

Book Review

Jody Azzouni. *Tracking Reason: Proof, Consequence, and Truth*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2006. vi + 248 pages.

1 Introduction

Jodi Azzouni's *Tracking Reason* offers an interconnected view of truth, mathematical proof, and logical consequence. The overall view is intricate, stimulating, provocative, and insightful, and the writing style is conversational and accessible. In this extended review I will engage Azzouni on two issues: (i) his deflationist approach to truth, and (ii) his syntactic approach to logical consequence. First, however, I will present a short summary of the book; describe what, in my understanding, Azzouni is trying to accomplish in it; and point out a few attractive features of Azzouni's approach, some of which are a bit surprising, given Azzouni's preference for deflationist and empirical philosophy.

2 Azzouni on Truth, Mathematical Proof, and Logical Consequence

2.1 Truth Azzouni distinguishes two targets of the theory of truth: "true" and *truth*. He advocates deflationism with respect to both. Deflationism with respect to truth he regards as a metaphysical position; deflationism with respect to "true"—a linguistic position. The metaphysical claim is that there are no substantive commonalities of truths: there is nothing in common to all truths. The linguistic claim is that the only rule of "true" in discourse is to express "blind endorsement." Thus, if you don't know exactly what Gödel's incompleteness theorem says or what Newton's theory of gravitation says or what Einstein's special relativity says, you cannot assert them directly, but you can still assert them indirectly, or do something that has the same assertoric force as asserting them directly, namely, "blindly endorsing" them. This you accomplish by saying something like "Gödel's incompleteness theorem/Newton's gravitation theory/Einstein's special-relativity theory is true." These complementary claims, namely, that the truth-predicate is no more than a device of blind endorsement and that there is no substantive commonality of truths,

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