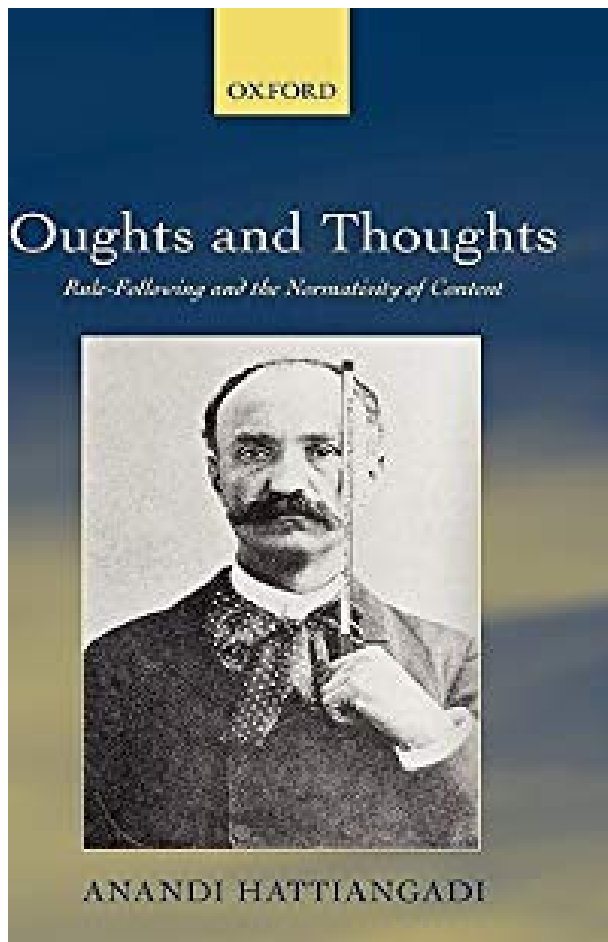


# Oughts and Thoughts: Rule-Following and the Normativity of Content



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In *Oughts and Thoughts*, Anandi Hattiangadi provides an innovative response to the argument for meaning skepticism set out by Saul Kripke in *Wittgenstein on Rules and Private Language*. Kripke asks what makes it the case that anybody ever means anything by any word, and argues that there are no facts of the matter as to what anybody ever means. Kripke's argument has inspired a lively and extended debate in the philosophy of language, as it raises some of the most fundamental issues in the field: namely, the reality, privacy, and normativity of meaning. Hattiangadi argues that in order to achieve the radical conclusion that there are no facts as to what a person means by a word, the skeptic must rely on the thesis that meaning is normative, and that this thesis fails. Since any "skeptical solution" to the skeptical problem is irremediably incoherent, Hattiangadi concludes that there must be a fact of the matter about what we mean. In addition to providing an overview of the debate on meaning and content skepticism, Hattiangadi presents a detailed discussion of the contributions made by Simon Blackburn, Paul Boghossian, Robert Brandom, Fred Dretske, John McDowell, and Crispin Wright, among others, to the controversy surrounding Kripke's argument. The issues considered include the normativity of meaning and its relation to the normativity of moral judgments, reductive and non-reductive theories of meaning, deflationism about truth and meaning, and the privacy of meaning.