



# **The Inessential Indexical: On the Philosophical Insignificance of Perspective and the First Person (Context And Content)**

*Herman Cappelen, Josh Dever*

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When we represent the world in language, in thought, or in perception, we often represent it from a perspective. We say and think that the meeting is happening now, that it is hot here, that I am in danger and not you; that the tree looks larger from my perspective than from yours. The Inessential Indexical is an exploration and defense of the view that perspectivality is a philosophically shallow aspect of the world. Cappelen and Dever oppose one of the most entrenched and dominant trends in contemporary philosophy: that perspective (and the perspective of the first person in particular) is philosophically deep and that a proper understanding of it is important not just in the philosophies of language and mind, but throughout philosophy. They argue that there are no such things as essential indexicality, irreducibly de se attitudes, or self-locating attitudes. Their goal is not to show that we need to rethink these phenomena, to explain them in different ways. Their goal is to show that the entire topic is an illusion—there's nothing there.

The Context and Content series is a forum for outstanding original research at the intersection of philosophy, linguistics, and cognitive science. The general editor is François Recanati (Institut Jean-Nicod, Paris).

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