Wittgenstein's views on religious belief are cryptic. We have comparatively few of his comments on religion, and most of what we do have were neither recorded by Wittgenstein himself nor intended by him for publication. Here I aim to assess some of the arguments that have been attributed to Wittgenstein in support of a view about religious belief that I call *No Contradiction*:

*No Contradiction.* When atheists deny the beliefs they take to be expressed by such sentences as
(a) 'God exists'
(b) 'God created the world'
(c) 'Jesus rose from the dead'
(d) 'We will face a Judgement Day'
they fail to *contradict* the religious beliefs such sentences are used to express.

Often associated with No Contradiction is a further related thesis that I call *Immunity*:

*Immunity.* Even if an atheist were successfully to refute the belief they took such a sentence to express (by providing empirical evidence to the contrary, say), they would fail thereby to refute the *religious* belief expressed.

There are passages in which Wittgenstein does appear to commit himself to something like No Contradiction. Consider:

If you ask me whether or not I believe in a Judgement Day, in the sense in which religious people have belief in it, I wouldn't say: 'No. I don't believe there will be such a thing.' It would seem to me utterly crazy to say this.
And then I give the explanation: 'I don't believe in ...', but then the religious person never believes what I describe.
I can't say. I can't contradict that person. *Lectures and Conversations* p55

Simon Glendinning interprets this and the surrounding text as articulating a criticism of what Glendinning calls the 'modern atheist'. According to Glendinning's Wittgenstein,
the crucial feature of the one who takes an atheist position, the one, for example, who feels obliged on occasion to insist that there will be no Judgement Day, is that *he or she does so because (by his or her lights) another person believes the opposite*, believes, in this case, that there will be a Judgement Day. (2013: 42)

Glendinning is 'honestly disgusted' with such modern atheist position-taking (2013: 42). While neither he nor Wittgenstein are religious believers, says Glendinning, neither are they atheists of the modern variety to which he supposes Christopher Hitchens and Daniel Dennett belong. Glendinning and Wittgenstein simply *fail to believe*, rather than confusedly try to adopt the modern atheist position of 'believing the contrary'. Glendinning explains as follows:

> The religious believer’s beliefs are of a very distinctive sort, quite different to typical scientific beliefs, but the modern atheist’s assertion of double belief— that 'there won’t be a Judgment Day, but another person says there will'— supposes that there are two beliefs in view here that can be traded in the marketplace of reason; just as if one were to assert that 'there won’t be an eclipse tomorrow, but another person says there will.' In the latter case the two market sellers may well contradict each other, 'they mean the same.' (2013: 50)

But why don't the religious believer and the atheist 'mean the same' by 'There will be a Judgement Day'? Why is the atheist who says 'There won't be a Judgement day, but another person says there will' mistaken in supposing they contradict what the religious person believes? I examine Glendinning's explanation at the end of this paper. In the meantime, let's establish an overview of some of the explanations on offer.

While commentators disagree about precisely what Wittgenstein's views on religious belief are, there's a broad consensus on at least this much: that Wittgenstein's aim is to clarify the nature of religious belief by clarifying the way in which expressions of such belief are used and the role they play in the lives of the faithful. What Wittgenstein supposes such an investigation reveals, it is generally agreed, is that the way in which the religious use such sentences as (a), (b), (c), and (d) is very different to the way in which we typically use the superficially similar sentences 'Electrons exist', 'Bevin created the National Health Service', 'John rose from his bed', and 'We will come before a judge and jury'. It's this difference in use that some then suppose delivers No Contradiction. When an atheist - certainly one of Glendinning's 'modern' variety - targets the religious beliefs expressed by such sentences as (a) to (d), they betray a misunderstanding. They suppose these sentences are indeed used by the religious to make claims akin to those made using 'Electrons exist', 'Bevin created the NHS', etc. But the religious person uses sentences (a) to (d) very differently, and so with a quite different meaning. So when atheists say e.g. 'God does *not* exist', 'It's false that God created the world', 'Jesus did *not* rise from the dead', and 'There *won't* be a Judgement Day', they fail to contradict the beliefs expressed by the religious using (a) to (d). Moreover, some would add that what such atheists
attempt to refute when they target the religious belief expressed by (a) to (d) is not what the religious actually believe.

What is controversial among those Wittgensteinians who sign up to No Contradiction is precisely how such religious sentences are used, and precisely why this difference in use should have No Contradiction, and perhaps also Immunity, as a consequence. Let's look at the three main views on offer: non-cognitivist, juicer, and atheist-minus (as I shall call them).

**Non-cognitivist views**

One of the most obvious ways of arguing for No Contradiction and Immunity is offered by the non-cognitivist. That Wittgenstein offers a non-cognitivist account of religious language has been held by a number of philosophers, including Hans-Johann Glock, who supposes Wittgenstein's view involves the thought that 'religious statements do not describe any kind of reality, empirical or transcendent, and do not make any knowledge claims' (1996, s.v. 'religion'). If no claim is made by the religious using sentences (a) to (d) then there is none for the atheist to contradict or refute. Here are three examples of non-cognitivist accounts of religious language use.

1. **Expressivist accounts**

What I shall call expressivist accounts offer a view of religious discourse akin to that offered by emotivism for ethical discourse, on which 'Stealing money is wrong', say, 'has no factual meaning' and merely 'expresses certain sentiments' (A.J. Ayer, 2001: 107). The faithful who say 'God exists' and 'Jesus rose from the dead' should similarly be understood, not as putting forward claims that might then be contradicted or refuted by the atheist, but as expressing certain emotions and/or attitudes - including certain attitudes towards life, such as an intense form of reverence, and/or awe, and/or optimism. If no claim is made by the religious believer, then there is none for the atheist to contradict or refute.

2. **System of reference account**

Wittgenstein says at *Philosophical Investigations* that:

[t]here is one thing of which we can say neither that it is one metre long, nor that it is not one metre long, and that is the standard metre bar in Paris. But this is, of course, not to ascribe any extraordinary property to it but only to mark its peculiar role in the language-game of measuring with a metre-rule'. (2009: (I) §50)

On Wittgenstein's view, while the sentences 'The dining table is one metre long' and 'The standard metre bar is one metre long' are superficially similar, their use is very different. The former is typically used to make a claim, a claim that might be contradicted, or
empirically confirmed or disconfirmed. However, the latter sentence is used, not to make a claim, but to determine what is meant by 'one metre'. What the latter expresses is, as it were, 'placed in the archives', forming part of the grammatical framework within which it then becomes possible to describe other objects as being, or failing to be, one metre long.

Wittgenstein suggests something similar regarding 'Here is a hand'. 'Here is a hand' can be used to make a claim. For example, I might say 'Here is a hand' on an archaeological dig, while excavating some small bones buried in the soil. Under such circumstances, it makes sense to ask how I know and what my evidence is, and there is the possibility that my claim might be refuted. However, 'Here is a hand', can also be used to provide an ostensive definition - to explain what the word 'hand' means - when said in broad daylight in front of a class learning English, say. Wittgenstein suggests that, on this second, meaning-determining use, no claim is made. Thus it makes no sense to ask for supporting evidence, or to suppose that what is said might be, say, empirically refuted.

The skeptic about the external world attempts to submit what's expressed by such sentences as 'Here is a hand', said while holding up ones hand in broad daylight etc., to doubt. They treat what is expressed as a claim, a claim for which the skeptic demands justification and, on finding it lacking, concludes we don't know. The Wittgensteinian solution to this skeptical puzzle is to recognise that, despite the obvious similarity between 'Here is a hand' as used on an archaeological dig and as used to explain meaning (it is the very same sentence that is in play), the use is very different. When used to explain meaning, no claim is made, and thus demands for justification make no sense.

Indeed, the skeptic's doubt is self-defeating. For in trying to doubt whether this is a hand under such circumstances, the skeptic leave the 'archives' - the store of meaning-constituting uses of such utterances - empty:

If I wanted to doubt whether this was my hand, how could I avoid doubting whether the word 'hand' had any meaning (1975: §383)

The situation is akin to trying to continue to describe objects as being 'one metre long' when nothing - not even the standard metre bar - has been used to determine what 'one metre' means.

But then what if sentences such as 'God exists' are similarly used by the religious, not to make claims that might be known or not known, but in something like this meaning- or reference-fixing way? Call such non-cognitivist accounts of how religious language is used meaning-fixing accounts.

Does Wittgenstein offer a meaning-fixing account? Wittgenstein does at least suggest that religious belief involves something like a 'passionate commitment to a system of reference' (1998, 64). And if 'God exists' etc. were used in something like the way Wittgenstein supposes the sentence 'The standard metre bar is one metre long' is used, then no claim
would be made by the religious person who says 'God exists'. And so, again, the atheist would be left with nothing to contradict or refute.

3. Lash's promissory account

Theologian Nicholas Lash offers a different Wittgenstein-inspired account of religious language use. Lash writes:

If someone is asked: 'Do you believe in God?' and replies 'I do', they may be saying one of two quite different things, because the English expression 'I believe in God' is systematically ambiguous. On the one hand, it may be the expression of an opinion; the opinion that God exists. On the other hand, as used in the Creed, in a public act of worship, it promises that life, and love, and all one’s actions are henceforth set steadfastly on the mystery of God, and hence that we are thereby pledged to work towards that comprehensive healing of the world by which all things are brought into their peace and harmony in God. 'Nicholas Lash, do you take Janet Chalmers to be your lawful wedded wife?' 'I do.' 'Janet Chalmers, do you believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth?' 'I do'. The grammar of these two declarations is the same. (2008: 34)

So there are, Lash says, two kinds of theist: those whom, in response to the question 'Do you believe in God?' use 'I do' to express agreement with an opinion, and those who use 'I do' to enter into a promise. There are, correspondingly, two kinds of atheism: the atheism that rejects the opinion that God exists, and the atheism that involves a refusal to enter into any such promise. According to Lash, atheists like Richard Dawkins (and no doubt Hitchens and Dennett) are attacking a crude form of theism on which belief in God amounts to belief in the truth of a certain opinion. Lash says,

the atheism which is the contradictory of the opinion that God exists is both widespread and intellectually uninteresting. (2008: 34)

On Lash's view, when religious folk like himself say 'I do' in response to the question 'Do you believe in God', they use it, not to assent to the truth of some claim, but to make a commitment. But then, as no opinion is offered, that again leaves atheists like Dawkins et al with nothing to contradict or indeed refute.

Lash, incidentally, also goes on to argue that the latter sort of atheism is impossible, as ‘effective refusal to have anything to do with God can only mean self-destruction, annihilation, return to the nihil from which all things came’ (2008: 35) Lash’s argument for the impossibility of this kind of atheism contains two obvious flaws, (i) Lash here just assumes that there is a God from which all things came, and (ii) in any case Lash muddles up two senses of ‘refusal to have anything to do with’. I can refuse to have anything to with my mother in the sense that I can ignore her, etc. but of course I still have something
to do with her, and indeed necessarily so: it remains true that if she had not existed, then neither would I. Similarly, atheists might 'refuse to have anything to do with God' even if there is, as Lash here just assumes, a God on which their existence depends.

**Some difficulties with the above accounts**

All three of the above accounts of how religious language function are non-cognitivist in that all deny that religious belief involves assent to some sort of claim (such as the claim - or, as Lash puts it, 'opinion' - the atheist takes 'God exists' to express). All three accounts have also been associated with Wittgenstein, though it's unclear to me whether Wittgenstein would be willing to endorse any sort of non-cognitivist account, let alone one of these specific suggestions.

Non-cognitivist views face a range of objections, including:

1. **While what the atheist denies may not be asserted by the religious, it is at least presupposed**

   The second and third of the above non-cognitive accounts face the objection that, while the religious person might not use religious utterances in order to make claims, nevertheless, on the proposed accounts, the truth of certain claims contradicted by the atheist would appear to be presupposed.

   Consider, first, Lash's promissory account of how 'I do' functions in response to the question 'Do you believe in God?' On the promissory account, 'I do' is not used to assent to the truth of a claim or opinion. Still, when we issue a promise, we issue it to someone – to something like a person. You can’t make a promise to a brick or a daffodil. Were you to try, you would be guilty of anthropomorphizing – of mistakenly supposing that the brick or daffodil is something like a person. But then if 'I do', said in response to 'Do you believe in God?', really is used to issue a promise, that raises the question: to whom is this promise made?

   Presumably, Lash is not merely making a promise to either himself or, say, other Christians (if he were, then he, or they, might release him from that promise whenever wished, but presumably that is not within their power). It appears that, if Lash is issuing a promise, the person to whom Lash is issuing that promise God. But then, even if Lash does use 'I do' to do something other than assent to the opinion that there exists a person-like God, it seems Lash nevertheless presupposes there exists a person-like God to whom such a promise might be made. But that there exists such a person-like God is precisely the claim that atheists like Dawkins, Dennett, and Hitchens contradict, and might even succeed in refuting.

   The 'system of reference' account faces the same sort of objection: that truth of what the atheist denies, if not asserted, is at least presupposed. Let's return for a moment to our
Wittgensteinian response to the skeptic. The Wittgensteinian insists that 'This is a hand', said while holding up one's hand in broad daylight in order to explain the meaning of 'hand', is used to give a definition, not make a claim. Perhaps so, the skeptic may reply, but the truth of an empirical claim is presupposed. For such a definition takes for granted the fact that one actually is holding up a hand by reference to which the word 'hand' might then be defined. The intended definition will succeed only if that presupposition is correct. But that the presupposition is correct is precisely what the skeptic throws into doubt. Similarly, while 'The standard metre bar is one metre long' may not be used to 'say' anything, its use to define what's meant by 'one metre' does at least presuppose something: the existence of a metre bar possessing a length. Without that bar, the reference-determining use of the sentence cannot succeed.

But then, also similarly, the suggestion that religious beliefs involve a passionate commitment to system of reference - a system explained by means of such propositions as 'God exists', God created the world', and so on - would appear if not to assert then at least to presuppose what the atheist denies: the existence of a divine reality. Just this objection is raised by John Cottingham:

the adoption of such a system does nevertheless presuppose certain truths - for example, the actual reality of the standard posited by the system (the paradigm 'meter bar' [...]). In the same way, a religious 'system of reference' can be said to have cognitive implications (by presupposing that supreme creative reality without which the system would make no sense)...

At the very least, it appears more work needs to be done by this brand of non-cognitivist to explain why religious systems of reference neither assert nor presuppose what the atheist denies: the existence of a divine reality.

2. Surely logic applies to religious beliefs, and so they do remain potentially refutable by the atheist

John Hyman points out that

it certainly is not possible to insulate religion entirely from rational criticism: 'If Christ be not risen, our faith is vain' implies 'Either Christ is risen or our faith is vain' for exactly the same reason as 'If the weather is not fine, our picnic is ruined' implies 'Either the weather is fine or our picnic is ruined'.

Hyman is surely correct that even religious beliefs are amenable to, and thus 'not invulnerable to logic' (2010: 185). But this opens up the possibility that such beliefs might then be shown to be, say, logically inconsistent, which is indeed the aim of some atheist arguments (those aiming to show that the concept of God involves a logical contradiction, for example).
In response, a Wittgensteinian may point out, correctly, that Immunity does not rule out the possibility of religious beliefs being refuted by the atheist *period*, it merely rules out refutation of religious belief by way of refutation of what the atheist takes such religious sentences to express. However, there remains the concern that non-cognitivist accounts struggle to accommodate the fact that logic can be applied to religious belief at all, e.g. if expressions of religious belief assert nothing, how are they able logically to contradict each other?iii

3. The non-cognitivist account struggles to make sense of the character of religious doubt

The faithful often entertain doubts about the existence of God, the resurrection of Jesus, and so on. How are such doubts to be accommodated on a non-cognitivist account? If no claim is made by 'God exists' and 'Jesus rose from the dead', then no claim is made about which one might then entertain a doubt.

In response, it may be said that religious doubts aren't doubts about the truth of claims or opinions. Consider the metric system of measurement. On Wittgenstein's view, 'The standard metre bar is one metre long' is used, not to make a claim, but to fix what is meant by 'one metre'. If no claim is made, then there is none to doubt. And yet one might still have doubts about, say, whether the metric system is a good system to adopt. After all, not all systems of measurement are useful or appropriate (a system using a standard measure made out of a material that dramatically and randomly expands and contracts would be quite useless for our usual purposes, for example). But then why can't a non-cognitivist account of religious language accommodate religious doubt in the same way? If no religious claims are made, then there are none to doubt, but I might still doubt whether the Christian 'system of reference' is a useful or appropriate framework for me to adopt. Indeed, I might discover good reasons not to adopt it.

An obvious difficulty with the above reply (and the associated account of how even the non-cognitivist might accommodate the thought that there could be *good reasons* to accept or reject particular religious systems of belief) is that it does not appear to be true to actual practice. When the religious profess doubts, they don't merely profess doubts about whether engaging in their particular religious practice is a good idea. They typically profess doubts about whether certain core doctrines are true.

Of course there are differences between doubts about the existence of God and doubts about, say, the existence of electrons. The religious doubt is usually far more momentous, for example. Still, expressions of religious doubt do appear to bear many of the grammatical hallmarks of doubt about truth claims. For example, religious doubts, and subsequent loss of belief, are often motivated by an application of logic and reason - *not* primarily to the question of whether religious belief is useful, mature, appropriate, etc. - but rather to the question of whether various core doctrines are true. Arguments are constructed, evidence marshalled, and defences run regarding *the truth of those core*
doctrines. When faith is lost, it is lost, more often than not, because this intellectual activity, focussed on defending the truth of those doctrinal claims, is deemed to have failed.\(^iv\)

4. The non-cognitivist account is not true to ordinary religious linguistic practice

A fourth objection is that if the non-cognitivist account of religious language did succeed in making religious belief something the atheist can neither contradict nor straightforwardly refute, it fails accurately to capture how religious language is actually used by the vast majority of believers.

Wittgenstein encourages us not to assume how language is used, but to look and see - see e.g. (2009: (I) §66) 'Don't think, but look!' He also encourages us to focus on ordinary linguistic practice. But ordinary religious linguistic practice does not appear to be what the non-cognitivist claims. A majority of religious people do indeed appear to use religious language in much the way the atheist supposes: to put forward various metaphysical, historical, and other truth claims.

In the US, for example, polls\(^v\) consistently indicate that around 130 million citizens believe the Earth was created by God sometime in the last ten thousand years (Bishop Ussher famously dated creation at 4004BC, and many Christians think this is about right). Most of these Christians also believe science supports this view at least as well as it supports the Old Earth/Evolutionary alternative. Even those Christians who accept that the universe is billions of years old nevertheless often suggest that there is empirical evidence to support belief in an intelligent creator and thus God (the fine-tuned character of the universe, for example). A majority of Christians also offer intellectual responses to the evidential problem of evil, appealing to theodicies, or at least God's mysterious reasons, in an attempt to defuse what they acknowledge is a problem: that the depth of evil we observe does at least appear to provide good evidence against the existence of omnipotent, omniscient, and supremely benevolent creator. On the non-cognitivist view, it's hard to see how we are to make sense of there even being a problem (for if no claim is made, then there is none for there to be evidence against). In short, more often than not, religious practice appears to exhibit very many of the markers of one in which claims are indeed put forward, developed, evidentially supported, contradicted, doubted, defended, abandoned, and so on. Christian discussion of the Resurrection provides a particularly good example. Christians often argue for the truth of the Resurrection, typically using a 'minimal facts' or best-explanation approach based on supposedly reliable historical reports of an empty tomb, the post-mortem appearance of Jesus, and so on.\(^vi\) Those Christians who believe the Resurrection is at least fairly well supported by Biblical and other historical sources (such as Josephus and Tacitus), or that fine-tuning provides evidence for the existence of a creator God, and so on, are not a small minority among the faithful but mainstream believers. They include a good many of the world's most well-respected Christian philosophers and theologians. These Christians do take themselves to be committed to the
truth of various claims - including the historical claim that Jesus rose from the dead. Yet Wittgenstein suggests that

The historical accounts in the Gospels might, historically speaking, be demonstrably false and yet belief would lose nothing by this... (1998: 32)

Both what Wittgenstein says here, and non-cognitivism, appear to be at odds with actual religious practice. For what percentage of Christians is it irrelevant to their belief whether or not the claim the atheist supposes is made by 'Jesus rose from the dead' - that is to say, an historical and potentially empirically refutable, claim - is actually true? For a very small percentage, surely.

In response, it might be said that my observations are far from 'grammatical'. They reveal only that, when Christians say 'Jesus rose from the grave', they intend to make an historical claim for which many suppose they can also provide at least some evidence. But that does not establish that's what they're actually doing. Perhaps these Christians are confused. Perhaps an examination of their actual linguistic practice reveals that, though they might not realize it, they are using 'Jesus rose from the dead' in just the way non-cognitivists suppose.

But why should we accept that, contrary to what most of them suppose, Christians don't use 'Jesus rose from the dead' to make an historical claim? Merely pointing to the undeniable fact that the Christian often has an enormous emotional investment in, and won't let anything count against, what they express using that sentence, doesn't establish that they aren't using the sentence to make an historical claim. So what does? In the absence of any reason for supposing they're not making an historical claim, the case for supposing that they are looks strong.

An alternative response would be to suggest that, rather than giving an account of how most mainstream religious folk actually use religious language, Wittgenstein intends only to outline the kind of religious faith he himself considers respectable. Perhaps that's the case. However, the kind of non-cognitivism outlined above is, as I say, not an option for most religious believers. Moreover what it describes is arguably not a form religious belief at all, given there's nothing the believer believes to be true (indeed, Schonbaumsfeld makes the point below that, on purely expressivist accounts, religious faith seems to boil down to nothing more than 'some bizarre sort of rapture' (207: 186)).

An alternative: the juicer view

So non-cognitivist accounts do not appear accurately to capture how religious language is used. But perhaps that is not the sort of account Wittgenstein is offering. A number of commentators suggest Wittgenstein supposes religious belief does involve belief that certain creedal and other claims are true. However, on this other interpretation, the way in which the religious person uses such sentences as 'God exists' and 'Jesus rose from the
dead' involves a rich practical and emotional dimension that is missing from the use to which the superficially similar sentences 'Electrons exist' and 'John rose from his bed' are put. Hence what the religious person means by the former utterance is largely or entirely lost on the atheist who understands the former sentences as expressing beliefs akin to those expressed by the latter.

Severin Schroeder takes the view that Wittgenstein does not deny religious belief involves signing up to truth claims. Schroeder says:

Contrary to [a] widespread view, Wittgenstein did not propound a purely expressivist construal of credal statements. Wittgenstein stresses the importance of commitment, the practical dimension of religious faith, without denying that it is, or involves, also believing certain things to be true. (2007: 445)

John Cottingham and Stephen Mulhall concur. 'True, Wittgenstein does say that religious belief 'can only be something like a passionate commitment to a system of reference', but as Cottingham notes:

[i]n saying that religious belief 'can only be a passionate commitment', he may simply be underlining the inescapability of a passionate, volitional element; he need not be saying that what is involved in the belief is merely the commitment. (2009: 216)

Cottingham provides the following helpful 'fruit juicer' analogy to explain the mistake he thinks is made by many atheist analytic philosophers when it comes to assessing religious belief.

Our language games are interwoven with a web of non-linguistic activities, and cannot be understood apart from the context that gives them life. ... analytic philosophers are often prone to use the 'fruit juicer' method when approaching modes of thought of which they are skeptical: they require the clear liquid of a few propositions to be extracted for examination in isolation from what they take to be the irrelevant pulpy mush of context. Yet to demand an answer to the Yes/No question: Do you or do you not believe that P? where P stands for a statement or series of statements in one of the Creeds, or some other doctrinal summary, often tells us surprisingly little about how a religious worldview informs someone's outlook. A juice extractor does not, as might first be supposed, give us the true essence of a fruit; what it often delivers is a not very palatable drink plus a pulpy mess. Someone who has only tasted strawberries via the output of the juicer, and has firmly decided 'this is not for me', may turn out to have a radically impoverished grasp of what it is about the fruit that makes the strawberry lover so enthusiastic. (2009: 209)
Like Mulhall, Schroeder, and Cottingham, Genia Schonbaumsfeld also rejects non-cognitivist readings of Wittgenstein or religious belief. On her view, Christianity involves more than just accepting the truth of certain claims, but that is not to say that therefore the 'doctrine' - Christian claims - are irrelevant, as this would be as absurd as thinking that because a song can be sung both with and without expression, you could have the expression without the song. (2007: 186)

Schonbaumsfeld holds that religious belief, stripped of all doctrine and reduced to mere passion in the way the non-cognitivist suggests, becomes 'either unintelligable or some bizarre sort of rapture' (2007: 188). Religious belief involves claims. Still, while Schonbaumsfeld supposes religious belief involves claims, she defends No Contradiction. She denies (as she supposes Wittgenstein denies) that what the atheist attempts to contradict is something the religious person believes. To illustrate why, Schonbaumsfeld provides a further musical analogy:

someone who 'does not possess a 'musical ear' will not be able to contradict the judgement of a connoisseur, as such a person will not have sufficient musical sensibility even really to understand what the connoisseur is saying. ...For exactly analogous reasons Wittgenstein feels that he cannot contradict what the religious person is saying, since he, as yet, lacks a real grasp of the concepts involved. That is to say, just as there is a musical sensibility and tone deafness (and to be sure, much in between), there is also religious sensibility and blindness for religion, and neither musical nor religious sensibility is acquired by learning a set of theses, doctrines, by heart - about who the great composers were, about the laws of counterpoint or about transubstantiation - since this would only bring about an 'external', that is, purely intellectual, understanding of the subject comparable to having learnt a code. But what is required here is the kind of understanding that makes the musical work or the prayer (the religious words) live for me, not the kind that allows me to parrot a form of words. (2007: 187)

Schonbaumsfeld supposes that, for the religion-blind atheist, and others (including Wittgenstein) who can only understand the 'external', purely-intellectually-graspable meaning of a religious utterance, any attempt to contradict what the religious person says using that form of words must inevitably fail.

Let's call Schonbaumsfeld's argument that the religion-blind atheist cannot contradict the religious person who says 'God exists', 'Jesus rose from the dead', 'We will face a Judgement Day', etc. because they do not so much as understand what the religious person means the Juicer Argument, as it echoes Cottingham's juicer view that what the atheist (who approaches such religious utterances in the spirit of dispassionate intellectual
inquiry) grasps is not the substance of what the religious person believes, but a thin, perhaps unappetizing and misleading, extract shorn of its true religious significance.

**Why the Juicer Argument fails**

As it stands, the Juicer Argument fails to establish No Contradiction. Suppose John says 'Otto is a Kraut'. In so saying, John clearly communicates his belief that Otto is German. However, John may also be doing much more than that. He may, in using these words, intend also to express his contempt for Germans, and thus Otto. The real point of John's utterance may be to belittle and insult. Now suppose that Mary, who hears John's remark, suffers from a condition that makes her, as it were, *insult-blind*. Consequently, Mary fails properly to understand the full use of the word 'Kraut', and in particular, the way John is using that expression on this particular occasion. The rich and varied use of the kind of vocabulary to which 'Kraut' belongs is entirely lost on Mary, who thinks 'Kraut' just means 'German'. And so, knowing that Otto isn't German, she says to John: 'No, you're mistaken: Otto is *not* a Kraut - he's not German.' Has Mary succeeded in contradicting John?

Surely she has. True, Mary may have only a thin, insult-blind, 'juicer' understanding of how John is using 'Otto is a Kraut', but that doesn't prevent her from successfully contradicting, and indeed perhaps straightforwardly refuting, what John said.

But then similarly, even if atheists have only a thin, religious-meaning-blind, 'juicer' understanding of what the religious person expresses using 'God exists', 'Jesus rose from the dead', etc., it does not follow that they cannot contradict the religious beliefs expressed using such sentences. Nor does it follow that they cannot straightforwardly refute what the religious person believes, by showing the belief they take the religious sentence to express to be false.

**Variant Juicer views**

*1. Juicer-plus-indifference*

The juicer argument, as it stands, fails. But what if we develop the juicer view of religious language a little? Suppose we add the thought that, while what the religious person says using 'God exists' and 'Jesus rose from the dead' does involve a commitment to the truth of the claims our atheist takes such sentences to express, it's a wishy-washy commitment at best. The truth of such claims is something about which the religious person is largely indifferent. What really matters to the religious person are those other dimensions of meaning that are lost on the atheist. Thus the response of religious person to atheistic refutations of such claims may be just to shrug and insist that the real point is being missed.

An analogy would be: John says 'Otto is a Kraut' intending to insult Otto. When Mary points out that Otto isn't German, John shrugs and says, 'I don't care - Otto is still an ass.' It
turns out that Otto's German nationality is of comparatively little importance to John. What really matters to John - what he's really attempting to articulate when he says 'Otto is a Kraut' - is something else (something that entirely passes the insult-blind Mary by): his contempt for John irrespective of John's nationality.

Call this view *juicer-plus-indifference*. There are places where Wittgenstein makes comments that would at least be explained by his holding this view. As noted above, he says:

> The historical accounts in the Gospels might, historically speaking, be demonstrably false and yet belief would lose nothing by this ... (1998: 32)

However, whether or not this is Wittgensteinian's view of how at least some religious language is used, it faces two serious problems. First, it fails to have the desired consequence that the atheist cannot contradict or refute what the Christian claims. It merely has the consequence that what's contradicted and perhaps refuted is of little importance to the religious believer.

Second, it's not true that most religious people are indifferent to the truth of such claims as expressed by the atheist who says, for example, 'Jesus did *not* rise from the dead'. The truth of that historical claim is, surely, integral to the faith of the majority of Christians.

2. *The strong juicer view*

Rather than supposing that the religious person uses 'God exists' and 'Jesus rose from the dead' both to commit to the truth of the claims that our atheist understands such sentences to make, and to do other things missed by the atheist, we might instead understand the religious person as doing *only* those other things. It is *only* the further rich dimensions of meaning lost on the atheist that are actually in play. Call this the *strong juicer view*. This view does deliver No Contradiction: what the religious mean by such sentences does not overlap at all with what the atheist denies.

But doesn't the strong juicer view bring us back to the kind of non-cognitivism that we earlier rejected: the view that no claim at all is made using such forms of words; the view that they are merely used to emote, define, promise, etc., rather than assert?

Not necessarily. Those dimensions of meaning and significance that pass our atheist by need not be restricted to the emotive, definitional, promissory, etc. Consider, by way of illustration, *metaphorical* meaning. Metaphors may not be literally true, but - unlike mere non-cognitive emotings or rule-givings - perhaps they are able to articulate or communicate truths. Schonbaumsfeld illustrates metaphorical meaning with the example of 'Juliet is the sun' as said by Romeo in *Romeo and Juliet*. Suppose Mary is not just insult-blind, but also metaphor-blind. Mary hears Romeo say 'Juliet is the sun' and responds: 'But Juliet is obviously *not* the sun: she's *not* a massive, hot object about which
the Earth rotates!' Here, it's clear Mary fails to contradict and indeed refute what Romeo says. Or suppose Mary hears John say 'Tom is the moth to your flame'. Were Mary to respond that there's good evidence she is not a glowing body of ignited gas, that Tom lacks wings and mandibles, etc. she would obviously neither contradict nor refute what John intends to communicate.

Schonbaumsfeld suggests atheists exhibit a similar kind of misunderstanding when they suppose that they are able to contradict what the religious person says. Clearly, the belief expressed by Romeo's sentence as understood by the metaphor-blind Mary is not a belief held by Romeo at all. But then, similarly, the belief expressed by 'Jesus rose from the dead' as understood by an atheist blind to religious dimensions of meaning may not be a belief held by the religious person at all.

However, this variety of 'juicer' view, on which (pace the non-cognitivist) the religious are indeed committed to the truth of certain claims, only not those that atheists takes such sentences as 'God exists', etc. to express, again runs into the problem that a majority of religious folk surely do use such sentences to commit to beliefs that atheists then deny. When atheists give arguments against the claims to which they take the religious to be committed, the religious typically respond with counter arguments, defences, and so on. This makes no sense if the religious actually make no commitment at all to such claims. So, for example, in response to the evidential problem of evil as raised against the belief atheists take 'God exists' to express, the religious do not typically shrug and insist the atheist has entirely misunderstood. Rather, they offer theodicies or suggest that for all we know there are unknown God-justifying reasons for allowing such evils. If the religious meaning of 'God exists' were only metaphorical, this response would make as much sense as Romeo's responding to Mary by, say, suggesting that the evidence that Juliet is not a massive hot body about which the Earth rotates is less than decisive.

Of course, some religious may insist that, while other religious folk may use the target sentences (a) - (d) in the way atheists supposes, they do not themselves use them in that way. Rather, these religious individuals really do use such sentences in a wholly metaphorical way. In which case the views of this religious minority, at least, are immune to atheist contradiction and refutation. However even supposing some religious do use the target sentences in a wholly metaphorical way, so that the strong juicer view is correct of them, it does not follow that the atheist could not contradict or indeed refute what those individuals believe. Once the metaphor has been explained to them - once it is clear what such a religious person is committed to - then an atheist might go on to contradict and indeed refute such a religious person, much as Mary, once she does come eventually to understand what John does mean by 'Tom is the moth to your flame', might then still succeed in contradicting and indeed refuting what Tom intends to convey.\footnote{viii}

To summarise: the modest juicer view, as expressed by Cottingham, which says that there are dimensions to the meaning of sentences such as (a) to (d) that are lost on the atheist, is perhaps not so implausible. However, as it stands (and contrary to what Schonbaumsfeld
suggests) it fails to deliver No Contradiction. On the other hand, perhaps some version of the strong juicer view, on which what the religious mean by such sentences is entirely lost on the atheist, will indeed deliver No Contradiction. However, as I just noted, that version on which the intended meaning is entirely metaphorical does not appear to prevent atheists contradicting what the religious believe. Further, the strong juicer view in any case depends on an implausible account of how religious language is actually used.

The atheist-minus view

All the above views are 'juicer' views in that they suppose the religious person uses sentences like (a) to (d) to express something over and above what the atheist grasps (with the strong juicer view insisting that what the religious express is something exclusively over and above what the atheist grasps). But there is another way in which we might argue for No Contradiction. Our argument might turn, not on the thought that what the religious mean by (a) to (d) is something beyond what the atheist means, but on the thought that what the religious mean, while overlapping to some extent with what the atheist means, is rather less than what the atheist means.

Suppose, for the sake of argument, that by 'God', Peter means an omnipotent, omniscient, and supremely benevolent being. Peter claims such a being exists. Suppose that Mary, an atheist, attempts to deny what Peter asserts. Only Mary has a thicker conception of God then Peter. Mary understands 'God' to refer to an omnipotent, omniscient, and supremely benevolent being that lives on a cloud. If that is what Mary means by 'God', then, when she says to Peter: 'No, there is no God' using 'God' as she understands the term, she fails to contradict Peter. Peter and Mary might both be correct (if there is an omnipotent omniscient and supremely benevolent being, but not one that lives on a cloud).

One obvious way in which atheists might misunderstand the religious is if the religious explain what they mean by analogy, and the atheist then takes that analogy too literally. For example, if a religious person explains that 'God' refers to something like a father who watches over us, and if the atheist understands this to mean that God is a physical person who literally looks down on us from the sky, then when the atheist says 'God does not exist', using the term as they understand it, they will fail to contradict the belief expressed by the religious person who says 'God exists'.

Call the view that the religious mean in some respects rather less than what the atheist understands such sentences to mean the atheist-minus view and the associated argument that the atheist therefore fails to contradict what the religious believe the atheist-minus argument.

There is certainly a long intellectual tradition on which 'God' talk is to be understood analogically, and so, at least for those within that tradition, perhaps there is a case to be made for saying that many atheists take such analogous talk too literally, and so fail to contradict the beliefs that the religious thereby express.
The atheist-minus and juicer views are compatible. We might suppose both that there are religious dimensions of meaning associated with sentences (a) to (d) that are lost on the atheist, and also (perhaps because the atheist has an over-literal grasp of what the religious mean by 'God') that in other respects the religious mean rather less than what the atheist means by such terms.

Here is an illustration of how what the religious mean by 'God' might be, in certain respects, thinner than what the atheist means. Many theologians suggest that whether or not God exists is not, as they suppose atheists think, a matter of whether or not some 'thing' exists. According to Professor Denys Turner, for example, 'God' is not the name of a 'thing' that exists in addition to chairs, tables, planets, and the universe. Turner says to the atheist:

   It is no use supposing that you disagree with me if you say, 'There is no such thing as God'. For I got there well before you. (2002: 19)

Given the atheist does define 'God' as a 'thing' that exists in addition to all other existent things, then, however else they may characterize God, in denying that 'God' exists, the atheist will indeed fail to contradict what Turner believes.

In *Culture and Value*, Wittgenstein similarly says that, when we consider God's existence, what is at issue is 'not the existence of something' [daß es sich hier um eine Existenz nicht handelt] (1998, 82). So perhaps Wittgenstein is here making, or would wish to make, the same point Turner makes above: that the atheist's denial that there is such a 'thing' as God is a denial of something no sensible religious person actually believes?

For reasons outlined earlier, the prospects of our justifying No Contradiction by means of either non-cognitivist or juicer views of religious belief look poor. Does the atheist-minus argument offer Wittgensteinians a more plausible way of justifying No Contradiction? Perhaps. But note the following:

First, while the atheist-minus view, if correct, will deliver No Contradiction, the onus is surely on those Wittgensteinians who wish to use atheist-minus to justify No Contradiction to show that it actually is correct, by showing, for example, that what the religious person means by 'God', 'Judgement Day', etc. really is rather less than what the atheist means.

Second, the prospects of showing the atheist is guilty of such a misunderstanding of what the religious mean by at least some of the target sentences - such as 'Jesus rose from the dead' - look bleak. Perhaps 'God exists' and 'There will be a Judgement Day' are sentences used by the religious to make much thinner claims than the average atheist, with their over-literal understanding of God and Judgement Day, supposes. But surely the average Christian does not mean anything less by 'Jesus rose from the dead' than does the atheist.
Third, the atheist-minus view, even if it does deliver No Contradiction, "fails to guarantee Immunity." Let's return to Peter and Mary. Suppose Mary attempts to refute Peter's belief in God using the evidential problem of evil. It won't do for Peter to respond: 'But you misunderstand me: you conclude there's no omnipotent, omniscient, and supremely benevolent being that lives on a cloud, and that's not what I believe!' If Mary, by means of the evidential problem of evil, has succeeded in showing there is no omnipotent, omniscient, and supremely benevolent being, then she has succeeded in refuting what Peter believes, even if, when Mary concludes that 'God does not exist', she fails actually to contradict him.

Fourth, note that the atheist-minus view merely has the consequence that atheists do not contradict what the religious believe. It does not, as it stands, justify the conclusion that atheists cannot contradict what the religious believe. While the atheist minus view, on which the atheist understand sentences (a) - (d) as committing the religious person to rather more than the atheist supposes, delivers No Contradiction, it doesn't prevent atheists from realizing they have misunderstood and then contradicting what the religious person believes. In order to deliver the stronger conclusion that atheists cannot contradict what the religious believe, further argument would be needed (perhaps along the lines that to grasp what the religious person means, one must actually believe). However, given that what the religious believe is, on the atheist minus view, less than what the atheist initially supposes, it's hard to see why the atheist can't immediately grasp and indeed successfully contradict what the religious believe by just dropping certain commitments from what they originally supposed the belief to involve, such as that e.g. God is a 'thing' or that God lives on a cloud. Indeed, surely that is all that's required?

Conclusion

How, exactly, do religious and atheist uses of (a) to (d) differ, and why should we suppose this difference has No Contradiction as a consequence? We have surveyed a number of answers to this question.

First we looked at non-cognitive accounts of religious belief, and found them implausible as accounts of how religious language is generally used.

We then examined two varieties of the view that the religious use sentences (a) to (d) to make claims. The first variety is the Cottingham/Schonbaumsfeld-type juicer view on which what the religious mean by such sentences is something over and above what the atheist is able to grasp. The second variety is the atheist-minus view, on which, while there is overlap between what the religious and atheists mean using such sentences, the religious mean rather less than the atheist means.

We saw that the modest juicer view of how religious language is used appears incapable of justifying either No Contradiction or Immunity. A variant of the juicer view - the strong juicer view, on which there is no overlap at all between what the religious and atheist
mean by such sentences in what - would, if shown to be correct, justify No Contradiction. However, the strong juicer view looks implausible as an account of how religious language is actually used.

The atheist-minus view, if correct, would justify No Contradiction. However, the onus is very much on those Wittgensteinians wanting to take this route to show that the atheist-minus view is correct and, at least for certain target sentences (such as 'Jesus rose from the dead'), that prospect looks dim. We saw, in addition, that even if atheism-minus does deliver No Contradiction, it both fails to guarantee Immunity and fails to deliver the stronger conclusion that the atheist cannot contradict what the religious person believes.

If you are a Wittgensteinian committed to No Contradiction, it seems to me that you have, at this point, some explaining to do. If you are a Wittgensteinian committed to Immunity, your position looks to me to be untenable.

Let's now return to Simon Glendinning: why does Glendinning embrace No Contradiction? According to Glendinning⁹, his explanation comes within his discussion of Nietzsche's parable of the 'madman'. In that parable, a madman wanders around in broad daylight with a lantern saying, 'I seek God, I seek God':

Haven’t you heard of that madman who in the bright morning lit a lantern and ran around the marketplace crying incessantly 'I seek God, I seek God.' Since many of those who did not believe in God were standing around together just then, he caused great laughter. (Nietzsche 2001: §125)

Then all fall silent and the madman throws his lantern to the ground saying, 'I have come too early.' He adds: 'my time is not yet. This tremendous event is still on its way, wandering. It has not yet reached the ears of men.' (2001: §125)

On Glendinning's view, the import of Nietzsche's parable is that

the madman is not one with the atheists of the marketplace. Their understanding of God perhaps belongs very squarely within an epoch of the death of God, but it is not the madman’s understanding. For the madman the idea of 'God' is not the idea of an existent being, or the intentional object of a religious belief, but (as it were) the intentional correlate of an entire way of thinking and believing; the point of focus for a whole life. The event of the death of God cannot then be understood simply like the death of something or someone within the world, or an event within the domain of everything that is. Rather, it is an event, some 2,000 years in the making, which is the opening up and holding sway of a world within which such worldly events take place, including the worldly crucifixon event which, we can now say, took place within the very world it came to open up.
Moreover, this event is not over. The deed—the murder of God—has been done by 'all of us' the madman says, and yet we know not what we have done: the news of the deed has yet to reach the ears of the atheists of the marketplace. (2013: 46-7)

Before I assess Glendinning's argument, here's a brief clarificatory point. The above passage suggests Glendinning supposes the thought that:

(A) the idea of God is the 'intentional correlate of an entire way of thinking and believing, the point of focus for a whole life'

stands in opposition to the thought that:

(B) God's death or ceasing-to-be can be 'understood simply like the death of something or someone within the world, or an event within the domain of everything that is.'

Yet it's by no means obvious that the two thoughts are in opposition. Consider a child whose whole life is built round Santa and the North Pole Xmas mythology. For this Santa-obsessed child, Santa Claus and Rudolph are the intentional correlates of her entire way of thinking and believing, the point of focus for her whole life. Clearly, it does not follow that, for this child, finding out that there's no Santa or Rudolph does not involve finding out about the absence of someone or something within the world.

So what is Glendinning's argument for No Contradiction? Thought (A), which Glendinning wants to endorse, is at least suggestive of the juicer view that what the religious mean by 'God' is something richer than the atheist understands by that term - something it takes full immersion in a religious form of life to grasp. However, we've already seen that the juicer view fails to deliver No Contradiction. An atheist might successfully contradict (and indeed refute) what the religious mean by 'God exists' even if it's true that, as a matter of fact, what the religious mean by 'God' extends far beyond what the atheist is capable of grasping. If Glendinning's argument for No Contradiction is the juicer argument, then it fails.

On the other hand, Glendinning, in rejecting (B) (along, he supposes, with Nietzsche's madman), seems also to be gesturing towards another view: perhaps the atheist-minus view on which the religious mean in certain respects rather less by sentences (a) to (d) than does then atheist, or perhaps the strong juicer view or even the non-cognitivist view on each of which there's no overlap at all between what the religious mean by such sentences and what the atheist means. Glendinning seems to think the atheist mistakenly supposes that belief in God involves belief in the existence of some being within the world - some addition to the list of 'things' that exist - whereas religious belief actually involves no such commitment. Hence what the atheist denies is not what the religious believe.

However, as we noted above, the onus is very much on those offering this sort argument to
show that terms like 'God', 'Judgement Day', etc. actually are used in a thinner, or even an entirely different, way by the religious than by the atheist. Glendinning makes no attempt to do that here. We also saw that the atheist-minus argument fails to deliver Immunity (though Glendinning does not explicitly commit himself to Immunity). And, perhaps most seriously, when we consider e.g. the Christian use of the sentence 'Jesus rose from the dead', it's implausible that the vast majority of Christians aren't committed to the truth of what the atheist takes that sentence to express. Surely, when Hitchens and Dennett - with whom Glendinning says he is 'disgusted' - deny 'Jesus rose from the dead', they really do deny the truth of a claim to which the vast majority of Christians are committed. Certainly, I think it's safe to say Glendinning has not yet shown otherwise. Glendinning's disgusted reaction looks, at best, premature.

Finally, consider a Christian who insists that, while a majority of other Christians might indeed be committed to the truth of what atheists like Dawkins, Hitchens, and Dennett deny, she herself is not. She really does use sentences (a) to (d) in the way the atheist-minus - or perhaps even the strong juicer or non-cognitivist - view suggests. Perhaps this is the kind of Christian belief Wittgenstein was investigating. He was interested in articulating, not what the broad Christian masses believe, but what might be believed by a philosophically sophisticated Christian.

However, in order for a Christian to take such a position, she will have to embrace, not the juicer view that what she means by 'Jesus rose from the dead' extends beyond what the atheist is capable of grasping, but something like the atheist-minus, strong juicer, or non-cognitivist views on which she would not be committed to the truth of what the atheist denies when the atheist denies 'Jesus rose from the dead'. Surely there are very few Christians who could, in good conscience, describe their Christian belief in such terms. In which case, going 'Wittgensteinian' in order to achieve No Contradiction is simply not an option for most Christians, including, I suspect, many who currently think of themselves as Wittgensteinians.

Perhaps some sense can still be made of Wittgenstein's claim that he, as a non-religious person, cannot 'contradict' what the religious person believes. However, if Wittgenstein really means to suggest that he literally cannot contradict what most religious folk mean by such sentences, it seems to me he's mistaken.¹

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Notes

1 They are related in at least this sense: if No Contradiction holds because the belief the atheist takes the sentence to express is not the belief that religious person uses the sentence to express, and if, in addition, reasonable or appropriate religious belief does not require the believer to assign a high level of credence to the belief the atheist takes such a sentence to express, then the atheist's attempts to refute the latter belief will leave the reasonableness or appropriateness of the religious belief largely unscathed.

ii Wittgenstein suggests that 'For a large class of cases - though not for all - in which we employ the word 'meaning' it can be defined thus: the meaning of a word is its use in the language.' (Philosophical Investigations I. §43) The suggestion that, in an important sense, the religious person and the atheist do not 'mean the same' by the sentence in question turns on the thought that they use it very differently.

iii This list of objections is not supposed to be exhaustive. Expressivist accounts also face e.g. the Frege/Geach objection that sentences given an expressivist treatment can crop up in asserted contexts in which they are not being used expressively. So, to illustrate, take the Wittgensteinian expressivist view that 'I am in pain' is used not to make a claim but to replace natural expressions of pain, such as going 'Ow!' This expressivist account has the advantage of neatly explaining why we seem to be infallible about whether we are actually, currently in pain (if no claim is made, then there is none to be mistaken about). But (the Frege/Geach objection then runs) what treatment do we then give of the conditional 'If I am in pain, then I should go to the doctor'? In this context, 'I am in pain' is not used to express pain. But if we then give a different, non-expressivist account of the meaning of 'I am in pain' in such unasserted contexts (so that 'I am in pain' has a different meaning in such contexts), we then face the problem of explaining why the argument: I am in pain, If I am in pain, I should go to the doctor, therefore I should go to the doctor, is deductively valid.

iv See for example Altemeyer and Hunsberger's Amazing Conversions (1997). Altemeyer and Hunsberger's survey found that those who have moved from strong religious backgrounds to atheism 'almost always changed because they felt intellectually compelled to do so'. They 'found too many inconsistencies, too many unprovens, too many implausibilities - and also too much sexism and too much unfairness - to base their lives any longer on what they came to see as a pack of fables. They had an unusual drive for the truth and personal integrity.' (1997: 212). The authors add that several former believers 'mentioned the parallel to Santa Claus: "My parents told me that was true, too. What was the evidence for God, really?"' (1997: 111)


vi For examples of arguments for an historical resurrection see Gary Habermas and Michael Licona (2004) and Tim and Lydia McGrew (2009).

vii Stephen Mulhall (2001). Mulhall says (2001: 100) 'Wittgenstein does not claim that coming to believe that God exists is nothing but a passionate commitment to a system of reference; he claims that 'religious belief' could only be something like such a commitment.'

viii I am grateful to Severin Schroeder for encouraging me to reinforce this point.

ix Confirmed by private correspondence between Glendinning and myself.

x I am very grateful to John Hyman and Severin Schroeder for detailed comments on early drafts, and also to John Cottingham, Simon Glendinning, and Genia Schonbaumsfeld for useful feedback.