

## Re: Torkel Franzen on truth

---

*Source:* <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.logic/2007-12/msg00742.html>

---

- *From:* "Nam D. Nguyen" <[namducnguyen@xxxxxxx](mailto:namducnguyen@xxxxxxx)>
  - *Date:* Tue, 18 Dec 2007 22:59:23 GMT
- 

tchow@xxxxxxxxxxxxx wrote:

In article <[vBD9j.29\\$Tx.18@pd7urf3no](mailto:vBD9j.29$Tx.18@pd7urf3no)>,  
Nam D. Nguyen <[namducnguyen@xxxxxxx](mailto:namducnguyen@xxxxxxx)> wrote:

tchow@xxxxxxxxxxxxx wrote:

Are you convinced, for example, that  $\sqrt{2}$  is irrational? On what basis?

On the basis of model that " $\sqrt{2}$  is irrational" is true, of course.

You didn't answer my first question directly. Are you convinced that  $\sqrt{2}$  is irrational?

But your first question is unanswerable, \*without\* a context/basis!  
(Why did you ask "On what basis?" \*immediately\* after your first question?)

If you asked me whether or not the sentence "President Kennedy is dead" is true/false, I'd react in the same way: no context no possible answer. If this sentence is answered in a play tomorrow about an event in 1960, the sentence could be false, in that context. If the play happens to be actually in 1961, but about an imagined event in 2010 the sentence could still be true or false, depending on the context of the plot the play-writer intended to write. If this sentence is uttered in the "normal" (i.e. historical) context, there are still other contexts to be content with: in some religion "beliefs" there would be no dead, just one life after another; and accordingly, President Kennedy would be still "alive", years after ... well, his "assassination"!

Philosophical "crab" right? Not really! Especially when talking about something that looks like a FOL truth question, like is " $\sqrt{2}$  is irrational". Let's even deal with a much simpler question: is " $1+1=0$ " true? The way DMC, PS and you seem to say is that there is certain \*absolute\* truth (value) about " $1+1=0$ " we must necessarily "believe" in, in much the same way some "religiously believe" Jesus of Nazareth is only son of God. What I counter is that there's no such kind of unchangeable belief in mathematical reasoning.

Re: Torkel Franzen on truth

What would be a distinction between these 2 kinds of belief: for one thing, model–truth belief (which you seemed