

E. J. Dionne, Jr. has wisely written: "We are entitled to our moral, ethical, and philosophical commitments. We are not entitled to our own facts" (*Souled Out*: 120).

This has an important implication, however, if to assert, "It is true that x ," is convertible with asserting, " X is a fact (or is real)." If this logical rule is valid, as I take it to be, to say that we are not entitled to our own facts is convertible with saying that we are not entitled to our own *truths*—even if we are entitled to our own *beliefs*, which is presumably what "our moral, ethical, and philosophical commitments" logically come to

Of course, whether, or in what sense, we're "entitled" even to our beliefs is not to be taken for granted—not, at any rate, if another logical rule is also valid. I refer to the rule that, because the connection between belief and truth is so tight, you don't even count as believing x unless you take x to be true and so also to be a fact (or to be real). To believe x , in other words, is *eo ipso* to make or imply the claim, "It is true that x " and " X is a fact (or is real)." But to make or imply this claim is one thing, to do so validly, something else. So, if to be entitled to a belief means that one's truth-claim for it is, in fact, a valid claim, then whether one is entitled to it is in no way settled simply by one's believing it and thereby making or implying a claim for its truth. If, on the other hand, to be entitled, or to have the right, to a belief means only that one has, as we say, the right to be wrong, then one may very well be entitled to all of one's beliefs, even the false ones, simply by believing them and thereby making or implying the claim that they are true.

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