when someone completely reasonable raises a doubt about the existence of the external world or about green being a color. Maybe they are doubting it as a joke or as a thought experiment, etc. But isn't doubt in these cases unreasonable independently of the person's intentions? This view is not uncontroversial and I won't attempt to defend it in this paper.

Another thing to consider is the question about what is deemed reasonable or unreasonable: "what men consider reasonable or unreasonable alters. At certain periods men find reasonable what at other periods they found unreasonable. And vice versa" (*OC* 336). Kober used the example of "Einstein changing our views of space and time, mass and energy" to argue that some considerations "may later cause us to revise some of our certainties."<sup>26</sup> Michael Williams created a mechanism based on four factors (semantic, methodological, dialectical and economic) to determine which propositions can be reasonably beyond doubt.<sup>27</sup> Though important considerations, I focus here on the basic propositions that most people would agree to if someone were to ask 'what is reasonably beyond doubt?': things like 'the external world exists', 'red is a color', etc.

Moyal-Sharrock claimed that "[on] Wittgenstein's view, 'Red is a colour' is as nonsensical as: 'Red is not a colour.'"<sup>28</sup> I am not of the same opinion, as long as her opinion is that both are

---

<sup>26</sup> Kober 2018, p. 454.

<sup>27</sup> Williams 2007, p. 100.

<sup>28</sup> Moyal-Sharrock 2004, p. 90.

nonsensical *in the same way*, which seems to be the case because she did not distinguish between different kinds of nonsense. It is true that both claims are nonsensical. The latter is nonsensical because it violates a grammatical rule by *indirectly causing* to cast a doubt against a proposition beyond doubt, while the former is nonsensical because it is the grammatical rule or proposition beyond doubt itself, and grammatical rules “stand outside the bounds of sense,” because they are not falsifiable, thus have no sense (*OC* 58).<sup>29</sup> But I have reasons to believe that the kind of nonsense of ‘Red is a colour’ and ‘Red is not a colour’ is not the same. I.e. The former is nonsense due to its indubitability, but the latter is nonsense because it is bullshit.

### 5. Admonishing bullshit

First, it is intuitive to say that unreasonable doubt is bullshit. I would call bullshit if someone asked, for instance, ‘how do you know that red is a color?’. It is also meaningless because raising a doubt against something meaningless doesn’t give the doubt a meaning. Additionally, just as other kinds of bullshit, it is not regulative of any language game. Nonetheless, it seems that unreasonable doubt might lack the other condition, which I said is unique to F-bullshit, i.e. disregard for truth value. This is because it is not obvious that the skeptic (of the kind that would ask things like ‘how do you know that red is a color?’) is doubting with disregard for truth value. It also seems that unreasonable doubt entirely lacks truth value, just as propositions beyond doubt, because there is no reason to believe that doubting something gives the doubt a truth value (*TLP* 4.003). This definitely complicates things, and I should consider them for future endeavors, but the fact that it has qualities that allow at least another kind of bullshit (C-) to be called bullshit (that is, intuitiveness, nonregulativeness and meaninglessness) I can justifiably call unreasonable doubt ‘W-bullshit’.

As previously stated, I am concerned with the difference between W-bullshit and other

---

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

kinds of ‘bullshit’. For this, I introduce the distinction between claimant- and challenger-bullshit.<sup>30</sup> F- and C-bullshit fall under the former kind because their instances take the form of claims. For example, ‘(even though I have no evidence for or against it) there was voter fraud during the last election’ (F-bullshit) or ‘social distancing is communism’<sup>31</sup> (C-bullshit). W-bullshit on the other hand takes the form of challenges to already established claims. W-bullshit is like asking ‘how do you know that your name is ... ?’ (OC 628) ‘how do you know that the earth has existed for a long time now’ (OC 138, 187, 188, 190, 231) ‘how do you know that the earth is round and not flat?’ (OC 147). I presume, though not conclusively, that it should also include all sorts of (unreasonable) skepticism and denialism like ‘how do you know that human-induced climate change is not a hoax?’, ‘how do you know that COVID-19 is real’, etc. As Wittgenstein himself pointed out:

‘We are quite sure of it’ does not mean just that every single person is certain of it, but that we belong to a community which is bound together by science and education. (OC 298)

To differentiate between claimant- and challenger-kinds of bullshit, consider that one thing is to produce bullshit when claiming something, while another is to produce it when challenging something that was already claimed, or is *implicitly* claimed. Both kinds of bullshit can cause each other. For instance, Bergstrom and West argue that (claimant-) bullshit “undermines our ability to trust information in general,”<sup>32</sup> which creates an ideal environment for challenger-bullshit to develop. On the other hand, if the presence of too much challenger-bullshit causes distrust of the evidence, it makes it easier for claimant-bullshit to develop. So the possibility that one causes the other is conceivable. Then, if we take into consideration causation (one thing cannot cause itself) and the fact that claimant- and challenger-bullshit have different logical forms, we can conclude

---

<sup>30</sup> I borrowed the claimant/challenger distinction from Williams 2007.

<sup>31</sup> See <https://ktla.com/news/local-news/demonstrators-gather-in-huntington-beach-to-protest-states-stay-at-home-order-and-defying-social-distancing-rules/>.

<sup>32</sup> Bergstrom and West 2020, p. 8. The reason for my assumption that Bergstrom and West refer exclusively to claimant-bullshit in this quote is that I doubt that they are considering challenger-bullshit anywhere in their analysis.

that they are different things — different kinds of bullshit. For instance, ‘human-induced climate change is a hoax’ and ‘how do you know that human-induced climate change is not a hoax?’ would be different according to the reasons just provided.

But in order to map W-bullshit in the ‘bullshit plane’, I must also locate it in relation to a second axis. As I said before, the difference between F- and C-bullshit is that the former is intention-based, whereas the latter is expression-based. It is not clear where W-bullshit lies in this distinction. It is complicated to exactly locate W-bullshit within the intention/expression axis, given that a) it is both an attitude (intention) and a category (expression), and b) it is both dependent (intention) and independent (expression) of a person’s reasonableness. Hence, we should consider both possibilities, which I highlight in the following table:

Table 1. *Bullshit plane*

	Intention-based	Expression-based
Claimant	F-bullshit	C-bullshit
Challenger	W-bullshit <sub>1</sub>	W-bullshit <sub>2</sub>

## 6. Conclusion

I have argued that unreasonable doubt, which is the kind of doubt raised against propositions beyond doubt (certainties that instantiate the kind of certainty that is based on the impossibility of logical mistake), is a kind of bullshit. This kind of bullshit is distinguished from other kinds of bullshit because it is challenger-bullshit, in opposition to claimant-bullshit. The latter is constituted by claims which are i) either made without regard for truth value or ii) meaningless. The former is constituted by challenges to already established claims which are

indubitable. I have also said that it is complicated to say with complete assurance whether W-bullshit is intention- or expression-based, but this and other complications must be dealt with in future endeavors. All in all, the most important contribution of this paper is to acknowledge Wittgenstein's continuing contributions to the philosophy of nonsense, given that much of his work was devoted to identifying it.

## References

- Bergstrom, Carl, and Jevin West. *Calling Bullshit: the Art of Scepticism in a Data-Driven World*. New York, NY: Random House, 2020.
- Burdge, Tom. "Meaning in Gibberish: In Defence of Deep Bullshit." *Aporia: St Andrews Journal of the Philosophy Society* 20, no. 1 (June 30, 2020): 31–46.
- Cappelen, Herman, and Josh Dever. "Bullshitting and Deep Bullshitting." In *Bad Language*, 52–72. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2019.
- Cohen, Gerard Allan. "Deeper into Bullshit." Essay. In *Contours of Agency: Essays on Themes from Harry Frankfurt*, edited by Sarah Buss and Lee Overton, 321–39. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002.
- Frankfurt, Harry. "On Bullshit," 1986, 1–20. Retrieved from [http://www2.csudh.edu/ccauthen/576f12/frankfurt\\_harry\\_-\\_on\\_bullshit.pdf](http://www2.csudh.edu/ccauthen/576f12/frankfurt_harry_-_on_bullshit.pdf)
- . "Reply to G.A. Cohen." Essay. In *Contours of Agency: Essays on Themes from Harry Frankfurt*, edited by Sarah Buss and Lee Overton, 340–44. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002.

- Kober, Michael. “Certainties of a World Picture: The Epistemological Investigations of *On Certainty*.” Essay. In *The Cambridge Companion to Wittgenstein*, edited by Hans Sluga and David Stern, 441–78. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2018.
- Moyal-Sharrock, Danièle. *Understanding Wittgenstein's On Certainty*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004.
- Williams, Michael. “Why (Wittgensteinian) Contextualism Is Not Relativism.” *Episteme* 4, no. 1 (2007): 93–114. <https://doi.org/10.3366/epi.2007.4.1.93>.
- Wittgenstein, Ludwig. *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*. Translated by Charles Kay Ogden. London, UK: Routledge, 1922.
- . *On Certainty*. Edited by Gertrude Elizabeth Margaret Anscombe and George Henrik von Wright. Translated by Denis Paul and Gertrude Elizabeth Margaret Anscombe. Oxford, UK: Basil Blackwell, 1969.