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## Nonnegotiable Contents

A piece of received wisdom among philosophers is that successful communication requires shared content. A speaker can convey to an audience a desire for water by uttering “I want water” just in case both can coordinate on a shared content—that the speaker desires water. Another piece of received wisdom emphasizes that competent agents can fail to know, and often make errors about conceptual content without disrupting communication (Burge, 1979; Kripke, 1980; Putnam 1975; Fodor 1975). What allows them to do so is that they are situated in a network of causal/social/historical connections, to which they defer. Deferential Network Models were introduced to sidestep any clash between successful usage and “arguments from ignorance and error” (Devitt and Sterelny, 1999). But, given potential ignorance, how can agents coordinate on substantive shared information successful communication presumes? How is an exchange of ideas possible in a world of deference?

One reaction is to argue that little antecedent knowledge is needed since we can coordinate on contents on the fly. Some argue that contents are dynamic, i.e., constantly changing, and potentially negotiated by members of a community (Armstrong, 2016, Cappelen, 2018, Carston 2002, Davidson, 1986, Haslanger 2012; 2018, Ludlow 2008, 2014, Plunkett and Sundell 2013, i.a.). We, however, argue that given the practice of deference, contents are non-negotiable, i.e., are not dynamic. Negotiation can neither change content nor secure a mutually shared content presupposed by communication. Indeed, accounts of negotiation are unsuccessful in part because they already assume coordination on shared content. In response, one can either, deny that there is widespread ignorance and error, and so, a need for deference, or deny that communication requires a non-trivial mutual grasp of shared content. But either option carries a cost.