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Philosophy of Language and Webs of Information

Heimir Geirsson



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The nature of propositions and the cognitive value of names have been the focal point of philosophy of language for the last few decades. The advocates of the causal reference theory have favored the view that the semantic contents of proper names are their referents. However, Frege's puzzle about the different cognitive value of coreferential names has made this identification seem impossible. Geirsson provides a detailed overview of the debate to date, and then develops a novel account that explains our reluctance, even when we know about the relevant identity, to substitute coreferential names in both simple sentences and belief contexts while nevertheless accepting the view that the semantic content of names is their referents. The account focuses on subjects organizing information in webs; a name can then access and elicit information from a given web. Geirsson proceeds to extend the account of information to non-referring names, but they have long provided a serious challenge to the causal reference theorist.

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For Lára Birna, Dagný, and Atli Mar

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1 Introduction and Overview

Suppose that back in the day when Ziggy Stardust was still performing, you and I attend one of his concerts. After the show we agree that Ziggy puts on a good show, that is, we both believe

1. Ziggy Stardust puts on a good show.

There is a sense in which we believe the same thing, namely, we accept and believe the same proposition. When we start discussing the show, it turns out that, quite apart from the fact that our criteria for a good show diverge, we think about or represent Ziggy in different ways. That is something that we might have expected, as this was my first Ziggy concert, while you have been a fan for a long time and have attended a number of his events. While we seem to have the same belief, that is, while we seem to believe the same proposition, we seem to represent Ziggy in significantly different ways. There is a sense in which our beliefs are not the same, which we can capture by saying that we believe the proposition in different ways.

As we continue our discussion, you proclaim that David always puts on a good show. "David who?" I ask. You repeat,

2. David Bowie puts on a good show.

As a relative newcomer to music, I do not know who you are talking about. I do not say anything, but conclude that you believe something that I do not believe, namely, that David Bowie puts on a good show. Later in the day you report to a mutual friend

3. Heimir believes that David Bowie puts on a good show.

I hear you say this and object. You continue and claim to be right, since it is true that

4. Heimir believes that Ziggy Stardust puts on a good show.

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As it turns out, you are correct. The following pages comprise an attempt to provide a systematic account of why you are right. Doing so involves discussing the nature of propositions, the nature of reference, the nature of *de re* beliefs or beliefs about objects, as well as substitutivity of names.

Philosophers have generally argued that we can substitute coreferential names in simple sentences, such as (1) and (2), while preserving truth value. Following Frege, it was common to argue that we cannot substitute coreferential names in attitude contexts, such as (3) and (4), while preserving truth value. Frege's argument against such substitutions depended on the intuitions he had about the cognitive significance of names and resulted in his view of names as having a descriptive meaning that they contribute to propositions expressed by sentences in which they occur.

The introduction of the causal reference theory gave philosophers some of the tools that allowed them to rethink the widely accepted Fregean view on substitutions. The initial impetus for rethinking substitution was that the causal reference theory provided a radically different account of the meaning of names; instead of the Fregean view that names have a descriptive meaning that secured reference, the causal reference view held that names do not have descriptive meanings that secure reference. Instead they secure their reference via a causal chain to the object named. That, in turn, seemed to imply that names could no longer be thought of as contributing descriptive contents to propositions. Instead, the suggestion was, they contribute to propositions the object referred to, giving us singular propositions. But the suggestion that names contribute to propositions the object referred to did not seem to provide the intuitive results regarding substitution for sentences like (3) and (4), and so the focus of attention quickly became substitution in sentences embedded in attitude contexts and, more specifically, belief reports. It is here, I believe, that we started down the wrong path. It looks as if we forgot what Kripke had pointed out in the preface to *Naming and Necessity*, namely, that even though the contribution of the names "Hesperus" and "Phosphorus" to propositions (if indeed we could retain talk of propositions) is the same, the sentence "Hesperus is Phosphorus" can sometimes be used to raise an empirical issue that the sentence "Hesperus is Hesperus" cannot be used to raise. That is, substituting coreferential names can affect our epistemic appraisal and attitude towards the relevant *simple* sentences (i.e., sentences that are not embedded in attitude contexts).

Most philosophers want to claim that we need to treat our intuitions against substitution for simple sentences differently than our intuitions against substitutions for embedded sentences. Consequently, a number of philosophers have spent a great deal of time devising a solution to the substitution problem for embedded sentences without considering that there is also a substitution problem for simple sentences. In some instances, the result has been that a solution that seems to be promising when dealing with embedded sentences does not transfer at all to simple sentences. Some attempted solutions postulate one kind of a proposition for belief context and

a different kind of a proposition for simple sentences. Almost all attempted solutions have started by focusing on embedded sentences, either ignoring simple sentences or providing solutions that cannot readily be applied to simple sentences. This approach, I believe, is fundamentally wrong. The more natural approach is to start with simple sentences and try to provide a unified solution: a solution that works for both simple sentences and embedded sentences.

A second mistake, I argue, is to focus exclusively on names and their meanings. It seems evident that the substitution problems are not unique to instances that involve names (and indexicals), as the various puzzles can easily be reproduced using, for example, pictures as a referring device. While the typical problem cases involve substitution of names and so focus on linguistic items, a solution to the substitution problem needs to be applicable to nonlinguistic representations of various kinds. Consequently, any solution that, for example, depends on including linguistic items in propositions fails what I call the generality constraint.

Very briefly, we need to acknowledge that we represent objects in a variety of ways and not just linguistically. I suggest that we gather information that we take to be about the same object into a web of information about that object, and that we then elicit information from the web in various ways. The webs of information are similar to what some have called dossiers or files with the exception that the webs allow in an intuitive way for some information to be more central than other information. One (but not the only) way to elicit information from a web is via a name that we take to be of that object. In some cases, we have different webs for the same person or object, especially if that person plays significantly different roles, or has significantly different guises. For example, it is appropriate to use different webs of information for Ziggy Stardust and David Bowie even though I know that Ziggy is Bowie, or, more accurately, a character played by Bowie. Once we assume that people have similar information in their webs of Ziggy and Bowie, it makes a significant difference whether I use the name “Ziggy” or the name “Bowie” in a sentence, for the two names elicit information from different webs. If I tell a friend that Ziggy will never perform again, then she would be mistaken if she assumed that *Bowie* will never perform again. We can thus elicit significantly different information with two sentences that express the same proposition. Once we have this basic picture we can apply it to belief reports as well, thus providing a unified approach to simple sentences and embedded sentences.

While the general picture argued for is rather simple, a number of issues have to be addressed before presenting it. So, here is a brief outline of the chapters that follow.

2. Reference. This chapter includes a general introduction to reference and substitution that includes an account of Frege’s theory, his motivation for introducing descriptive meanings, and how he proposed that we deal with substitutions in both simple sentences and in attitude contexts.

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Following a critical assessment of Frege's theory, the causal reference theory is introduced and discussed. Special attention is given to Kripke's epistemic argument against the description theory and recent discussion of that argument.

3 Propositions: Structure and Objects. In the introduction to *Naming and Necessity*, Kripke wondered whether we could preserve propositions given some of the challenges raised by his rejection of the description theory. While philosophers generally agree that the causal reference theory does not force us to abandon propositions, Frege's way of thinking about propositions came under intense pressure. Instead of names contributing descriptive meanings to propositions as Frege had envisioned, a popular and widely discussed alternative is that names do not contribute such meanings. But if names do not contribute descriptive meanings to propositions, then what do they contribute, and what is the nature of the propositions expressed by simple declarative sentences containing names? As it turns out, the solutions to a number of the problems that prompted Frege to introduce his brand of propositions, as well as solutions to the problems raised against the causal reference view, introduce different kinds of propositions. This chapter discusses Fregean propositions, as well as several types of propositions introduced by causal reference theorists when trying to solve some of the problems faced by the theory. The best alternative for the causal reference theorist remains to adopt direct reference, where a referring term in a simple sentence contributes to the expressed proposition the object referred to, giving us structured singular propositions consisting of ordered objects and properties.

4. Reporting Attitudes. Discussion of attitude reports demanded a good deal of interest and effort among those attacking and defending direct reference. This chapter explains why that is the case and critically evaluates several of the most prominent accounts of attitude reports, including Frege's account; the pragmatic implicature account of Nathan Salmon; the linguistically enhanced propositions introduced by Mark Richard; the hidden indexical account advocated by Mark Crimmins; and Scott Soames's descriptively enhanced beliefs and assertions. The accounts discussed, I argue, focus on trying to solve the wrong problem. We have antisubstitution intuitions for both belief contexts and for simple sentences, that is, sentences that are not embedded. The accounts discussed generally fail to extend to simple sentences.

5. Singular Propositions and Acquaintance. Advocates of the direct reference theory have made it very easy to believe singular propositions. Generally, they have held that if one sincerely assents to a sentence expressing a singular proposition, then one believes that proposition. But while the easy access to singular propositions is now the norm, it was not always like that. This chapter discusses an argument of Donnellan in which he focuses on cases where names are introduced without the person who introduces the name being acquainted with the object named, such as when Leverrier

introduced the name “Neptune” as the name of the object that was the cause of the perturbations of the orbit of Uranus. I develop Donnellan’s claim and argue that it is much harder to believe singular propositions than most direct reference theorists want to admit. In order to believe a singular proposition, I argue, one needs to be acquainted with the object in the proposition in the appropriate way.

6. Beliefs and Belief Reports. According to naïve Russellianism, we can substitute coreferential names while preserving truth value. While endorsing naïve Russellianism, I acknowledge that we do have antisubstitution intuitions that have to be taken into account. Those intuitions do not focus on information contained in a sentence, but rather on information elicited by a sentence. Because the information elicited by a sentence can differ depending on which name of an object is used, we generally cannot and should not freely substitute names in simple sentences even though truth value is preserved when doing so. The framework that allows us to account for this includes webs of information in which one stores information one takes to be about an individual or a persona. The name used in a sentence helps one elicit information from a given web, and so it makes a difference whether, for example, one uses the name “Ziggy” or the name “Bowie,” as the different names will elicit information from different webs of information. The account is easily extended to belief reports. When reporting beliefs, we assume that other people have similar basic information in their webs as we do, and that affects our intuitions when we substitute names in belief reports. Even when someone is in the know about a relevant identity, I argue that, in general, we still should not substitute, and so the issue at hand is not one of mistaken evaluation, as David Braun and Jennifer Saul have argued. While it is to an extent indeterminate what information is being provided when uttering sentences and reporting beliefs, that can be explained by talk about what is compatible with the information in our respective webs of information and not in terms of one asserting a number of propositions with a single utterance, as Scott Soames has argued.

7. Empty Names. The naïve Russellian claims that simple sentences express singular propositions: propositions that have as a constituent the object to which the name in the simple sentence refers. Accordingly, the sentence “Kasparov is a grandmaster” expresses a proposition that contains Kasparov as well as the property of being a grandmaster. But what about sentences such as “Santa is fat?” The name “Santa” fails to refer and so there is no object that it can bring to the proposition expressed by a simple sentence in which it occurs. One plausible way of dealing with this is to claim that “Santa is fat” expresses an incomplete proposition. Several issues then remain. What truth value should we assign to such a proposition? Is there a difference between different types of empty names, namely, fictional names, mythical names, and names of imaginary objects? And how can we account for the cognitive difference between “Santa is fat” and “The Tooth Fairy is fat,” assuming that the two sentences express the

same incomplete proposition? I will argue that incomplete propositions are neither true nor false, and will then extend the account from the previous chapter to account for the information value of sentences containing empty names.

8. Attitude Contexts: Belief and Justification. The resistance towards naïve Russellianism can be further reduced. It is common to argue that naïve Russellianism clearly gives us counterintuitive and wrong results when substituting in knowledge contexts. Clearly, the argument goes, the Babylonians did not know that Hesperus is Phosphorus even though they knew that Hesperus is Hesperus. Here I argue that, once the direct reference theorist accepts that one can believe propositions in different ways, she needs to abandon the view that that one is justified in believing a proposition *simpliciter*. Instead, one can be justified in believing a proposition when believed one way and at the same time not be justified in believing the same proposition when believed in a different way. While believing a proposition is simply standing in the appropriate relation to it, how it is believed affects justification. Because a proposition's justificatory status, and hence whether one knows it, depends on how one believes it, the Babylonians could very well be justified in believing that Hesperus is Hesperus without being justified in believing that Hesperus is Phosphorus. Not surprisingly, the argument entails that we need to relativize a priori knowledge to how the given proposition is believed. The Babylonians knew a priori that Hesperus is Hesperus when the proposition was believed appropriately, while they did not know a priori that Hesperus is Phosphorus, given how they believed the proposition before discovering the identity.

It is important to note that this work is significantly less technical than other books on the issue. The focus is on the broad picture, and specific language and logic puzzles have to give way. As a result, this work should be significantly more accessible to the nonspecialist than most other works on these issues. While the target audience is professionals, advanced undergraduate students should also be able to benefit significantly from the text.

2 Reference

In the 1960s and 70s, a number of philosophers started to advance a view of reference and meaning of proper names that was strongly at odds with the generally accepted theory. The theory that was generally accepted at the time was the description theory of proper names, according to which reference was determined by the descriptive meaning of a name. The description theory holds that proper names have both meaning and reference and, further, that their reference is determined by their meaning. When Gottlob Frege initially presented this theory, he suggested that a proper name has a sense or a meaning, which is how we think of the object. The meaning is the cognitive content or the mode of presentation associated with the expression we use to refer to the object. While Frege's view is compatible with various ways of thinking about an object, he is typically interpreted as having the mode of presentation associated with a name be a descriptive meaning: thus the description theory of names. For example, the meaning of the name "Alexander the Great" might be given by the description "Aristotle's most famous student." When I utter a sentence containing the name "Alexander the Great", then the name is only a shorthand for its meaning. The sentence "Alexander the Great conquered the Middle East" thus means, when unpacked, the same as the sentence "Aristotle's most famous student conquered the Middle East." The description picks out the person who was Aristotle's most famous student, and that is the person referred to with the name "Alexander the Great." This account is of course not supposed to apply only to names of famous people, such as "Alexander the Great," "Napoleon," and "Aristotle," to name a few. Instead it is meant to be a general theory of meaning and reference.

Later versions of the theory as presented by, for example, Peter Strawson and John Searle, improved significantly upon Frege's account.¹ Instead of the meaning of a name being a single associated definite description, as Frege had suggested, later versions loosened the connection between the name and any single description, while, at the same time, acknowledging that the meaning of names is richer than Frege had allowed for. Searle even went as far as arguing that there was no reason to insist that the content of names was descriptive. Instead, he suggested that the content might not

be something that we can express linguistically and that it might instead be the totality of the mental content that a speaker associates with a name. However, in my discussion of the description theory, I will stay with the more traditional understanding of names having descriptive meanings.

There are several reasons for claiming that a number of definite descriptions rather than a single description give the meaning of a name. The most obvious reason for introducing a richer meaning is the possibility of a single definite description not being able to pick out a unique object. For example, it is possible that I am not the only Icelandic philosopher at Iowa State University, in which case we need further descriptions to properly distinguish me from this other philosopher. Another important reason for the inclusion of additional descriptions is the realization that I, for example, might have decided not to become a philosopher and might have decided to continue filleting fish instead or stuck with my short-lived profession as a knife sharpener. In spite of that, my name would still refer to me, and so it seems likely that my name has a much richer meaning than initially suggested, including, for example, “the former knife sharpener who teaches philosophy at Iowa State University.” Still another reason for introducing additional descriptions is that if one identifies the meaning of a name with a description, then one runs into difficulties when we recognize that different speakers can take the name to mean different things. This becomes more acute once we leave the “famous names” behind and focus more on the names of lesser-known people. While many are able to produce an identifying description of Aristotle, most are not able to produce an identifying description of me. Even among those who know me, some do not know my profession and know me instead as the assistant coach of a soccer team. When loosening the connection between a name and any single description, one can recognize variations in meanings between speakers. The question is how to loosen the relevant connection.

One additional problem that the description theory faces provides a direction as to how one should loosen the connection between a single description and a proper name. If we identify the meaning of a name with the set of descriptions that are true of an object, then every true statement that includes the name becomes true in virtue of the meaning of the words, and every false statement becomes contradictory. If the name “Alexander the Great” means “the person who . . . ,” where we fill this out with every true definite description of Alexander the Great, then, if we say something false of Alexander the Great, that will contradict the meaning of the name. In order to avoid this consequence, one needs to further loosen the connections between a name and the descriptions that make up its meaning. We can accomplish that by introducing a disjunction of descriptions as composing the meaning of a name. The view, then, is no longer the one that a name has a meaning given by a definite description, but instead that a name has a meaning given by a loosely associated set of definite descriptions. Alexander the Great is then the person who satisfies most, or more than anyone else, of the descriptions that are loosely associated with the name.

The versions of the description theory that rely on the meaning of names being given by either a definite description or some set of descriptions face their own unique problems. But there are problems these theories face that do not depend on whether one accepts the view that the meaning of a name is given by a single definite description or a cluster, conjunctive or disjunctive, of definite descriptions. Rather, the problems arise due to the connection between descriptive meaning and reference.

It should be noted that my interpretation of Frege is not shared by all. In particular, there are several philosophers who have argued that the view I am attributing to him is false and that a correct understanding of Frege brings him much closer to the direct reference view than previously thought, namely, the view that the reference of a name is determined via a causal chain. I will later discuss the arguments of one of these philosophers, Gareth Evans, and argue that his interpretation is not faithful to Frege's texts. It is thus Frege's view as more traditionally understood on which I will focus, for the most part, when dealing with the description view of proper names.

An important aspect of Frege's view is that names contribute their descriptive content to the propositions expressed by sentences that contain them. Names that have different descriptive meaning will thus contribute different contents to the propositions expressed by the sentences in which they occur. Frege used this element of names to explain the difference in cognitive content between sentences that contained different but codesignative names. Since the names "Mark Twain" and "Samuel Clemens" have different meanings, their contributions to the propositions expressed by sentences in which they occur differ, and so we find the sentence "Mark Twain is Mark Twain" to be uninformative, while the sentence "Mark Twain is Samuel Clemens" is informative. This feature of Frege's theory is very important, and I will call views that build representations into the propositions expressed by a sentences that contain names of the object Fregean views of names.

If "Mark Twain" means "Missouri's most famous writer," then a sentence that contains the name "Mark Twain" expresses a proposition that has a descriptive content that determines the reference of the name and determines how we represent, or think of, the person referred to. Since the name "Mark Twain" means "Missouri's most famous writer" and the name "Samuel Clemens" does not mean "Missouri's most famous writer" the two names contribute different descriptive content to propositions expressed by sentences in which they occur, and our cognitive content is affected accordingly when we believe those different propositions.

The description theories came under strong criticism during the 1970s, and, at the same time, a new picture, or a new view, of reference emerged. The crux of the new view, the causal reference theory, is that the reference of names is not determined by the descriptive content of names. Instead, names are connected with objects via a causal chain. An object is named, often in a baptism ceremony (loosely understood), and the name is then passed on

from one language user to the next. As long as people intend to use the name with the same reference as the person they heard the name from, reference is preserved. According to the causal reference theory, the name “Aristotle” does not pick out its bearer due to some descriptive content that it has. Instead, there is a causal chain that links my use of the name “Aristotle” to its bearer, namely, Aristotle himself. In fact, Aristotle might never have met Alexander the Great, and so might not have been his teacher. Instead, Aristotle’s most famous student might have been someone who never went to war and who never conquered another nation. Still, the name “Aristotle” would name the man Aristotle. It so happens that he is both a philosopher and the teacher of Alexander the Great, but he might have been neither. Regardless of his profession or how his life turned out, the name “Aristotle” would refer to him.

The causal reference theory seemed to have profound consequences. Its advocates argued, for example, that the connection between necessary truths and a priori knowledge was not as previously believed, and they provided examples of alleged contingent a priori truths, as well as necessary a posteriori truths. At the same time, it seemed clear that the objects of beliefs, namely, propositions, should not be viewed as the Fregeans thought of them. According to the Fregeans, the descriptive content of names is contributed to the proposition expressed by a simple sentence (i.e., a sentence that is not embedded in any intentional contexts). The resulting proposition is a proposition that is fully conceptual: the kind of proposition that I will call a general or a Fregean proposition. While some of the causal reference theorists were skeptical about propositions in general, they soon started arguing that a name does not contribute any descriptive content to a proposition expressed by a simple sentence. Instead, the name contributes only the object named to the proposition. We thus had singular propositions, namely, propositions that contained the object named as well as properties. But while the introduction of singular propositions solved some problems, it introduced other persistent ones. If a name only contributes the object named to the proposition expressed by the sentence in which it occurs, then two sentences that contain different but codesignative names express the same proposition. Since the names “Mark Twain” and “Samuel Clemens” refer to the same person, the sentence “Samuel Clemens is a great author” and the sentence “Mark Twain is a great author” express the same singular proposition. Given some very plausible assumptions, one can then claim that if anyone knows that Mark Twain is a great author, then that person also knows that Samuel Clemens is a great author. But, surely, to claim that whoever knows the former also knows the latter seems mistaken. Similarly, it seems that if Martha knows that Mark Twain is Mark Twain, then it certainly appears that I cannot truly report that information by saying that Martha knows that Mark Twain is Samuel Clemens, when that is something Martha might deny knowing.

Little has yet been said, but it is enough to show that what seems like a very simple issue, namely, the meaning and reference of proper names, gives rise to a host of problems. In what follows, I will present in a more careful way the two basic theories of names—how they give rise to the problems mentioned above and some simple attempts to solve the problems, as well as the basic arguments the causal reference theorists brought against the description theory.

FREGE'S THEORY

In the opening paragraph of “On Sense and Reference,” Frege writes:

Equality gives rise to challenging questions which are not altogether easy to answer. Is it a relation? A relation between objects, or between names or signs of objects? In my *Begriffsschrift* I assumed the latter. The reasons which seem to favour this are the following: $a = a$ and $a = b$ are obviously statements of differing cognitive value; $a = a$ holds *a priori* and, according to Kant, is to be labelled analytic, while statements of the form $a = b$ often contain very valuable extensions of our knowledge and cannot always be established *a priori*.²

Frege seems to be right. For example, the information expressed by

1. Kasparov is Kasparov

clearly seems to differ from the information expressed by

2. Kasparov is Weinstein.

Everyone who has interest in chess and Russian politics knows who Kasparov is (a former world champion in chess turned political activist). Relatively few know that until his teens he went by the name Weinstein and was best known for being a prodigy in the Botvinnik Chess Academy. Further, it seems evident that one can know what is expressed by (1) once one understands the concept of identity and has acquired the name “Kasparov” (i.e., (1) seems to express an example of *a priori* knowledge). The same cannot be said of what (2) expresses, as it takes some empirical research to uncover the identity in question. Even those who knew young Weinstein the chess prodigy might not know that he is no other than Kasparov, the grandmaster and political activist.

Frege’s solution to the problem of how two sentences containing different but codesignating names can have different cognitive value is clever and appealing. He writes:

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It is natural, now, to think of there being connected with a sign (name, combination of words, letter), besides that to which the sign refers, which may be called the reference of the sign, also what I should like to call the *sense* [meaning] of the sign, wherein the mode of presentation is contained.³

So, the name “Kasparov” has a meaning and the name “Weinstein” has a different meaning. Since the names contribute their meaning to the propositions expressed by the sentences in which they occur, and the meanings of the two names are different, the propositions expressed by (1) and (2) are different: hence the difference in cognitive value between the two sentences. Further, the account explains the apparent a priority of what (1) expresses and the apparent a posteriority of what (2) expresses. The names “Kasparov” and “Weinstein” have different meaning and so contribute different contents to the propositions expressed by sentences in which the names occur. Sentence (1) expresses something like “the former world chess champion turned political activist is the former world chess champion turned political activist” which is knowable a priori. Sentence (2) expresses something like “the former world chess champion turned political activist is the former prodigy in the Botvinnik Chess Academy,” and this certainly is not knowable a priori.

According to Frege, reference is mediated through meaning. The meaning of a referring name describes an object that is the referent of the name. For example, the names “Hesperus” and “Phosphorus” have different meanings but the same reference. “Hesperus” means “the evening star,” while “Phosphorus” means “the morning star.” Both descriptions describe the planet Venus, which is the referent of both names.

Frege’s view that to each name there corresponds a sense which uniquely determines a reference might strike us as being peculiar, as we often seem to associate a meaning with a name that does not describe any single object uniquely. But for Frege, there is a difference between the meaning of a name, which is objective and grasped by everyone who knows the language, and the meaning that we might subjectively associate with a name. While claiming that to any given name there corresponds a definite meaning, Frege also writes, “To every expression belonging to a complete totality of signs, there should certainly correspond a definite sense; but natural languages often do not satisfy this condition, and one must be content if the same word has the same sense in the same context.”⁴ This is a peculiar claim, for one would think that Frege’s theory is dealing with natural languages and the meaning of names as they occur in natural languages. But, strangely enough, natural languages did not seem to interest Frege that much. We will later examine what motivated Frege to deal with meaning and reference, and identity statements in particular.

Frege’s view of names extends to predicates and sentences. The reference of a sentence, he claimed, is a truth value, and the meaning of a sentence is

a proposition that contains the meanings of the parts that make it up. For example, the proposition expressed by the sentence “Kasparov is a grandmaster” consists of the meaning of the name “Kasparov” and the meaning of the predicate “is a grandmaster.” A predicate also has a reference and a meaning. The reference of a predicate is a function from an individual to a truth value. The meaning of a predicate is what it contributes to a proposition expressed by the sentence in which it occurs, that is, the meaning of a predicate is the way in which its function is presented. A predicate, then, is a function that takes the meaning of names as an input, and gives propositions as an output.

A complication arises for Frege’s view once one considers opaque contexts, or context in which one sentence is embedded in an attitude context, such as “believes that,” “knows that,” or “thinks that.” Consider the following examples.

1. Kasparov is Kasparov.
2. Kasparov is Weinstein.
3. Mary believes that Kasparov is Kasparov.
4. Mary believes that Kasparov is Weinstein.

Sentences (1) and (2) both express truth. In Frege’s terms, both refer to True. On Frege’s account, the truth value of a sentence (or, rather, the proposition it expresses) is determined by the referents of the meaningful parts of that sentence. Since the names “Kasparov” and “Weinstein” refer to the same person, (1) and (2) have the same truth value. But if we apply this reasoning to sentences (3) and (4), then they should have the same truth value as well. However, it seems like sentences (3) and (4) can have different truth values. Suppose that Mary has read a number of books by Kasparov and studied his games, while she has never heard the name “Weinstein.” In that case, we would very likely say that (3) expresses truth, while (4) expresses a falsehood. That is, (3) and (4) do not refer to the same truth value in spite of the embedded sentences both referring to True. Frege’s solution to the complication is simple and effective. Frege believed that in opaque contexts truth value is preserved under substitution of sentences with the same meaning. But the embedded sentences in (3) and (4), that is, sentences (1) and (2), do not have the same meaning. Frege accounts for the difference in truth value between what (3) and (4) express by saying that, in opaque contexts, sentences refer to their customary sense, namely, to the proposition that they usually express. If that is so, then the embedded sentences in (3) and (4) refer to different propositions, which explains how (3) can be true while (4) is false, even though the names in the embedded sentences, “Kasparov” and “Weinstein,” refer to the same person.

The problem that arises with substitutions is not limited to identity statements. While Frege focused on identity statements, the problem generated by substitution of coreferential names in identity statements arises as well in other types of statements. Consider, for example, the following sentences.

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5. Kasparov is a grandmaster.
6. Weinstein is a grandmaster.

Someone might very well assent to (5) while not assenting to (6) on the grounds of believing that (5) expresses a truth while (6) a falsehood. Since it is a relatively little known fact that Kasparov changed his name from Weinstein before his chess career took off, even those who know a considerable amount about Kasparov's career might not know this tidbit about his name change. The same seems true when the above sentences are embedded. Consider, for example, the following two sentences.

7. Mary believes that Kasparov is a grandmaster.
8. Mary believes that Weinstein is a grandmaster.

Mary might well assent to (7) and not assent to (8), in which case we would be moved to say that (7) expresses truth while (8) expresses a falsehood.

The problem of substitution does not seem to be limited to coreferential names, as the same problems seem to arise when one uses indexicals. Consider David Kaplan's well-known example of someone who saw in a window a reflection of a person whose pants were on fire.⁵ His behavior is sensitive to whether he thinks

9. His pants are on fire

or

10. My pants are on fire

even though the object of thought might be the same, assuming that he sees his own reflection.

The results when the sentences are embedded mirror the previous example. Prior to finding out that he was looking at his own reflection, it seems true when he ponders "I believe that his pants are on fire" and false when he thinks to himself "I believe that my pants are on fire." Here, of course, the indexicals "his" and "my" refer to the same person, just as, in the example above, "Kasparov" and "Weinstein" refer to the same person.

Further, it seems like we do not need to rely on names or indexicals to generate our antisubstitution intuitions. Suppose that Mike is blind and that he, as the protagonist in the movie *The Scent of a Woman*, relies on an acute sense of smell to identify people. Suppose that he identifies one particular scent as being the scent of Mary. Mary knows about Mike's acute sense of smell, and she knows that he can identify her accordingly. She wants to go through Mike's room without being detected, and so she puts on a new perfume and then rummages through his belongings. When Mike arrives, he detects a new smell. He thinks to himself, "I somewhat expected Mary to

have been here, but clearly she has not been in my room. However, someone I don't know has been here." Assume that Mike uses scent to represent at least some people much in the same way that we sometimes use names to represent people. Then, clearly, he believes that the person represented by the scent belonging to Mary is not the person represented by the new scent. Just as with the examples above, it would take some empirical work for Mike to discover that the person represented by the scent belonging to Mary is the person represented by the new scent.

It seems, then, that our difficulty with substitution is not specific to names and not even specific to names and indexicals. What seems to be at stake is how we represent objects in our environment. If we represent the same object in two or more ways, not knowing that they are representations of the same object, then we seem to invite substitution puzzles. While I will for the most part focus on names, whatever solution is provided for the problems raised by substitution needs to be informed by the nature of the problem. That is, a solution should deal with information in such a way that it is not specific to names and indexicals, but rather in a way that is open to us representing objects in various ways. If it turns out that we represent objects with images, scents, or tactile feel, to name a few possibilities, then a solution of the problem of substitution that is specific to the meaning of names is at most a partial solution.

Frege certainly presented the substitution problem in such a way that it seemed to be a problem that crucially involves names, and he focused on the problem as it arises in the context of identity statements. His solution to the problem was to distinguish between the meaning and the reference of a name. The connection between meaning and reference, according to Frege, is such that meaning determines reference (for referring terms). And so this is the basic view that came under attack during the second half of the twentieth century.

CAUSAL REFERENCE

The description theory came under attack by several philosophers, including Ruth Barcan-Marcus, Keith Donnellan, Hilary Putnam, and Saul Kripke. But it was Kripke's seminal lecture series, which *Naming and Necessity* now comprises, that was especially important. In *Naming and Necessity*, Kripke advanced several observations and intuitive insights that count against the description theory. In place of the description theory, Kripke offers what he calls a better picture.

An initial "baptism" takes place. Here the object may be named by ostension, or the reference of the name may be fixed by a description. When the name is "passed on from link to link," the receiver of the name must, I think, intend when he learns it to use it with the same

reference as the man from whom he heard it. When I hear the name “Napoleon” and decide it would be a nice name for my pet aardvark, I do not satisfy this condition.⁶

The idea behind the new theory of reference is simple enough: a name is linked with an object via a causal chain that started when the object was named. When I use the name “Napoleon,” the causal chain leads back to the person so named, namely, Napoleon Bonaparte (assuming that he is the one at the end of the causal chain of the name and the one to whom I intend to refer). While Kripke hinted at the causal theory of reference, he did not argue for it explicitly. He certainly did not argue for the direct reference theory. The former, the causal theory of reference, is a view on how names refer to objects. The latter, the direct reference theory, is a view about what contribution names make to propositions expressed by sentences in which they occur. So, what were the main reasons and arguments that the proponents of the “better picture” brought against the description theory?

First, our *semantic intuitions* inform us that the referent of a proper name is not determined by the reference of a description that the speaker associates with the name. Names of historic people serve as particularly apt examples, as we often use the names of those people to refer to them successfully without knowing much, if anything, of substance about them. In particular, we often cannot provide any unique description that applies to them, nor can we provide a set of descriptions that picks them out. Kripke’s “better picture” explains how we are able to refer to these people in spite of not having information about them of the kind required by the description theories. After an initial baptism of Napoleon, his name is passed from person to person, each new user of the name intending to use it with the same reference as the person from whom they heard the name. Eventually the name reaches me, and even though I know next to nothing about Napoleon, I am still able to refer to him in virtue of the causal chain that connects my use of the name “Napoleon” with Napoleon. It might even be the case that I do not have any correct information about the referent after acquiring the name (except, perhaps, for the information that the person referred to is called “Napoleon”), and I would still be able to use it to refer to Napoleon.

Kripke took this idea a step further when he introduced misinformation about the referent. Most of us know Gödel as the person who proved the incompleteness of arithmetic. Suppose, Kripke suggests, that contrary to what we believe, Gödel did not prove the incompleteness of arithmetic. Instead a different person, Schmidt, did so, but passed away before being able to present his proof to anyone. Gödel found Schmidt’s proof and presented it as his own, and so we came to attribute the proof of incompleteness to Gödel instead of Schmidt. Even if this were true, Kripke suggests that, contrary to the description theory, the name “Gödel” would still refer to Gödel, the one who did *not* in fact prove the incompleteness of arithmetic.

Second, we have *epistemic intuitions* that cause difficulties for the description theories of reference. Kripke gives an example of Peano, to whom most attribute the discovery of the axioms for number theory. But while the discovery of Peano's axioms is attributed to Peano, it was in fact Dedekind who made the discovery. As Kripke points out, if the description theory were true, then "Peano discovered the axioms for number theory" would express a trivial truth.⁷ But not only is this not a trivial truth, this is based on a misconception and so not true at all.

In general, "if D exists, then D is D ," where D stands for a definite description, is knowable a priori. However, contrary to what the description theory implies, if N stands for a name and D for the description associated with the name, then "if N exists, then N is D " is typically *not* knowable a priori which indicates that the associated description does not have the same meaning as does N . To illustrate, assuming that "Kasparov" means "the highest rated grandmaster in chess," then "if Kasparov exists, then Kasparov is the highest rated grandmaster in chess" is not knowable a priori. However, "if the highest rated grandmaster in chess exists, then the highest rated grandmaster in chess is the highest rated grandmaster in chess" is knowable a priori, thus indicating that "Kasparov" does not mean "the highest rated grandmaster in chess."

Third, our *modal intuitions* cause problems for the description theories. The examples Kripke gave to support this exploit our intuition that proper names refer to the same individuals in counterfactual situations that they refer to here and now, even though the individual is significantly different in the counterfactual situation from what he is now. Kripke's example of Moses illustrates this. In a counterfactual situation, Moses decided to live his life significantly differently from how he in fact lived it. He might, for example, have decided not to become the leader of the Israelis, and so he might not have led the Israelis out of Egypt. But, Kripke points out, we would nevertheless say that he was Moses. However, that is something that the description theorists cannot reconcile with their theory, as it seems that they are committed to saying that *necessarily* Moses led the Israelis out of Egypt, the reason being that the very meaning of "Moses" is "the one who led the Israelis out of Egypt." That is, the description theories seem committed to the view that it is necessarily true, if true, that Moses led the Israelis out of Egypt, while the direct reference theorist claims that our intuitions support the view that it is a contingent fact about Moses that he did so. Using the language of possible worlds, we can say, and it seems right to say, that in a possible world, Moses did not lead the Israelis out of Egypt. We have here also the idea that underlies the notion of a *rigid designator*. A rigid designator refers to the same object in all possible worlds in which that object exists. Regardless of what Moses did with his life, the reference of the name "Moses" is not affected by that. Once the reference of the name "Moses" has been fixed, the name picks him out in all possible worlds in which he exists. While the description theories have the name pick out whatever object

best fits the descriptive meaning of a name, the Moses example shows that the reference of a name is unaffected by the different exploits of Moses in various possible worlds. “Moses” refers to Moses in all of them, provided that he exists in that world.

While none of the reasons above provide a positive argument for a causal theory of reference, the causal theory is what Kripke suggested as a replacement for the description theories. But the causal theory of reference only suggests how reference is secured. It is silent about what a name contributes to a proposition expressed by a sentence in which it occurs. Given that the causal theory of reference does not allow that reference is determined by descriptive meaning, the main candidate for the semantic contribution of a name became the object referred to. Hence, we have the causal theory of reference paving the way for direct reference. It should be noted that, although the causal theory of reference paved the way for direct reference, in no way does it imply that one has to accept direct reference. One can accept a causal theory of reference and still argue that a name contributes a descriptive content to a proposition. However, my concern will be primarily with the problems and puzzles that arise when one accepts the direct reference view.

OUR EPISTEMIC INTUITIONS

Kripke’s appeal to our epistemic intuitions is of special interest to my project since it, more than the appeal to our semantic intuitions and modal intuitions, bears on the information contained in or associated with names. Additionally, the appeal to epistemic intuitions, and arguments based on that appeal, are very important for the direct reference theorist. One way in which the description theorists have responded to the direct reference theory is to develop rigidification theses, which claim that ordinary descriptions do not constitute the meaning of names. Instead, rigidified descriptions, descriptions that refer to the same objects in all possible worlds in which the relevant object exists, constitute the meaning of names. The basic move consists of claiming that instead of D constituting the meaning of N for a given name N and its descriptive meaning D , the description *the actual* D constitutes the meaning of N , where “actual” is an indexical. With this move the description theorist can circumvent some of the problems raised by the direct reference theorist. For example, the description theorist can now accommodate our *modal* intuitions, and so that part of the direct reference theorist’s attack does not work as before.

When arguing against the description theory, the direct reference theorist points out that the description theory renders it a priori that if Peano exists, then Peano discovered the axioms for number theory. The rigidified description theorist claims that, given the rigidified meaning of “Peano,” the relevant sentence should read as follows: “If Peano exists, then Peano is

the *actual* discoverer of the axioms for number theory.” But, as the direct reference theorist points out, there is no reason to claim that this latter sentence is not a priori just as the first one. So, while the rigidification helps the description theorist avoid the modal arguments, the sting is not removed from the direct reference theorists’ attack. Our epistemic intuitions and arguments based on those intuitions seem to withstand the rigidification of descriptions, thus showing the importance of that line of attack by the direct reference theorist. The attack and some of the responses to it merit additional discussion.

One of the theses to which the description theorist seems committed is the following:

If N exists, then N has most of the P s,

Where N stands for an object and P its identifying properties. A simpler version of the statement, one that corresponds to my presentation of Frege’s version of the description theory, namely, a view where the meaning of a name expressed by a single definite description, is as follows:

If N exists, then N is the P .

Kripke states the first version given above, but, as far as I can see, his discussion applies equally to both versions, and so I will focus on the second version. What Kripke points out is that if the statement is true, then the description theorist seems committed to the proposition expressed by the sentence being a priori. What reasons does Kripke give for the proposition expressed being a priori? Here is Kripke’s version of one of the relevant examples and probably the one most used when discussing the issue.

In the case of Gödel that’s practically the only thing many people have heard about him—that he discovered the incompleteness of arithmetic. Does it follow that whoever discovered the incompleteness of arithmetic is the referent of “Gödel”?

Imagine the following blatantly fictional situation. . . . Suppose that Gödel was not in fact the author of this theorem. A man named “Schmidt,” whose body was found in Vienna under mysterious circumstances many years ago, actually did the work in question. His friend Gödel somehow got hold of the manuscript and it was thereafter attributed to Gödel.⁸

I *think* that my belief about Gödel *is* in fact correct and that the “Schmidt” story is just a fantasy. But the belief hardly constitutes *a priori* knowledge.⁹

The relevant statement that we should know a priori if the description theory is true is the following:

S: If Gödel exists, then Gödel is the discoverer of the proof of incompleteness of arithmetic.

Kripke says that he thinks his belief about Gödel is correct and that the story about Schmidt is just fantasy. However, his belief about Gödel, he claims, hardly constitutes a priori knowledge.

There is a simple argument here, the epistemic argument, which we can state as follows:

1. If the description theory is true, then sentence *S* expresses a proposition that can be known a priori.
2. But the proposition expressed by the sentence cannot be known a priori.
3. So, the description theory is false.

Neo-Fregeans, the contemporary advocates of description theories, have responded to the epistemic argument by trying to show that one of its premises is false. When doing so, they focus on descriptive conditions that allow us to conclude that one of the two premises is false. The descriptions focused on typically involve meta-linguistic, causal, or demonstrative elements. Additionally, Robin Jeshion has recently launched a new attack on the epistemic argument that is independent of these types of descriptions, arguing that the epistemic argument is unstable. The argument merits further discussion. I will discuss both lines of attack below, with the main focus on Jeshion's argument.

The second premise in the argument is the salient premise and the one on which neo-Fregeans have focused in their replies. Frederick Kroon and Francois Recanati try to avoid the argument by evoking certain meta-linguistic descriptions.¹⁰ By doing so, they hope to find some propositions expressed by sentences of the above type that are knowable a priori. Kroon suggests that if the name "Jonah" is given the content "the individual called 'Jonah' by members of my community," then it is not possible that Jonah is not the individual called "Jonah" by members of my community. The relevantly similar sentence to *S* would then be "if Jonah exists, then Jonah is called 'Jonah' in my community." Similarly, Recanati suggests that "Socrates" is synonymous with "the individual called 'Socrates' in the community to which I belong." But we can describe cases that escape this general strategy as exemplified by the following example: For some reason some friends of mine started to refer to a neighbor farmer as "George" even though that was not his name. They only did this in their own home and only in my presence. I thus came to refer to this person as "George" even though he was not so called by members of my community, nor the community to which I belonged. And since it is false that he was so called by members of my community or the community to which I belonged, the relevant propositions are not knowable a priori or otherwise.

Like the neo-Fregeans, Robin Jeshion focuses her discussion on the second premise of the epistemic argument, namely, that the relevant proposition

cannot be known a priori, and she argues that Kripke does not establish this premise as being true. Jeshion quickly hones in on Kripke's Gödel example when discussing the argument. Remember that Kripke pointed out that he can imagine it being the case that Schmidt and not Gödel discovered the incompleteness proof, and that, while he can imagine that being the case, he also believes that the story of Schmidt is false. Jeshion provides a new twist on Kripke's example in her discussion. She writes:

But surely we can imagine coming across evidence for thinking that Schmidt, and not Gödel, was the discoverer of the incompleteness proof. We can imagine discovering an early manuscript of the proof in Schmidt's handwriting and finding Schmidt's body riddled with bullets. And Schmidt's widow comes forward with testimony about Gödel's theft and murder, along with stories about threats to her life if she divulged the news.¹¹

Jeshion continues and focuses primarily on a possible support for premise (2) in the epistemic argument. On the face of it, the support for premise (2) seems to be based on the following kind of reasoning.

An argument to support premise (2) in the epistemic argument:

- 1s. The proposition expressed by *not S* is possibly true.
- 2s. If *not S* is possibly true, then *S* cannot be known a priori.
- 3s. So, the proposition expressed by *S* cannot be known a priori.

Jeshion does not state the argument in this form, but instead considers various versions of it. In the ensuing discussion and analysis, she focuses on the nature of a priori knowledge and whether, for example, *P* is a priori if one can possibly obtain empirical evidence that shows that *P* is false.

Jeshion's discussion of the nature of a priori knowledge and how various evidence is and is not compatible with such knowledge is interesting and instructive. It is worth noting that her discussion does not threaten Kripke's examples of the contingent a priori, as those examples are generated via a naming process (such as my seeing a stick of a certain length and deciding that it is one meter long by saying "stick *S* is one meter long," thus introducing "one meter") and so involve sentences of a different kind than the one on which Jeshion focuses. However, Jeshion's discussion invites the complex issue of the impossibility of fallible a priori knowledge, an issue that we need not discuss here. I believe that, in the end, Jeshion's reading of the argument has little bearing on Kripke's original point, and I believe that we can show so without getting involved in the complex issues of fallible a priori knowledge.

Suppose that Kripke had not used the Gödel example but had instead only used the example he introduces immediately following the presentation of the Gödel example, namely the one of Peano and Dedekind.

What do we know about Peano? What many people in this room may "know" about Peano is that he was the discoverer of certain axioms

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which characterize the sequence of natural numbers, the so-called “Peano axioms.” Probably some people can even state them. I have been told that these axioms were not first discovered by Peano but by Dedekind. Peano was of course not a dishonest man. I am told that his footnotes include a credit to Dedekind. Somehow the footnote has been ignored.¹²

If we now restate the original (Gödel) argument using the Peano example we get the following:

1. If the description theory is true, then the sentence “If Peano exists, then Peano is the discoverer of the Peano axioms” expresses a proposition that can be known a priori.
2. But the proposition expressed by the sentence cannot be known a priori.
3. So, the description theory is false.

And the argument to support premise (2) of the argument does not, as previously, include possibly true propositions. Instead it looks as follows:

- 1s. The proposition expressed by “It is not the case that if Peano exists, then Peano is the discoverer of the Peano axioms” is *true*.
- 2s. If *not P* is true, then *P* cannot be known a priori (because *P* is false).
- 3s. So, the proposition expressed by “If Peano exists, then Peano is the discoverer of the Peano axioms” cannot be known a priori (because it is false).

The main difference between the supportive argument now and before lies in the first premise, namely, that in the second example, we know that Peano did not discover the Peano axioms. Because we know that he did not discover the axioms, it is false that Peano did discover the axioms. Since one cannot know falsehoods, one cannot know a priori (or otherwise) that Peano did discover the axioms. The Gödel example as understood by Jeshion involved an unnecessary complication, namely, an argument based on the possibility that Gödel might not have discovered the incompleteness proof. The Peano example, in contrast, is based on the knowledge that it is false that Peano discovered Peano’s axioms.

If we interpret the Gödel example in a more charitable way, then we should understand the example in a way that parallels the Peano example, namely, we should not understand Kripke as suggesting that it is (merely) possible that Schmidt discovered the incompleteness proof. Instead we should understand Kripke as assuming for argument’s sake that it is false that Gödel discovered the incompleteness proof, in which case we cannot know a priori (or otherwise) that he did discover the proof. So understood the argument does not involve the complications that Jeshion introduces. Instead, the argument correctly assumes that even if the description theory

is true, one is not justified in believing that the description that constitutes the meaning of a name correctly describes the object referred to. Certainly, one is not justified a priori in believing so as the description theory suggests.

MEANING

My focus in the remainder of this work will not be on the basic arguments for and against the description theory. Instead I am more concerned with some of the problems that face the direct reference theory and how the theory can deal with the problems. Of course, as Russell pointed out, one can judge the success of a theory by how it can deal with problems, and I believe that the direct reference theory can, even in its most naïve form, handle what is thrown at it.

Before we get to some of the puzzles and problems that the theory needs to deal with, we need to discuss the meaning of names and what they contribute to propositions expressed by sentences in which they occur. If the direct reference theorist does not hold that the semantic meaning of a proper name is the descriptive content that Frege assigned as a meaning, then what are the alternatives? The simplest solution is that the meaning of a name is its referent. For example, the meaning of the name "Aristotle" is Aristotle. But if the meaning of a name is the object to which it refers, then what does the name contribute to a proposition expressed by a sentence in which it occurs? What kind of an entity is that proposition? That will be the subject of the next chapter. As we will see, when dealing with the various problems that the direct reference theorist has to face, a lot depends on what kind of proposition one adopts.

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3 Propositions: Structure and Objects

In *Naming and Necessity*, Kripke does not talk about propositions and their nature. In the introduction to *Naming and Necessity*, he even wonders whether the apparatus of propositions might break down if the “better picture” of reference, namely causal reference, is accepted. Further, he writes that he never intended to go so far as to accept the view, sometimes attributed to him, that a sentence that contains the name “Cicero” expresses the same proposition as the corresponding sentence with “Tully” substituted for “Cicero,” the names “Cicero” and “Tully” being coreferential. Instead of focusing on propositions, Kripke suggested that there might be something about *sentences* that explains failure of substitution of coreferential names. He writes “[that] the English sentence ‘Hesperus is Phosphorus’ could sometimes be used to raise an empirical issue while ‘Hesperus is Hesperus’ could not shows that I do not treat the *sentences* as completely interchangeable.”¹ This is a curious view, as it clearly indicates that the new account of reference might be incompatible with the then-reigning Fregean view of the nature of propositions and, further, that we might have to focus our attention on sentences rather than propositions.

We will look at the motivation for introducing propositions in the first place, the roles they play, and why different theories of reference are committed to different kinds of propositions. Since Frege is to a large extent responsible for introducing propositions into the current landscape of philosophy, we will take a careful look at his project, including why he introduced propositions as well as the nature of the propositions he introduced. While the causal reference theory has introduced a lively discussion on the nature of propositions, there is little reason to believe that we have to give up on them.

WHAT ARE PROPOSITIONS?

The term “proposition” is a technical one that has different meanings for different philosophers. The term has a rather broad use in contemporary philosophy. Most commonly, it is used to refer to the primary bearers of

truth value as well as to objects of belief and other propositional attitudes. Advocates of propositions say, for example, that propositions are true or false and that sentences are only true or false in a derivative way; namely, we can say that a sentence is true if it expresses a true proposition and false if it expresses a false proposition. The term is also used to capture the referents of that-clauses and the meanings of sentences, as well as what is expressed by declarative sentences. If you utter “it is raining,” and an Icelander utters “það rignir,” then we said the same thing in the sense that we uttered sentences that express the same proposition. Propositions are also what allow people to share beliefs, or to believe the same thing. If you sincerely assent to “Plato was a Greek philosopher” and so believe what the sentence expresses and a monolingual Icelander sincerely assents to “Platón var Grískur heimspekingur” and so believes what that sentence expresses, then the two of you believe the same thing, as the two sentences express the same proposition. And finally, the term refers to objects that possess modal properties, such as being necessary or contingent.

As a starting point, I will assume that propositions are the bearers of truth values and that they are objects of belief. Most advocates of propositions can certainly accept this as a minimal characterization of propositions. But this leaves out a number of things about which philosophers disagree, such as, for example, whether propositions are composed of concepts or objects and whether their components are arranged in any particular way. It is common now to claim that propositions are structured, that is, to say that they are complex entities whose parts are arranged or bound together in a particular way. But the view that propositions are structured entities, a view that probably originated with Frege, took a back seat to another account that was thought promising for a while, namely, the possible worlds account of propositions. Let us first look briefly at the possible worlds account of propositions before moving on to structured propositions.

POSSIBLE WORLDS ACCOUNT OF PROPOSITIONS

The possible worlds account of propositions grew out of possible worlds semantics, as it was developed during the middle part of the twentieth century. I will think of a possible world as a way things could have been, and as such I do not attach any particular metaphysical view to how I use the term. It seems obvious that there might have been more elephants in the world than there are or that there might have been fewer elephants in the world than there are, that is, there are possible worlds at which there are more elephants than in the actual world and there are possible worlds at which there are fewer elephants than in the actual world. Used in this way, it appears that one need not make any large-scale metaphysical commitments with the use of possible worlds talk. That is not to say that there are no significant metaphysical issues that arise in connection with possible worlds, but I am

not concerned with those issues here. I am more concerned with using talk about possible worlds as philosophical method, namely, as a helpful way to think about certain issues.

One way to try to account for propositions in terms of possible worlds goes as follows. We can capture the idea that there are different numbers of elephants in various possible worlds by saying that the extension of “elephant” differs from world to world. That is, we associate a function with the name “elephant,” namely, a function from possible worlds to elephants. Correspondingly, we associate with sentences functions from possible worlds to truth values. That function maps a world to *true* if the sentence is true at that world. And now, since we take propositions to be the primary bearers of truth values, it seems to be a logical move to suggest that propositions are functions from possible worlds to truth values. Identifying propositions with functions from possible worlds to truth values is equivalent to identifying them with the set of all possible worlds at which a given sentence is true.

Identifying propositions with sets of possible worlds leaves us with a sizable problem because such an account gives us a very coarse-grained account of propositions, and it does not seem to individuate propositions finely enough to avoid serious problems. Consider the following sentences, all of which express necessarily true propositions: “all bicycles are bicycles,” “all bachelors are unmarried males,” and “ $2 + 3 = 5$.” Because all three sentences express necessary truths, all three sentences are true at all possible worlds. But if that is so, and given that a proposition is the set of possible worlds at which the sentence that expresses it is true, then all three propositions must be the set of all possible worlds. That is, they are the same proposition. This is an intolerable result, for the sentences surely express different propositions. One quick reason as to why we should claim that the sentences express different propositions is that it is intuitively obvious that they do so.

Things do not get any better once we look at beliefs when conceived as a relation between a believer and a proposition. If I believe that all bicycles are bicycles, and I believe that $2 + 3 = 5$, then it seems clear that I believe two different things (i.e., that I believe two different propositions). But, according to the possible worlds account of propositions, since the sentences express the same proposition, I only believe one proposition and not two, that is, I stand in a belief relation to one and not two propositions. Further, if we look at the content of my belief, where the content of my belief is somehow captured by the propositions believed, then since the sentences “all bicycles are bicycles” and “ $2 + 3 = 5$ ” express the same proposition, the possible worlds account of propositions seems to dictate that I believe the same thing when I believe that all bicycles are bicycles as I do when I believe that $2 + 3 = 5$. Again, the result is highly counterintuitive.

Proponents of the possible worlds account of propositions are not without recourse at this point. Robert Stalnaker has defended and further developed the account more than anyone else.² One of the problems that I have

raised against the account is the problem of equivalence, namely, the problem that all necessarily true propositions are one and the same. Stalnaker has discussed the problem of equivalence and suggested that the first step toward a solution of the problem is to view the belief relation when we consider “*S* believes that *P*” not as a relation between person *S* and the proposition that *P*, but rather between *S* and the proposition that the sentence *P* expresses a necessary truth. The view, then, is that if I claim to believe that all bicycles are bicycles, then I bear a belief relation to the proposition that the sentence “all bicycles are bicycles” expresses a necessary truth, and if I claim to believe that $2 + 3 = 5$, then I stand in a belief relation to the proposition that the sentence “ $2 + 3 = 5$ ” expresses a necessary truth. Since these two sentences are clearly different, namely, the sentence “all bicycles are bicycles” and the sentence “ $2 + 3 = 5$,” I can stand in a relation to one of Stalnaker’s suggested objects of belief without standing in a relation to the other (i.e., it now seems that I can believe one necessarily true proposition without believing them all). But this attempt at a solution comes at a price.

One of the thorny problems when dealing with propositions is how to individuate them. If we individuate them too coarsely, then we end up with a problem like the one Stalnaker is dealing with in his attempted solution to the problem of equivalence. Granted, the problem Stalnaker faced was extreme, namely, that all necessarily true propositions are one and the same. When trying to solve the problem of equivalence by introducing elements that give us finer-grained propositions, then, we have to be careful not to go too far, and the direction suggested by Stalnaker suffers from the problem of giving us a too fine-grained account of propositions. Consider the following scenario. A monolingual speaker of English believes that all bicycles are bicycles, and a monolingual speaker of Icelandic believes the same proposition (i.e., the two of them believe the same thing or share a belief). But on Stalnaker’s account, they cannot do so. The monolingual English speaker bears a belief relation to a proposition about an English sentence, namely, the proposition that the sentence “all bicycles are bicycles” expresses a necessary truth, and the monolingual Icelandic speaker bears a relation to a proposition that the sentence “*öll reiðhjól eru reiðhjól*” expresses a necessary truth. When Stalnaker introduces a meta-linguistic element into what is believed, namely, that what one believes is partly about sentences, then the account becomes so fine-grained that monolingual speakers of different languages cannot share a belief if the sentences used to express the belief differ. Stalnaker does recognize some of the difficulties with his proposed solution and says that his account would require more complexity and more context dependence than is usually required. But he does not provide the additional details required to address the problems, and so his view, as of now, is more of a suggestion as to how to solve the problem than a solution. Given the difficulties, and given that one of the very criteria of propositions we set out with was that they are the objects of shared beliefs, we should abandon the possible worlds account of propositions and look for solutions elsewhere.

STRUCTURED PROPOSITIONS

The basic idea behind structured propositions is that propositions have constituents that are the semantic values of words or phrases occurring in a sentence that expresses the proposition, and that the constituents are bound together in some way. For example, the sentence “Jack is tall” expresses a proposition and the constituents of the proposition include the semantic value of the name “Jack” and the semantic value of the predicate “is tall.” The proposition expressed by the sentence “Jack loves Megan” has as its constituents the semantic values of the names “Jack” and “Megan” as well as the relation of loving. The proposition expressed by the sentence “Megan loves Jack” has the same constituents as does the proposition expressed by the sentence “Jack loves Megan,” but the constituents are bound together, or ordered, in a different way, and so the two sentences express different propositions. The structure of the proposition, in a relevant sense, reflects the structure of the sentence that expresses it.

Some of the virtues of this approach to propositions should already be evident, namely, we can now have necessarily true but distinct propositions, which is something that the possible worlds account of propositions has difficulty allowing for. Consider, for example, the propositions expressed by the sentences “Kasparov is Kasparov” and “3 is greater than 1.” Both sentences express necessary truths, but the propositions expressed have different constituents. The proposition expressed by the first sentence, but not the second sentence, has the semantic value of “Kasparov” as a constituent, while the proposition expressed by the second sentence, but not the first sentence, has the semantic values of “3” and “1” as constituents. Since the propositions have different constituents, they are clearly different propositions.

In addition to giving us a somewhat fine-grained account of propositions, there is a second reason for why philosophers have moved towards structured propositions and away from the possible worlds account of propositions. According to the direct reference theory, a name does not have a descriptive meaning that determines its reference. Instead, the name refers directly or via a causal chain. But if a name does not determine its reference via a description that it contributes to the proposition expressed by the sentence in which it occurs, then what does it contribute to propositions? One strong candidate is that the name contributes to the proposition the object referred to. Kripke, of course, did not advocate the view that propositions contain the objects of reference, but another proponent of the direct reference theory, David Kaplan, did so to an extent. In his essay “Demonstratives” he wrote

Don’t think of propositions as sets of possible worlds, but rather as structured entities looking something like the sentences which express them. For each occurrence of a singular term in a sentence there will be a corresponding constituent in the proposition expressed. The constituent

of the proposition determines, for each circumstance of evaluation, the object relevant to evaluating the proposition in that circumstance. In general the constituents of the proposition will be some sort of logical complex, constructed from various attributes by logical composition. But in the case of a singular term which is directly referential, the constituent of the proposition is just the object itself.³

Kaplan was not a strong advocate of the view expressed in the quote above. He used structured propositions mostly as a heuristic device and even adopted a possible worlds account of propositions in his formal semantics. Kaplan attributed the type of propositions described above to Russell, and so they are typically called either Russellian propositions or singular propositions, and, while Kaplan was not a strong advocate of singular propositions, many direct reference theorists have since accepted them. Singular propositions, then, are structured propositions that contain amongst their constituents the referent of the directly referential expression that occurs in the sentence expressing the proposition. In addition to names, these expressions include, on many accounts, indexicals and some definite descriptions, including rigid definite descriptions that refer to the same objects in all possible worlds.

Nathan Salmon and Scott Soames have presented what is the best-known approach to singular propositions. Constituents in their structured singular propositions include properties in addition to the object referred to. Thus, the sentence “Aristotle was a great philosopher” expresses a proposition that includes not just Aristotle, but also the property of being a great philosopher. The proposition can be represented as an ordered pair, namely:

$\langle a, P \rangle$

Where “a” stands for Aristotle and “P” stands for the property of being a great philosopher. The proposition expressed by the sentence “Megan loves Jack” can be represented as

$\langle \langle m, j \rangle L \rangle$

while the proposition expressed by the sentence “Jack loves Megan” is represented as

$\langle \langle j, m \rangle L \rangle$

where m stands for Megan, j for Jack, and L for the loving relation. The proposition represented as $\langle \langle m, j \rangle L \rangle$ is true in circumstance c if, and only if $\langle m, j \rangle$ is in the extension of the loving relation at that circumstance.

A question that arises here is whether structured singular propositions are fine-grained enough. One of the motivations behind singular propositions

was that the possible worlds account of propositions was not fine-grained enough and had the undesirable consequence that all necessarily true propositions were the same. While singular propositions avoid that problem, another problem arises. Since singular propositions have as constituents the object referred to as well as a property, two different sentences can express the same proposition. That is a desired result in some cases, as when we are dealing with different languages and want to be able to say that sentences in the respective languages express the same proposition, such as when a sentence of one language is accurately translated into a second language. But a problem that many find devastating centers on sentences in the same language that differ only in that they contain different but coreferring directly referring terms. These terms contribute the same object to the proposition expressed by the sentences in which they occur, and thus the sentences express the same proposition. The sentence

Kasparov is a grandmaster

expresses a proposition that can be represented as $\langle k, P \rangle$, where k stands for Kasparov and P for the property of being a grandmaster. The sentence

Weinstein is a grandmaster

expresses a proposition that can be represented as $\langle w, P \rangle$, where w stands for Weinstein and P for the property of being a grandmaster. But since Kasparov is Weinstein the two names contribute the same object to the proposition expressed by the sentences, and so the two sentences express the same proposition. The same goes for the sentences

Kasparov is Kasparov

and

Kasparov is Weinstein.

The first sentence expresses a proposition that can be represented as $\langle \langle k, k \rangle I \rangle$, namely Kasparov twice over together with the identity relation, while the second sentence expresses a proposition that can be represented as $\langle \langle k, w \rangle I \rangle$. Since Kasparov is Weinstein, both names contribute the same object to the proposition, and so the two sentences express the same proposition. The problem that now arises is that it seems clear that in most relevant contexts the sentence “Kasparov is Kasparov” is not informative, while the sentence “Kasparov is Weinstein” is informative. Given the difference, it seems obvious to many that the two sentences have to express different propositions, since it appears that someone may believe and know that Kasparov is Kasparov without believing or knowing that Kasparov is Weinstein. Or, to take a different example, if the ancient astronomers knew that

Hesperus is Hesperus, it seems that the advocate of singular propositions has to say that they also knew that Hesperus is Phosphorus, given that the relevant sentences express the same proposition. But that surely cannot be true, for while it is a trivial truth that Hesperus is Hesperus, it was a significant empirical discovery to find out that Hesperus is Phosphorus. It seems, then, that singular propositions have problems with substitution cases because they do not accommodate the fact that two sentences that contain different but codesignative names can have very different information value. If so, then singular propositions are probably not as fine-grained as they need to be. When we deal with belief ascriptions, we will look at some interesting attempts to account for our intuitions about belief ascriptions by introducing a more fine-grained account of propositions while retaining direct reference.

While the issue of whether singular propositions are fine-grained enough remains one of the main issues in the following chapters, it is clear that singular propositions are on this note a huge improvement over the possible worlds account of propositions. For example, on the latter account, all true identity statements express the same proposition. On the former account, most true identity statements express different propositions. “Mark Twain is Mark Twain,” “all bicycles are bicycles,” and “Kasparov is Kasparov” express the same proposition on the possible worlds account, but not on the singular proposition account. The scope of the problem for the advocate of singular propositions is significantly smaller than it is for the advocate of the possible worlds account of propositions.

It appears that singular propositions are object-dependent since they contain as constituents the objects referred to (i.e., it appears that the proposition cannot exist without an object referred to existing). At first glance, it even seems to be a defining difference between singular propositions and Fregean propositions that the former contain the object referred to as a constituent while the latter do not. But an influential interpretation of Frege begs to differ, as it interprets Frege as introducing object-dependent propositions as well. The view deserves a closer look.

FREGEAN PROPOSITIONS AND OBJECT DEPENDENCE

The traditional interpretation of Frege reads him as endorsing propositions that are not object-dependent (i.e., propositions that can exist even though the proper names that occur in the sentences that express them do not refer). But John McDowell and Gareth Evans have challenged this with an influential interpretation of Frege. McDowell first introduced a Fregean reading that included object-dependent propositions and contrasted them to Frege’s senses, which he took to be object-independent.⁴ But shortly thereafter, in *The Varieties of Reference*, Evans proposed an interpretation of Frege according to which Frege’s senses are object-dependent.⁵ McDowell later endorsed Evans’s interpretation of Frege.⁶

The introduction of object-dependent propositions among Fregeans seems, at least initially, to blur the distinction between them and Russellians, namely, the direct reference theorists who advocate structured singular propositions as objects of belief. One way to characterize the two camps is to allege that Russellians accept object-dependent propositions while Fregeans do not accept such propositions. Although Evans does not make the object referred to a part of the proposition expressed, the introduction of object-dependent thoughts in a Fregean framework made it possible for neo-Fregeans to do so, much as Russellians do with singular propositions.⁷ While there are some similarities between the theories of Russellians and neo-Fregeans, the salient difference between the two concerns the mode of presentation of the referent. The Russellians argue that the proposition expressed is a singular proposition that does not contain a mode of presentation, and thus argue that there is a distinction between a proposition expressed and its cognitive content, or the thought. The most common Russellian way to accomplish this distinction is to argue that singular propositions are believed under guises, or in different ways—a view that will be discussed in greater detail in subsequent chapters. The neo-Fregeans, on the other hand, do not draw this distinction between proposition and thought, and insist on making the mode of presentation of the referent a constituent of the proposition or thought. One way to do so is to argue that names contribute descriptive senses to propositions, the descriptive senses then being the relevant modes of presentation. As explained further later, a consequence of the Evans-McDowell interpretation of Frege is that if someone hallucinates that there is an oasis in front of her, then there is no thought of an oasis but only an illusion of a thought. No reference entails no sense, and no sense entails no thought. Evans and McDowell have thus provided neo-Fregeans with a “wide content” interpretation of Frege, in which the individuation of thought depends partly on what the thought is of and so depends partly on what lies outside of the head.⁸

Interestingly, Evans argues that he is not deviating from the views of Frege in his interpretation. He understands Frege in such a way that Frege accepted object-dependent propositions. He writes, for example, that

Frege held, both before the distinction between sense and Meaning and, despite appearances, after it, a highly Russellian view of singular terms. Frege’s later apparent willingness to ascribe sense to certain empty singular terms was equivocal, hedged around with qualifications, and dubiously consistent with the fundamentals of his philosophy of language.⁹

This is a startling interpretation of Frege and an interpretation that is not consistent with the reading I have given Frege so far. Evans apparently is attempting to give us a “correct” reading of Frege. However, I will argue that his interpretation is not very plausible. One should note that if Evans’s

interpretation of Frege is not well-grounded in Frege's writings, then the theoretical implication of Evans's interpretation should be understood appropriately, and not as Frege's view. I shall focus on Frege's views on the issue in this section and, in particular, whether there is any evidence that the mature Frege (i.e., after he introduced the sense/reference distinction) accepted object-dependent propositions. In the following section, I shall take a closer look at Evans's arguments for his interpretation of Frege.

In his early works, Frege was not as concerned with how language related to the world as he was with the logical relations between sentences and the thoughts that they express. At the time when he wrote the *Begriffsschrift*, first published in 1879, he was not concerned with how sentences relate to reality, and he never mentions what it is that makes a sentence true or false. His interest is focused on truth values as they pertain to logical relations. Further, he was not concerned with how names refer, although at one point he does come close to making the sense/reference distinction. When discussing equality of content in the *Begriffsschrift*, Frege shows how names can determine the same content in different ways and that, in some cases, the same content is given by two ways of determining it. Frege illustrates this with a geometry example.

Let a fixed point A lie on the circumference of a circle, and let a straight line rotate around this. When this straight line forms a diameter, let us call the opposite end to A the point B corresponding to this position. Then let us go on to call the point of intersection of the straight line and the circumference, the point B corresponding to the position of the straight line at any given time. . . . We may now ask: What point corresponds to the position of the straight line in which it is perpendicular to the diameter? The answer will be: The point A. The name B thus has in this case the same content as the name A.¹⁰

But even though the two names have the same content, Frege argues that we cannot use the same name throughout the example, for name *B* only has the same content as name *A* in the given example when point *B* corresponds to the straight line's being perpendicular to the diameter, as specified.

Even here we should not understand Frege as providing a theory of reference as his concern in the passage is not with how names refer. Instead Frege is pointing out that sometimes the same thing is determined (referred to) in different ways and that the symbol for equality of content is sensitive to the different ways in which names can determine the same content or the same thing. While Frege does mention reference, the notion of reference is not of much interest to him at this point. Instead, what is of importance is that the equality sign is sensitive to when two names determine the same content different ways. The focus is, again, on the relationship between sentences; in this case identity sentences, and the thoughts they express.¹¹

In *Function and Concept*, presented in 1891, Frege sets out to supplement the ideas in the *Begriffsschrift*. Here he is concerned with truth and falsity and, consequently, with the contribution names make to a thought. He presents the view that proper names have the role of introducing objects that are to be the arguments to functions. For example, the function “a is big” maps all and only big objects onto the value True. If Paul is an argument to the function “a is big,” then the sentence “Paul is big” is true only if the argument is mapped onto the value True and false only if it is mapped onto the value False. But the argument can only be mapped onto the values True or False if the name “Paul” introduces an object (i.e., only if “Paul” has a semantic value). That is, the sentence can express a thought or a proposition only if “Paul” has a semantic value.

In “Seventeen Key Sentences on Logic,” Frege puts the point in the following way:

A sentence can be true or untrue only if it is an expression for a thought. The sentence “Leo Sachse is a man” is the expression of a thought only if “Leo Sachse” designates something. And so too the sentence “this table is round” is the expression of a thought only if the words “this table” are not empty sounds but designate something specific for me.¹²

And in his dialogue with Pünjer, he says that “Once ‘Sachse is a man’ expresses an actual judgment, the word ‘Sachse’ must designate something. . . .”¹³

What we can gather from Frege’s *Begriffsschrift* as supplemented by *Function and Concept* is that he held the view that if someone utters a sentence containing a proper name, then that sentence can have a truth value only if the proper name has a semantic value, and that a sentence containing a proper name expresses a thought or a proposition only if the name has a semantic value.

An interesting consequence of Frege’s early view is that if “Leo Sachse” does not designate something, then the sentence “Leo Sachse is a man” does not express a proposition. The proposition expressed by the sentence “Leo Sachse is a man” is thus object-dependent in the sense that it only exists if “Leo Sachse” has a semantic value. Furthermore, in this view, the sentence “Santa Claus is jolly” fails to express a proposition because “Santa Claus” does not have a semantic value. The same holds true for the sentence “Thales was a philosopher” if it turns out that Thales never existed. This is certainly not a view that is commonly associated with Frege. In order to distinguish this view from what was to come, let us call this the view of Frege I. At this stage in his development Frege’s views are close to the view that Evans attributes to him. But a lot changes in Frege’s subsequent and more mature works.

In “On Sense and Reference,” published in 1892, Frege presented his distinction between sense and reference and with it a view that appears to be significantly different from his earlier views. The cognitive aspect of

language use motivated Frege to take a second look at his theory. In particular, he was concerned with how identity statements with codesignative but different names can be informative, although the problem extends to other statements as well. Consider, for example, the following two sentences:

Mark Twain is Mark Twain.

Mark Twain is Samuel Clemens.

It is evident that the second sentence is informative while the first sentence is not informative. The problem is how to account for the informativeness. In the opening paragraph of “On Sense and Reference,” Frege criticized the account of the informativeness of identity statements he gave in the *Begriffsschrift*, saying that if an identity statement only relates names, those names do not provide us with proper knowledge. Clearly something else is called for in order to account for the informativeness of the relevant statements, and so a different account is required.¹⁴

Frege responds to the problem presented by the informativeness of identity statements by introducing the views of Frege II. According to the views of Frege II, what a name contributes to a proposition is not the object referred to, and the role of a name is not to introduce an object to a proposition. Instead, a name contributes its sense to a proposition. In Frege’s words, “A difference [in cognitive significance] can arise only if the difference between the signs corresponds to a difference in the mode of presentation of that which is designated.”¹⁵ So, senses of names are, at least typically, the ways in which objects are presented, and the connection between a name, its sense, and its reference is such that to a name there corresponds a sense and to that sense corresponds a reference, so the sense mediates between a name and its reference. Frege explains this with the following example:

Let a , b , c be the lines connecting the vertices of a triangle with the midpoints of the opposite sides. The point of intersection of a and b is then the same as the point of intersection of b and c . So we have different designations for the same point, and these names (“point of intersection of a and b ,” “point of intersection of b and c ”) likewise indicate the mode of presentation; and hence the statement contains actual knowledge.¹⁶

The names in the example above designate the same thing, but the ways in which they present this common referent is different, so they have different senses. With names contributing senses to the propositions expressed by the sentences in which they occur, and with the senses determining reference, Frege can account for the informativeness of the relevant sentences. The resulting view is that of Frege II.

At least on the face of it, Frege II differs significantly from Frege I when it comes to object-dependent propositions. We saw that for Frege I, a simple

declarative sentence expressed a proposition only if the name in the sentence had a semantic value. That is not so for Frege II. For example, in “On Sense and Reference,” he says, “In grasping a sense, one is not certainly assured of a reference,”¹⁷ and “every grammatically well-formed expression representing a proper name always has a sense. But this is not to say that to the sense there also corresponds a reference.”¹⁸ So Frege II allows for there being meaningful expressions that do not refer, such as “the celestial body most distant from the Earth” and “the least rapidly convergent series.”

Further, in a letter to Russell dated from 1904 as well as in “Letter to Jourdain,” Frege addresses what names contribute to propositions. In the letter to Russell, he writes:

Mont Blanc with its snowfields is not itself a component part of the thought that Mont Blanc is more than 4,000 metres high. . . . The sense of the word “moon” is a component part of the thought that the moon is smaller than the earth. The moon itself (i.e., the denotation of the word “moon”) is not part of the sense of the word “moon”; for then it would also be a component part of that thought.¹⁹

In “Letter to Jourdain,” Frege is equally clear on what a name contributes to a proposition:

[T]he sense of the name “Ateb” is different from the sense of the name “Aphla.” Accordingly, the sense of the proposition “Ateb is at least 5000 metres high” is also different from the sense of the proposition “Aphla is at least 5000 metres high.”²⁰

From this we can infer that names contribute their senses to the propositions expressed by the sentences in which they occur. Because the names “Ateb” and “Aphla” have different senses that they contribute to the propositions expressed by sentences in which they occur, the resulting propositions are different. We can conclude that, according to the views of Frege II, the name in a sentence contributes its sense to the proposition expressed, and the sense does not have to belong to an object, although typically it does.

The introduction of senses has serious implications for Frege’s view of object-dependent propositions. Frege I held the view that if a name in a sentence failed to refer, then the sentence failed to express a proposition. But as we have now seen, in “On Sense and Reference,” Frege says that one can grasp a sense without being assured of reference. And since a name or a singular term can have a sense without reference, and it contributes its sense to the proposition expressed by the sentence in which it occurs, it is evident that, according to Frege II, sentences that contain nonreferring names can nevertheless express propositions. But if sentences that contain nonreferring names can express propositions, then those propositions are not object-dependent. So, Frege II, contrary to Frege I, does recognize and accept propositions that are not object-dependent. Given this textual evidence,

what evidence and arguments might Evans have for his reading of Frege? Evans's arguments will be presented and evaluated next.

EVANS'S ARGUMENTS FOR OBJECT DEPENDENCE

In *The Varieties of Reference*, Gareth Evans argues that Frege II, as well as Frege I, held a highly Russellian view of singular terms and that Frege II, as well as Frege I, held that propositions expressed by simple sentences containing proper names were object-dependent. In particular, Evans claims that Frege's willingness to ascribe sense to empty terms, terms with no semantic value or no reference, is "only dubiously coherent."²¹ Evans provides four main arguments for claiming that Frege II accepted object-dependent propositions.

- I. *The modes of presentation argument.* A mode of presentation is, according to Frege, associated with a name giving it its sense. But a mode of presentation has to be a presentation of something. In the case of empty terms there is no object referred to, so there is no mode of presentation. Therefore, empty names have no sense.²²
- II. *The semantic gap argument.* Frege tried to construct a theory of meaning according to which the semantic meaning of the whole depends upon the semantic meaning of its parts. But, empty terms do not contribute a semantic value to the propositions expressed by the sentences in which they occur. Therefore, there is a group of sentences to which Frege's view that the semantic value of a sentence is determined by the semantic value of its parts does not apply. This position, Evans maintains, is barely intelligible. And since we should try to avoid attributing barely intelligible interpretation to Frege when a "more intelligible" interpretation is available, we should go with the "more intelligible" interpretation, namely, Evans's interpretation.
- III. *The truth-value gap argument.* Frege held the view that language supports truth-value gaps, that is, that there are sentences which, by virtue of containing empty names, are neither true nor false. But if that is so, then consider the following possibility. Suppose we have a scientific language containing a negation operator, "neg." If the language contained a sentence *Fa*, where *a* is an empty proper name which expresses a thought that is not true, then there is nothing to prevent "neg *Fa*" from being true. But since Frege accepted the principle that if a sentence *S* has no truth value, then no embedding of *S* can be true, he needs to find a way to deny that "neg *Fa*" is true, which, according to Evans, he can only do under Evans's interpretation.
- IV. *The mature Frege I argument.* Frege I had a mature theory of meaning, and the later Frege should be interpreted in light of that theory of meaning. When we do that, we have to acknowledge that since Frege I accepted object-dependent proposition, so does the later Frege.²³

I will argue that none of these arguments are sufficiently strong to warrant Evans's claim that Frege II accepted object-dependent propositions.

The modes of presentation argument does not commit Frege II to object-dependent propositions. It is true that Frege says modes of presentation belong to objects and, naturally, objects cannot have modes of presentation without existing. But Frege also says that modes of presentation are associated with proper names. In order for Evans's argument to work, he has to assume the following:

MP: A mode of presentation cannot be associated with proper names without the mode of presentation being a presentation of an (existing) object.

Given the views of Frege II, *MP* should be regarded as being false. It suffices to point out, again, that in "On Sense and Reference," Frege gave examples of names that have sense but do not refer, and this clearly indicates that Frege II accepted the view that a mode of presentation can be associated with a name without that mode of presentation being of an object. Once sense is couched in a definite description, we can associate a description with a name and by doing so give the name a sense without the description describing an existing object. But if that is so, then *MP* is false. *MP* needs to be argued for, and, given the views of Frege II, it is hard to see how one can do so. Nevertheless, Evans attempts to do so when presenting the second argument.

The second argument, the semantic gap argument, claims that Frege's theory does not apply to some sentences because the semantic value of sentences containing empty names cannot be determined by the semantic value of its parts. The proper reply to this is that, after Frege introduces his sense/reference distinction, we can have sense without reference, and that sentences containing empty proper names have one kind of meaning and not another. In "On Sense and Reference," Frege gave examples of proper names that have sense but lack reference. Also, in "Compound Thoughts," Frege states that

Names that fail to fulfill the usual role of a proper name, which is to name something, may be called mock proper names. Although the tale of William Tell is a legend and not history, and the name "William Tell" is a mock proper name, *we cannot deny its sense*.²⁴

It is important to note that Frege talks about the *usual* role of names and that we cannot deny that the name "William Tell" has a sense although it lacks reference and, as a result of it lacking reference, is a mock proper name. So, Frege clearly tells us that a name that fails to name something, a mock name, can have a sense. Frege II therefore provides us with both empty names, such as "William Tell," and empty descriptions, such as "the

celestial body most distant from the Earth.” In both instances we have sense without reference, and so it seems clear what position Frege II held on the issue.

Evans has a reply to the view that Frege II accepted empty proper names and that the sentences that contain them can convey thoughts. He states, “There just *is* a pretheoretical notion of a sentence being significant—a sentence’s being so constructed that it is capable of expressing or conveying a thought to, and perhaps inducing a belief in, anyone sufficiently familiar with the language.”²⁵ The underlying assumption is that a sentence containing an empty name cannot express or convey a thought. But, as we have seen, Frege II acknowledges sense without reference and so the assumption on which Evans’s reply rests is not compatible with Frege II’s stated views. Consequently, Evans has to provide some additional reasons for his interpretation. The evidence Evans provides for this interpretation includes the following quotes from Frege:

Names that fail to fulfill the usual role of a proper name, which is to name something, may be called mock proper names. . . . The sense of the sentence “William Tell shot an apple off his son’s head” is no more true than is that of the sentence “William Tell did not shoot an apple off his son’s head.” I do not say that this sense is false either, but I characterize it as fictitious.

Instead of speaking about fiction, we could speak of “mock thoughts.”

Even the thoughts are not to be taken seriously as in the sciences: they are only mock thoughts.²⁶

From this Evans concludes that, unqualified, these passages induce an inconsistency in Frege’s view. When they are qualified with Frege’s likening to fiction, the inconsistency disappears, Evans says, for then we can say that the sentence containing the empty name does not “really” have a sense; instead it is only *as if* the sentence containing the name functions properly and only *as if* the name refers to something.²⁷

Evans’s interpretation contrasts sharply with what Frege himself says. In the first place, Frege is very indecisive in the above quotes. Instead of saying that we *should* call names that fail to refer mock proper names, and instead of saying that we *should* talk about mock thoughts, he more cautiously says that we *may* or *could* do so. Furthermore, Frege talks in several places without qualification of sense without reference, and so it certainly seems like Frege did not see the need for his view to be qualified. Consider for example the following passage from “Letter to Jourdain” where he writes:

Without reference, we could indeed have a thought, but only a mythological or literary thought, not a thought that could further scientific

knowledge. Without a sense, we would have no thought, and hence also nothing that we could recognize as true.²⁸

Here it is very clear that Frege does indeed acknowledge that we can have thought without there being an object that the thought is of, although he says the thought is only a mythological or literary thought. The price to pay is that the resulting proposition is not a proposition of the type that can further scientific knowledge. He further makes it clear that, while we can have a thought without an object that the thought is of, thought does require sense.

In the same passage where he talks of mock thoughts Frege writes:

Assertions in fiction are not to be taken seriously: they are only mock assertions. Even the thoughts are not to be taken seriously as in the sciences: they are only mock thoughts. If Schiller's *Don Carlos* were to be regarded as a piece of history, then to a large extent the drama would be false. But a work of fiction is not meant to be taken seriously in this way at all: it's all play. . . .

The logician does not have to bother with mock thoughts, just as a physicist, who sets out to investigate thunder, will not pay any attention to stage-thunder. When we speak of thoughts . . . we mean thoughts proper, thoughts that are either true or false.²⁹

Two things are clear in this passage. First, it is reasonable to assume that what sets thoughts proper apart from mock thoughts is that while thoughts proper have truth values, mock thoughts lack truth values.³⁰ But if that is so, then that is the contrast we should be working with. Not, as Evans would have it, a contrast between "real thoughts" and "mock thoughts." And second, it is very clear that fiction does not belong with the sciences, and, presumably, the language of fiction that is a part of natural languages does not belong with the language of science.

The difference between thoughts proper and mock thoughts is that the former have truth values while the latter do not. Correspondingly, one might suspect that the difference between real proper names and mock proper names is that the former refer while the latter do not. That, in fact, seems to be Frege's view, as evident, for example, in a previous quote where he wrote that although "William Tell" is a mock proper name, we cannot deny its sense."³¹

In "On Sense and Reference," Frege gives a brief explanation of why we are sometimes content with using names that lack reference. The reason is that sometimes we are not concerned with truth values. Sometimes we are concerned with the feelings and the images aroused by the senses of the sentences, as when we are listening to an epic poem. Search for reference and truth would stand in the way of the aesthetic delight such work can arouse.

“Hence, it is a matter of no concern to us whether the name ‘Odysseus,’ for instance, has reference, so long as we accept the poem as a work of art.”³² Once again Frege is acknowledging sense without reference.

Evans’s third argument for claiming that Frege II accepted object-dependent propositions is the truth-value gap argument; namely, if Frege held the view that there are truth-value gaps, then if sentence *Fa* of a scientific language contains an empty name and expresses a proposition that is at least not definitely true, then it cannot be ruled out that the language contains a negation operator so that the negation of *Fa* is true. The quick reply to Evans is that Frege could agree that he cannot exclude the possibility of such an operator existing. But such an operator would not give the results Evans claims it does. If *Fa* is true then, presumably, *neg Fa* is false, and if *Fa* is false then, presumably, *neg Fa* would be true. But in case *Fa* lacks a truth value, which is something Frege thinks is a possibility, as does Evans’s reading of Frege, then it is reasonable to claim that *neg Fa* would also lack truth value.

This leaves Evans’s fourth argument, which states that Frege’s later work, such as “On Sense and Reference,” ought to be interpreted in light of the mature theory of meaning in his earlier works. I have motivated the sense/reference distinction and the shift in Frege’s theory in light of cognitive significance. But that, surely, is not a full account of Frege’s motivation for introducing the sense/reference distinction. Others have pointed to the importance of Frege’s attempts to reduce mathematics to logic and the prominent role Axiom V plays in the introduction of the distinction.³³

On the interpretation I have given of Frege, there is a development in his works that includes him rejecting his former view on semantics. In his earliest works, he is only concerned with syntax. He then supplements his early view with an account of the semantics of proper names according to which names contribute their reference to the thought expressed by the sentences in which they appear. At the same time, we see the precursor of a sense-reference distinction, as when he points out that reference to the same thing can be determined in different ways. Finally, his interest in semantics increased in his later works leading to his sense/reference distinction and with it a rejection of his former view of the semantics of proper names.

Any reading of Frege that interprets him as being only concerned with syntax in the *Begriffsschrift* or that infers that he turned his back on the semantic view he presented in *Function and Concept* (when supplementing and further developing the ideas in the *Begriffsschrift*) raises problems for Evans’s fourth argument. Given that some of the evidence for this reading of Frege, provided as direct quotes from Frege’s works, plainly contradicts Evans’s interpretation, we have to conclude that Evans’s interpretation of Frege is very implausible. We can therefore conclude that none of Evans’s reasons for the view that Frege accepted object-dependent propositions after introducing the sense/reference distinction hold.

INDIVIDUATING THOUGHTS: WIDE AND NARROW CONTENT

Given the results of the discussion, one has to wonder what motivates Evans and McDowell to introduce object-dependent propositions into Frege's framework. The reason, I believe, is the force with which the direct reference theory entered philosophy of language and with it the reintroduction of object-dependent singular propositions.

Frege had emphasized that a single entity, namely, thought, played the role of cognitive content *and* the role of truth-value bearer. Accordingly, he held that one could individuate a thought with either a cognitive-content criterion or a truth-conditional criterion. The advance of the direct reference theory introduced a different picture. In particular, Twin Earth-style thought experiments led many to argue that Frege's two criteria diverge. For example, if Ted is watching a cat on Earth and Twin-Ted (Ted's replica on Twin Earth) is watching a cat on Twin Earth (of course a precise replica of the Earth cat, this being Twin Earth), then their thoughts would have the same narrow content. If one were to examine the thoughts from inside their heads, their thoughts would be indistinguishable. In spite of that, their objects of thought are not the same due to Ted having beliefs about the cat on Earth while Twin-Ted has beliefs about the cat on Twin Earth, and thus two different animals figuring in the propositions that Ted and Twin-Ted believe. The natural conclusion to draw from this type of thought experiment is that Frege was wrong; it is not a single entity that played the role of cognitive content and the role of truth-value bearer. Instead we have a divergence; the cognitive-significance criterion individuated narrow content, or what is in the head, while the truth-conditional criterion individuated the object of thought.

The divergence view, the view that the cognitive-significance criterion and the truth-conditional criterion diverge in the way explained, is a serious deviation from Frege. At the same time, the Twin Earth arguments are powerful in showing that the objects our thoughts are about do play a role in individuating them. Evans and McDowell responded to these arguments by, unlike Frege, acknowledging the object dependence of our thoughts, while, like Frege, denying the divergence view. As a consequence, Evans and McDowell individuate a sense or a mode of presentation in part by the object that it is a sense of. While those who accept the divergence view can distinguish between narrow and wide contents, allowing them to say that Ted and Twin-Ted can have the same narrow content while having different wide contents, Evans and McDowell do not acknowledge that Ted and Twin-Ted have the same narrow contents. Their denial of the divergence view means that they do not admit to there being a narrow mode of presentation, a mode of presentation independent of reference.³⁴

It is hard to deny that we do think about Santa Claus, Pegasus, Zeus, and the Tooth Fairy, to name a few fictional characters, and one of the strengths of Frege's theory is that he can account for such thoughts within

his framework because we can have sense without reference. The advocates of the divergence view try to maintain Frege's insight when they separate the cognitive-significance criterion and the truth-conditional criterion, for that allows them to talk about narrow content (cognitive significance) even though the thought is not of an object (so it lacks truth conditions).

A consequence of Evans's and McDowell's interpretation of Frege is that if there is no object, there is no thought. The difficulty with this interpretation is brought out in the following example. Suppose that I am thirsty and tired in the desert and that I see an oasis in the distance. I form beliefs about the oasis, and my thoughts are of the oasis. My travel companion, Susan, is also tired and thirsty and is looking away from the oasis when she hallucinates an oasis. According to Evans and McDowell, since Susan is hallucinating an oasis, there is not an oasis thought in Susan's head: no object, hence no sense of an object, and hence no thought. But we have good reasons to believe that there is a considerable similarity between my thoughts and Susan's thoughts when it comes to an oasis. In particular, our behavior and our dispositions to behave will be affected in very similar ways, and we cannot explain that without talking about us having similar thoughts about an oasis.³⁵ For example, because I believe that there is an oasis in front of me, I am happy and relieved. Because Susan believes that there is an oasis in front of her, she too is happy and relieved. Because I believe that there is an oasis in front of me, I am disposed to head in that direction. Because Susan believes that there is an oasis in front of her, she is disposed to head in that direction. Because I believe that there is an oasis close by, I am disposed to quicken my steps, and so is Susan. Because I believe that I see an oasis, I am disposed to inform Susan that we can soon quench our thirst, and, because Susan believes that she sees an oasis, she is disposed to inform me that we can soon quench our thirst. In short, there is a strong functional and behavioral similarity between the two of us. Both of us have feelings and beliefs that are best explained by reference to our mental content, or with reference to our thoughts. And both of us have behavioral dispositions that are best explained with reference to our thoughts about an oasis.

There are therefore good reasons to believe that there are thoughts available in empty cases, like in Susan's case. Frege acknowledged that. Evans's and McDowell's interpretation of Frege gives us the improbable result that there are no thoughts in empty cases, thus giving up Frege's insight on the issue, and thus not allowing for a meaningful distinction between wide and narrow content.

We can conclude that Frege held that propositions are not object-dependent, but that they are instead composed of the senses of their parts. The sense of a name is a way of thinking about the object to which it refers. The sense of a predicate combines with the sense of a name, giving us the sense of a sentence. And the sense of sentence is a proposition. Fregean propositions thus have constituents, although their constituents are significantly different from the constituents of singular propositions. Further, Frege did

accept structured propositions, as do those who advocate structured Russellian propositions, or singular propositions. And finally, Frege did make a rather sharp distinction between ideas, which are subjective, and propositions, which are not subjective. Propositions, he suggested, are not objects, nor are they ideas. Instead, propositions occupy what he called “the third realm” and we “grasp” propositions when believing them. As such, Fregean propositions are not object-dependent, and they do not contain objects, unlike singular propositions. And finally, in Frege’s view, we can individuate propositions by noticing their cognitive significance. If the cognitive significance of Proposition *A* and Proposition *B* is different, then the propositions are different, and if there is a cognitive difference between believing that *A* and believing that *B*, then the propositions believed are different.

ADVANTAGES OF SINGULAR PROPOSITIONS

We have now looked at several prominent accounts of propositions, which differ significantly, and the discussion is not complete, as there are many more accounts of propositions that we have not addressed at all. Other accounts of propositions, especially enhanced singular propositions, will be addressed later, as they play an important role in the discussion on belief attributions.

There are two main reasons for claiming that sentences containing proper names express singular propositions. The first is driven by powerful intuitions behind the direct reference theory of names and indexicals. These intuitions are best employed in the works of Saul Kripke and Keith Donnellan. The main thesis of the theory is that the semantic values of names and indexicals are their referents. Once we accept that, and once we accept propositions, it seems evident that names and indexicals contribute the objects to which they refer to propositions expressed by sentences in which the names and indexicals occur. As a result, we have objects as constituents of propositions, which is one of the defining characteristics of singular propositions.³⁶

The second reason for claiming that there are singular propositions is of a rather different nature. In an example due to Scott Soames, consider the following sentence where “it” functions as a bound variable.

1. There is a planet such that the ancients believed, when they saw it in the morning, that it was only visible in the morning, and when they saw it in the evening, that it was only visible in the evening.

A semantic theory has to be able to account for the truth of what (1) expresses. We can easily do that if we say that the ancients bore the belief relation to singular propositions that we can represent as follows:

2. ⟨being visible only in the morning, Venus⟩

3. (being visible only in the evening, Venus)

The key is to note that (2) and (3) contain Venus itself rather than a mode of presentation of Venus. If the proposition contained a mode of presentation, then (1) could only express truth if the ancients thought of the planet under the same mode of presentation when they saw it in the morning as they did when they saw it in the evening. But they certainly did not do that. So, the way to account for the truth of what (1) expresses is to say that the propositions expressed by the embedded sentences in (1) are singular propositions.

What we can gather from these examples is that we have good intuitive support for there being singular propositions. But we also have good intuitive support for there being Fregean propositions. It suffices to give examples of belief ascriptions containing proper names. Consider the truth values to the propositions expressed by the following pairs of sentences:³⁷

- 4a. The ancients believed that Phosphorus was visible only in the morning.
- 4b. The ancients believed that Hesperus was visible only in the morning.
- 5a. The ancients believed that Hesperus is Hesperus.
- 5b. The ancients believed that Hesperus is Phosphorus.

The Fregean seems to have the right intuitions about these sentences. There is strong intuitive support for one being able to believe what is expressed by one of the embedded sentences without believing what is expressed by the other, so it seems possible, and even right, that (4a) is true while (4b) is false and that (5a) is true and (5b) false (i.e., that the pairs can have different truth values). The direct reference theorist has a difficult time with the pairs of sentences, as it appears that she has to hold that if (4a) is true, so is (4b), and if (5a) is true, so is (5b). So here, our intuitions clearly support the Fregean side, which allows the ancients to believe what is expressed by one of the embedded sentences in (4) and (5) without believing what is expressed by the other. The Fregeans, instead of letting the object referred to enter the proposition expressed, make the mode of presentation of the object designated semantically significant. Since the ancients assigned different (descriptive) modes of presentation to the names “Hesperus” and “Phosphorus,” presumably “the evening star” to “Hesperus” and “the morning star” to “Phosphorus,” the embedded sentences in (4) and (5) express different propositions.

There are several factors that have to be considered when deciding which account of propositions to accept. The strongest factor, though, is the ability of the relevant theory to deal with problems and puzzles. We have already encountered versions of most of the problems and puzzles that need to be dealt with. One of the main problems is how to account for the reference of names, and, as we have seen, the direct reference view grew out of a simple and persuasive account of reference, namely, the causal account of

reference. In fact, some neo-Fregeans accept a causal account of reference in favor of Frege's view that reference is mediated via content. What allows us to call them neo-Fregeans in spite of accepting causal accounts of reference is their approach to propositions. Much like Frege, they make the mode of presentation of an object a part of the proposition expressed. Doing so gives them a more fine-grained account of propositions than is available to those who advocate singular propositions, and so they can, for example, account for the different information value of identity statements such as "Kasparov is Kasparov" and "Kasparov is Weinstein" in a relatively straightforward way. But it is not clear how exactly one can build modes of presentation into propositions while still being able to account for some of our intuition, as there are difficulties that arise with the general neo-Fregean approach. Consider the following example, in which we assume that Lois thinks of Superman as hero and Lex thinks of him as a villain:

Lois believes that Superman can fly.
 Lex believes that Superman can fly.
 So, there is something that both Lois and Lex believe.

The inference seems good, and it certainly appears that we should say that Lois and Lex believe the same thing, or that they share a belief. But if modes of presentation are built into propositions, and Lois and Lex have different ways of representing Superman, namely, one represents him as a hero and the other as a villain, then it is hard to avoid the conclusion that once we flesh out what they believe the resulting propositions will turn out to be quite different, and Lois and Lex, despite appearances, do not share a belief or believe the same thing.

In what follows, I will strongly favor singular propositions over their competitors. Doing so invites a number of challenges, and one of the main goals in the remainder of this work is both to spell out some of the consequences of accepting the direct reference theory as well as singular propositions, and to try to solve some of the puzzles and problems that arise when doing so. At the same time, I do not want to be dogmatic about propositions. Fully conceptualized, or Fregean, propositions do play important roles in our cognitive schema, and it is important to recognize the role they play. Plainly put, we do sometimes think of objects under a description. When assessing the various puzzles and problems, it is possible that we should conclude that there is not a single account of propositions that provides a solution to all of them. To the purist, a unitary solution is preferable. But such a solution might not be the simplest one, and it might not account very well for some of the data we gather by looking at our cognitive makeup. We might find a parallel to this in the debate on whether we represent objects propositionally or imagistically. The answer that is likely to survive in that debate is that we do both, and that it depends to some extent on each individual how she represents objects.

One of the conclusions for which I will argue is that it is much more difficult to believe a singular proposition than is commonly assumed. I will argue that believing a singular proposition requires a certain kind of acquaintance with the object in the proposition. But that leaves many singular propositions, including propositions about distant historical figures, out of reach of belief. When assenting to these propositions, we nevertheless acquire a belief. We just do not acquire a belief of a singular proposition, and so we might have to resort to the resulting belief being one of a general proposition. Perhaps we have to face the same kind of solution when it comes to propositions as we seem to have found in the imagery debate, namely, that people represent objects in various ways, and how we represent objects might affect which, and even what kind, of a proposition we believe when assenting to a sentence.

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4 Reporting Attitudes

Attitude reports, and in particular belief reports, have been a focus of attention in the debate between direct reference theorists and description theorists. It complicates the debate between the two camps that those who accept direct reference have provided very different accounts of belief attribution, and so, even though they share the basic view of direct reference, there is often little agreement among them beyond that. I shall look at why attitude ascriptions have garnered so much attention and why there is so much disagreement about how to analyze attitude reports. I shall then discuss some of the more prominent attempts to account for attitude reports and their truth values.

FREGE ON ASCRIPTIONS

In his article, “On Sense and Reference,” Frege drew his distinction between the meaning of names and the reference of names and by doing so accounted for the difference in cognitive significance between statements containing different but codesignative names. He also pointed out in that article that, when sentences containing proper names are embedded in attitude contexts, they do not have their customary reference, namely, the True or the False. Instead they refer to their customary senses. Let us look at a familiar example to explain his account. In order to avoid complications, I will assume that we are not dealing with fictional characters but rather individuals as real as you and I. The example is that of Superman. Lois would sincerely assent to, and thus believe, that Superman has amazing powers, and she would dissent from, and thus not believe, that Clark Kent has amazing powers. It seems then that we could truly report Lois’s beliefs as follows:

1. Lois believes that Superman has amazing powers
- and
2. Lois does not believe that Clark Kent has amazing powers.

We seem to have strong intuitions to the effect that both (1) and (2) express truths.

Consider first what Frege would say about the embedded sentences if they were not embedded, namely,

3. Superman has amazing powers,

and

4. Clark Kent has amazing powers.

Frege tells us that the truth value of what (3) and (4) express depends on the reference of the terms, and so since the names “Superman” and “Clark Kent” have the same reference, both (3) and (4) express truths. But while the two sentences have the same truth value they differ in cognitive value. Frege’s theory explains that by stipulating that the names “Superman” and “Clark Kent” having different meanings. “Superman” might mean something like “the cool superhero” while “Clark Kent” might mean something like “the nerdy journalist,” and so the two names contribute very different meanings to the propositions expressed by the respective sentences.

It seems evident that Lois does believe that Superman has amazing powers, while she does not believe that Clark Kent has amazing powers, and so (1) and (2) appear to be true. Frege explains this by holding that a correct propositional attitude must indicate how an object is represented by the believer, that is, the propositional attitude must include the mode of presentation of the object. The customary meaning, or mode of presentation, of the name “Superman” is not the same as the customary meaning of the name “Clark Kent,” and that, Frege maintains, explains how it is that both (1) and (2) express truths. While the name “Superman” as it occurs in (3) refers to Clark Kent, the name as it occurs in (1) refers to the customary meaning of the name “Superman,” namely, something like “the cool superhero.” Similarly, the name “Clark Kent” as it occurs in (2) refers to the customary meaning of the name “Clark Kent,” namely, something like “the nerdy journalist.” The different reference of the two names as they occur in embedded contexts explains, according to Frege, how both (1) and (2) can express truths. The embedded sentences refer to different propositions. Frege’s way of accounting for our intuitions about the truth values of what (1) and (2) express is to make a mode of presentation a part of the truth conditions for the sentence in which the name occurs and this is a move that is repeated, with some variations, by neo-Fregeans.

The key to Frege’s treatment of embedded sentences is how the reference of names changes when they occur within the scope of attitude verbs. Outside of such contexts, they refer to their customary referents, but

when occurring within the scope of attitude verbs, they do not refer to their customary referent. Instead they refer to their customary meaning (or customary sense). It is precisely because (3) and (4) differ in meaning and so express different propositions that (1) and (2) do not differ in truth value.

Frege's account of embedded sentences and the reference of the names that occur in them faces some telling difficulties. Consider the following sentence:

5. Jack and Jill both became lawyers, and Jack believes that she passed the bar first.

Here it seems natural to read "she" as being anaphoric on "Jill" (i.e., "she" picks up the reference of "Jill"). It does not seem to be the case that "she" refers to any particular mode of presentation of Jill or a customary sense of the name "Jill." But if this is so, then it runs contrary to Frege's view that a referring term refers to its customary sense when occurring in attitude context. Of course the Fregean is not without resources. For example, she might point out that (5) and (6) express the same proposition and have the same truth value.

6. Jack and Jill both became lawyers, and Jack believes that Jill passed the bar first.

Further, the Fregean might claim that in (6), "Jill" refers to its customary sense, and so, in spite of appearances, "she" refers to that same customary sense in (5). But the difficulty is not avoided, as the following example, due to Scott Soames, shows.

7. Venus is such that the ancients believed, when they saw it in the morning, that it was only visible in the morning, and when they saw it in the evening, that it was only visible in the evening.

Here the most natural way to understand the word "it" is to claim that it is anaphoric on "Venus" and so "it" refers to whatever "Venus" refers to, that is, "it" picks up the reference of "Venus." But notice how Frege's view blocks that understanding. Given Frege's understanding, "it," as it occurs in (7), should refer to the customary sense of "Venus." But that clearly seems to give us an unnatural and wrong reading of the sentence, as it entails that the ancients thought of Venus under the same mode of presentation when they saw it in the morning as they did when they saw it in the evening.

To further compound Frege's difficulty consider sentence (8) where "it" functions as a bound variable.

8. There is a planet such that the ancients believed, when they saw it in the morning, that it was only visible in the morning, and when they saw it in the evening, that it was only visible in the evening.

A semantic theory has to be able to account for the truth of what (8) expresses. We can easily do that if we say that the ancients bore the belief relation to the singular propositions that contain Venus and the property of being visible only in the morning on the one hand, and Venus and the property of being visible only in the evening on the other hand. The key is to note that the singular propositions contain Venus itself rather than a mode of presentation of Venus. If the proposition contained a mode of presentation, then (8) could only express truth if the ancients thought of the planet under the same mode of presentation when they saw it in the morning as they did when they saw it in the evening. But they certainly did not do that. So, the way to account for the truth of what (8) expresses is to say that the propositions expressed by the embedded sentences in (8) are singular propositions.

Finally, we can generate similar problems without relying on anaphoric chains. Suppose that I utter the following:

9. Peter believes that I will live a relatively long life.

My use of “I” does not seem to indicate in any way how Peter thinks of me or how Peter represents me. Instead the word’s role seems only to be to single me out as the object of Peter’s belief.

Considerations such as these have led many to the doctrine of semantic innocence, namely, the view that referring expressions refer to the same objects when embedded within attitude contexts as they do when not so embedded. It appears that giving up semantic innocence, as Frege does, leads to difficulties. The term “semantic innocence” comes from Donald Davidson who introduced it in the following way:

If we could but recover our pre-Fregean semantic innocence, I think it would be plainly incredible that the words “the earth moves,” uttered after the words “Galileo said that,” mean anything different, or refer to anything else, than is their wont when they come in other environments. Language is the instrument it is because the same expression, with semantic features (meaning) unchanged, can serve countless purposes.¹

It seems like the doctrine of semantic innocence is plausible in addition to having great intuitive appeal. Davidson’s insight that the language is as powerful as it is due to terms having a fixed meaning seems right. One would not, and should not, expect that names and other singular terms change their meaning due to the syntactic context in which they occur. A theory that gives up semantic innocence seems to violate some basic notions that we have about natural languages and how they work. Nevertheless, Frege

gave up semantic innocence for a reason. Giving up semantic innocence allows him to account for our intuition that reports containing embedded sentences, reports such as (1) and (2), have the same truth value. There is no denying that we do have these intuitions, and so we need to deal with them somehow. Once we accept semantic innocence, we have a difficult problem on our hands, and that is how we can account for our pretheoretical intuitions regarding sentences (1) and (2) that Frege dealt with by giving up semantic innocence.

We should note one more simple but telling problem with Frege's view when applied to natural languages. When occurring in embedded contexts, referring expressions, in Frege's view, refer to their *customary* sense. But apart from some "famous names" cases, it seems clear that names do not have a customary sense. A couple of examples should make this point clear as well as further difficulties that arise once we acknowledge a lack of customary sense.

First, suppose that my son, Atli, goes over some of Kasparov's games without knowing very much about Kasparov. His only connection with Kasparov is the games he views, and all he knows about Kasparov is that he is a chess player who played the games. Later, in the presence of Kasparov, I point at the chess player and say, "My son believes that he, Kasparov, is a creative player." Two points should be clear: first, my demonstration does not indicate how my son represents Kasparov, and second, given my son's limited exposure to Kasparov it is very unlikely that he could point him out or even tell him apart from Ivanchuk, another creative player. Given this, it seems clear that whatever mode of presentation I introduce with my use of "he" and "Kasparov," that mode of presentation does not need to match my son's representation of Kasparov.

Second, now that you know that I have a son named Atli, then what is the customary sense of the name "Atli"? It seems evident that I, my wife, his sister, my brother, and the various friends he has represent Atli in different ways. Some think of him primarily as my son, some think of him as a student, some think of him as a soccer player, some think of him as a swimmer, etc.; and they represent him accordingly. To claim that there is a customary sense associated with Atli's name, or most other natural language names, seems to be wrong. How people represent each other, and how people represent objects in general, depends to a large extent on how they are acquainted with them, and that varies greatly from person to person depending on various factors. The former world champion Anatoly Karpov from whom Kasparov won the world title, no doubt represents Kasparov very differently than does Atli. And Kasparov's mother who nurtured him and who has been a constant supporter represents Kasparov differently than either Atli or Karpov. For one, she is the only one of the three who knows Kasparov outside of chess circles.

If referring expressions, and names in particular, do not have a customary sense, then that creates problems for Frege's theory. Instead of referring to

a name's customary sense, we now need to introduce *variable reference* to account for the *variable sense* that names have. But if we do that, then the reference of a name occurring in an embedded sentence changes depending upon whose attitude I am reporting. The name "Kasparov" would have one reference, or refer to one sense, when I report Atli's belief that Kasparov is creative, and it would have a different reference, or refer to a different sense, when I report Karpov's belief that Kasparov is creative, and it would have to refer to one additional sense when I report Putin's belief that Kasparov is creative (Putin knowing Kasparov primarily as a political activist). But this has the unwelcome consequence that since I rarely know how people represent other people and objects, I do not know what I am referring to when I report their beliefs and attitudes.²

The problem becomes particularly acute when I report the beliefs of both Putin and Karpov, as when I report that both Putin and Karpov believe that Kasparov is creative. I am reporting a belief that Putin and Karpov supposedly share. But since they have different ways of representing Kasparov, it does not seem that Frege's account can deal with this case. It seems that "Kasparov" as it occurs in the embedded sentence has a single reference. But if we accept the variable reference account and do not accept semantic innocence, then "Kasparov" cannot have a single reference in the context, since I am reporting the beliefs of people who have different ways of representing Kasparov, and so "Kasparov" needs to refer to both of those modes of presentation. To make matters worse, since I do not know how Putin and Karpov represent Kasparov, there is a strong sense in which I do not know what I am referring to if we accept Frege's take on attitude reports. Instead, I am referring to their representations, whatever they are. But that seems wrong, because it seems right that I know perfectly well what I am reporting. The simple way out of this quandary appears to be to accept semantic innocence. If we do that, then I do know what I am referring to when reporting Putin's and Kasparov's beliefs, and it is only a single object, namely, the object itself. I am referring to Kasparov and not a representation of him.

NAÏVE RUSSELLIANISM

The sharpest contrast with Frege's view is that of the naïve Russellian, or the Millian. The basic elements of naïve Russellianism are simple enough. The naïve Russellian thinks, first of all, that "belief" is a two-place predicate, relating persons and propositions, and so she also believes that the objects of beliefs and belief attributions are propositions. The name or indexical contributes the individual it refers to in a given context to the proposition expressed by the sentence in which it occurs, and a predicate contributes to the proposition a property or a relation. The proposition expressed by a simple sentence containing a name or an indexical is a singular proposition, consisting of an object and a property. The singular proposition expressed by the sentence

3. Superman has amazing powers

can be represented as follows:

10. ⟨Superman, having amazing powers⟩.

Since the naïve Russellian accepts semantic innocence, embedded sentences, such as those appearing in belief contexts, express the same proposition as they do when not embedded.

It is a consequence of naïve Russellianism that two different but coreferential names contribute, in suitable contexts, the same individual to the proposition expressed by the relevant sentences. Since “Superman” and “Clark Kent” refer to the same person in sentences (3) and (4),

3. Superman has amazing powers

and

4. Clark Kent has amazing powers

express the same proposition. That proposition can be represented as

10. ⟨Superman, having amazing powers⟩

or as

11. ⟨Clark Kent, having amazing powers⟩.

Since (10) and (11) contain the same objects and properties that are ordered in the same way, the two sentences express the same singular proposition.

The main objection to naïve Russellianism when it comes to belief ascriptions is that the view seems very counterintuitive, and, as some claim, it downright seems to give us the wrong results. The problem arises due to the nature of propositions that the naïve Russellian accepts together with semantic innocence.

Consider

1. Lois believes that Superman has amazing powers

and

12. Lois believes that Clark Kent has amazing powers.

According to naïve Russellianism, if (1) expresses a truth, then so does (12) because the embedded sentences in (1) and (12) express the same proposition. But, the objection goes, surely Lois does not believe that Clark Kent

has amazing powers. We know that she believes that Superman has amazing powers. But it seems intuitively evident, given the story of Superman and Lois's relationship with Clark Kent, that, while (1) expresses a truth, (12) expresses a falsehood. This objection to naïve Russellianism is frequently stated with knowledge claims instead of belief claims, and our intuitions might be shocked to a greater degree when it is so stated. It seems clear that Lois knows that Superman has amazing powers, and at the same time it seems equally clear that she does not know that Clark Kent has amazing powers. Naïve Russellianism's account of belief reports, its opponents argue, clearly runs against our intuitions about the truth values of such reports. Let us call the problem we face here the multiple belief problem.

The problem is further amplified when we consider that, while Lois sincerely assents to

3. Superman has amazing powers,

and so believes that Superman has amazing powers, she claims that

4. Clark Kent has amazing powers

is false, and so believes that Clark Kent does not have amazing powers. So,

13. Lois believes that Clark Kent does not have amazing powers

seems true. Given that Lois is fully rational, is attentive to her beliefs, and would not accept inconsistent beliefs, the naïve Russellian view again seems to give us results that run counter to our intuitions. While this problem is similar in nature to the multiple belief problem, we will distinguish the two by calling the latter the consistency problem. So, while the multiple belief problem focuses on how one apparently comes to believe the same proposition twice over without realizing it, the consistency problem focuses on how one comes to believe a proposition and its negation while being fully attentive to one's beliefs and without detecting any inconsistency in one's beliefs.

Given the counterintuitive results of naïve Russellianism, there have been a number of attempts to circumvent the problems. Some such attempts accept the very course-grained singular propositions as objects of beliefs and try to avoid the problems facing the naïve Russellian in various ways. Nathan Salmon suggests that our intuitions about belief reports are systematically wrong and that we should explain our mistaken intuitions in terms of how we fail to distinguish the semantic content of an utterance and its pragmatic implicature. John Perry and Mark Crimmins, following Steven Schiffer, develop a view that treats "belief" as a three-place relation instead of a binary relation, relating a person, a proposition, and an "unarticulated constituent" of the proposition. Mark Richard gives up singular

propositions as being the contents of belief reports in favor of more fine-grained propositions, namely Russellian Annotated Matrixes. I will look at some of these prominent theories below.

THE PRAGMATIC IMPLICATURE ACCOUNT

Nathan Salmon has advocated the view that we, ordinary speakers, systematically confuse the semantic content of an utterance with its pragmatic implicature. The idea of pragmatic implicature can to an extent be explained with an example.

Consider the following two sentences:

Ralph took the medication and got better.
Ralph got better and took the medication.

Many ordinary speakers would claim that the two sentences say different things and that both sentences cannot be true. They have the intuition that if the first sentence is true, then the second has to be false. To explain these intuitions we can resort to pragmatic implicature and say that ordinary speakers are likely to understand the first of the two sentences as such:

Ralph took the medication and then got better

(i.e., they understand the sentence in a way that implies a temporal sequence; namely, *first* he took the medication and *following that* he got better). While this might not be the semantic meaning of the sentence, someone who utters the sentence pragmatically implicates that there is a temporal sequence.

The semantic part of Salmon's account includes the view that a belief report is true if the believer stands in the belief relation to the singular proposition expressed by the embedded sentence in the belief report. Salmon accepts direct reference and that simple sentences express singular propositions, namely, structured propositions made up of individuals and properties. Singular propositions, according to Salmon, are believed *in a way*. For example, Lois believes the proposition expressed by (3) and (4)

3. Superman has amazing powers
4. Clark Kent has amazing powers

in different ways, and so assents to (3) while not assenting to (4). While the belief relation is a binary relation that holds between a person and a proposition, it can be analyzed into an existential generalization of a three-place relation, BEL, which involves a believer, a proposition, and a guise under which the proposition is apprehended. Since believing is an existential generalization of the BEL relation, the believer apprehends the proposition that

she accepts under a guise. On Salmon's account, guises are not part of the semantic content of belief ascriptions and belief reports.³

Salmon has only provided a sketch of what might be conveyed or implicated by a belief report. The two following sentences

1. Lois believes that Superman has amazing powers

and

12. Lois believes that Clark Kent has amazing powers

have the same semantic content, and so are analyzed as follows.

1[^]. There is a guise, x , such that Lois grasps *that Superman has amazing powers* by means of x and BEL(Lois, *that Superman has amazing powers*, x).

12[^]. There is a guise, x , such that Lois grasps *that Clark Kent has amazing powers* by means of x and BEL(Lois, *that Clark Kent has amazing powers*, x).

However, given that Lois assents to (3) and not (4), the relevant guise operating in (1) and (12) differ. Given this, sentence (1) and sentence (12) pragmatically implicate different propositions. The utterance of (1) pragmatically implicates something like the following:

1*. Lois believes that Superman has amazing powers under a guise like "Superman has amazing powers"

while the utterance of (12) pragmatically implicates something like

12*. Lois believes that Superman has amazing powers under a guise like "Clark Kent has amazing powers."

Because of the pragmatically implicated propositions, listeners will likely mistake the proposition expressed by (1*) for the one expressed by (1), and they will likely mistake the proposition expressed by (12*) for the one expressed by (12). Sentences (1*) and (12*) show the three-place BEL relation and what the relation might plausibly be, while the original sentences, namely (1) and (12), only show the two-place belief relation. Consequently, the implicated propositions include guises, or ways in which the original proposition is believed. While the guises in the implicated propositions are not carefully specified, for explanatory purposes they can reasonably be understood as being something like sentences, and the implicatures can reasonably be understood as being something like the implicatures exemplified above. Given that Lois believes the proposition under different guises, or in

different ways, she can come to believe the proposition twice over, not realizing the second time around that she already believes the proposition, albeit under a different guise. These different ways of believing the proposition are then implicated in a belief report.

Similarly, if (1) is true, that is, if Lois believes that Superman has amazing powers, then she might nevertheless dissent from (4), which says that Clark Kent has amazing powers. That is, at the same time, it seems true that

1. Lois believes that Superman has amazing powers

and

13. Lois does not believe that Clark Kent has amazing powers.

That is, she both believes, and withholds belief from the same proposition at the same time without detecting that she does so even when carefully attending to her beliefs. The explanation, as before, is that she believes the proposition under a different guise the second time around.

Salmon claims that (1) and (12) have the same truth value. The reason that we wrongly think that they do not have the same truth value is that we mistake the proposition implicated for the proposition expressed, that is, instead of taking the content of the belief report to be captured by (1), we take it to be captured by (12*), namely, the sentence that includes the third relata. Further, he claims that (1) and (13) cannot both be true. The reason we think that both can be true is, again, because we confuse the propositions believed with pragmatically implicated propositions.

Salmon's account, then, when simplified, is that the semantic account of naïve Russellianism is correct. He deals with the multiple belief problem and the consistency problem as they arise in the contexts of belief reports by providing an explanation that relies on pragmatic implicature. The multiple belief problem and the consistency problem are explained by Salmon's telling us that ordinary speakers systematically confuse a proposition expressed by an utterance and a proposition implicated by an utterance, mistaking one for the other.

As with some of the accounts to be discussed, I am not sure that there is a way to soundly refute Salmon's theory. Still, we should consider how plausible his theory is and whether it is a reasonable account of belief reports. When evaluating the accounts of belief reports, we should keep in mind that we are dealing with belief reports of ordinary language users and that we are trying to explain some of the intuitions of ordinary language users.

The main criticism of Salmon's theory is that it does not seem to capture what really goes on when ordinary people report beliefs. There are several ways to bring this out. First, it seems clear that, even if the account applies to some belief reports, it does not serve as a comprehensive treatment of belief reports of ordinary speakers. In most situations, when I report beliefs, I am

not very concerned with how the one whose belief I am reporting thinks of the object in the proposition, or how the person believes the proposition. In most situations, my main concern when reporting beliefs is to make sure that I accurately convey the singular proposition believed; that is, my main concern is that I convey who or what I am talking about and what property is attributed to that object. Consider Samuel, who has no training in philosophy, and who tells me that Travis believes that G. W. Bush's foreign policy was shortsighted. As is the case with most belief reports, it is of little concern to him or me how Travis represents Bush or in what way Travis believes the relevant proposition. As is the case with most belief reports, Samuel is getting some very basic information across. He is just telling me that Travis thinks that Bush's foreign policy was shortsighted. What is of importance is what proposition Travis believes and not how he believes it.

The point is brought out again when we consider historical cases. When I report that Hannibal, an old Roman, believed that Carthage should be destroyed, then what I am doing is communicating the propositional content of Hannibal's belief. My concern, and my listener's concern, is not with the way in which Hannibal believed the proposition. In fact, I do not have any way of finding out in what way Hannibal believed the proposition in spite of me easily being able to report his belief. My intention when uttering belief reports need not be anything but to communicate the proposition believed.

Another issue that arises when we consider Salmon's theory has to do with the implicature itself. If Samuel is told that his report implicated something like "Travis believes that G. W. Bush's foreign policy is shortsighted under a guise like 'G. W. Bush's foreign policy is shortsighted,'" then he would probably be taken by surprise. In all likelihood, he would not know about the implicature, and if we were able to convince him that there is an implicature involved, he would in all likelihood not recognize it.

The example of Hannibal and the report of his belief raises a related concern. Remember that we captured Lois's apparent different attitudes towards (3) and (4) by introducing guises. Since it seems that the substitution of the name "Clark Kent" for the name "Superman" is the only salient difference in the relevant sentences, we suggested that the different guises are linguistic in nature. Hence, we got (1*) and (12*). But if we claim that guises are linguistic in nature as suggested, then it seems next to impossible to report some attitudes. Sometimes our belief reports involve translations from another language. Given the difference between English and Hannibal's native language, it is unlikely that Hannibal himself, were he to listen in on me reporting his beliefs, would accept my belief report of his attitude towards Carthage as being correct. In fact, he would not understand any of what I said he believed. On Salmon's account, an explanation of Hannibal's rejection of my report would appeal to a pragmatically implicated proposition. My report of Hannibal believing that Carthage should be destroyed might implicate something like the following:

14. Hannibal believed that Carthage should be destroyed under a guise like “Carthage should be destroyed.”

Surely Hannibal did not believe the proposition under this guise, since he does not speak English. Hannibal would perhaps accept my report as being accurate if the pragmatic implicature was something like the following:

15. There is a translation of “Carthage should be destroyed” into Hannibal’s language such that Hannibal would sincerely have assented to that sentence.

But there are reasons to doubt that this is a correct explanation of how to understand the report. One reason for doing so is that (15) drops the inclusion of guises that are supposed to do the heavy lifting on Salmon’s account.

Finally, it does not seem to be the case that ordinary speakers are aware that they are pragmatically implicating anything, let alone anything of the sort Salmon suggests. Ordinary speakers are aware of people representing objects in various ways or thinking of objects in various ways, and they often seem to be sensitive to these ways, whatever they might be, in their reports. But ordinary speakers do not seem to couch ways of believing as they manifest themselves in belief reports in terms of implicated propositions. When presented with a simplified version of Salmon’s account, his way of explaining what is going on does not seem familiar to ordinary speakers. That is, when one suggests to ordinary speakers that their belief reports carry with them implicatures of the kind Salmon suggests, there is little or no sense of recognition. When an ordinary speaker reports that Travis believes that G. W. Bush’s foreign policy is shortsighted, she does not think that another proposition is pragmatically implicated indicating how Travis holds the belief in question. The implicature account of belief reports simply does not seem to ring true to the ordinary user.

There is, of course, a simple reply to the objection. We can point at, for example, the physical explanations of our thought processes and claim that, just as the ordinary speaker does not recognize Salmon’s account of belief reports when presented with it, the ordinary thinker does not recognize a correct physical account of thinking when presented with it. But there is a disanalogy here, for while the physical account of thinking is a microphysical account of what goes on when we think, and as such is hidden from the ordinary thinker, Salmon’s account is of what the speaker means when reporting beliefs. It seems reasonable to assume that a speaker should recognize what she meant when presented with it. Sometimes speakers mean something other than what they literally say, such as when they make a sarcastic comment, and when they do so, they typically recognize the implicated proposition when presented with it. The fact that they do not recognize the proposition that is implicated according to Salmon’s theory when

presented with it indicates that Salmon did not get the account of belief reports of ordinary people right.

Given these difficulties with the pragmatic implicature account, we should look at a different way of dealing with belief reports—one that also accepts singular propositions as being the objects of belief and views the belief relation as being a binary relation.

DESCRIPTIVELY ENRICHED BELIEFS AND ASSERTIONS

Scott Soames has developed an account of beliefs and belief ascriptions that builds on Salmon's idea that we can believe singular propositions in different ways. In one of his recent books, he develops an account of belief reports. He later adds to that a more detailed account of ways of believing.⁴ There is a lot to like about Soames's approach, including that he aims at providing an account that explains our ant substitution intuitions in both belief reports and simple sentences, that is, sentences that are not embedded and that express singular propositions.

Consider an identity sentence, such as "Hempel was Hempel." The sentence expresses a singular proposition that we represent as follows:

16. <<Hempel, Hempel>, identity>.

Different ways of thinking of the object in the proposition, namely Hempel, can give rise to one entertaining the proposition in different ways. Soames suggests that thinking about Hempel as a famous philosopher, or as a neighbor, allows one to entertain (16) by understanding (17a) and (17b) and reflecting on the propositions that they express:

17a. My neighbor, Peter Hempel, was my neighbor, Peter Hempel.

17b. The famous philosopher Carl Hempel was the famous philosopher Carl Hempel.

If I first think about Hempel as my neighbor Peter Hempel, and then as the famous philosopher Carl Hempel, then I may also entertain (16) by thinking about (17c), namely,

17c. My neighbor, Peter Hempel, was the famous philosopher, Carl Hempel.

An interesting consequence of this is that, while (16) is, on Soames's account, trivial and uninformative, (17c) is informative and not trivial. Each of these sentences express propositions, Soames claims, that are a descriptive enrichment of the proposition expressed by (16), and in entertaining each of these propositions, we are also entertaining the proposition expressed by

(16). Since the three different ways of entertaining the proposition expressed by (16) carry with them different descriptive contents, each of the propositions has different cognitive significance. While Soames suggests that it is possible that there may be ways of believing propositions without them involving descriptive enrichments, he also maintains that it is possible that there is no way of entertaining (16) without entertaining, implicitly or explicitly, some descriptive enrichment of it.

Soames's main question concerns what proper names contribute to the semantic contents of propositions expressed by the sentences that contain those names. Soames divides names into linguistically simple names and partially descriptive names. Examples of the former are "Microsoft," "Seattle," and "Hempel," while "Queen Elizabeth," "Princeton University," "Professor Saul Kripke," and "New York City" are examples of partially descriptive names. Linguistically simple names are purely Millian in that their semantic contents are their referents and the semantic contents of sentences containing them are singular propositions. The semantics of partially descriptive names are complexes consisting of their referents as well as properties predicated of the referents. That is, the semantic content includes both the object referred to and a descriptive property that is associated with the object. Interestingly, linguistically simple names, such as "Hesperus" and "Phosphorus," are not partially descriptive, and so the difference in informativeness between "Hesperus is Hesperus" and "Hesperus is Phosphorus" cannot be explained in terms of partially descriptive names.

While linguistically simple names contribute only their referents to propositions expressed by sentences in which they occur, such sentences can, according to Soames, be used to convey and assert different propositions in different contexts. Sentence (18) can be used to assert and convey various propositions, including those semantically expressed by (19a)–(19c):

- 18. Peter Hempel taught at Princeton University.
- 19a. The philosopher, Peter Hempel, taught at Princeton University.
- 19b. My neighbor, Peter Hempel, taught at Princeton University.
- 19c. The man standing over there, Peter Hempel, taught at Princeton University.

What enables the speaker to assert and convey (19a)–(19c) when uttering (18) is the conversational background, including shared presuppositions of the conversational participants and the context of the conversation. In each case, the descriptive proposition is a modest descriptive enrichment of the singular proposition expressed by (18), and Soames claims that, since in each case the singular proposition is the common core of what is asserted by (18) across normal contexts, and since the proposition expressed by (18) is a trivial consequence of the enriched proposition, it counts as being asserted even though the enriched proposition may be the focus of the conversational participants.

Attitude ascriptions, where (18) is embedded under attitude verbs, receive similar treatment. Depending on the context, an utterance of (20) may result in the assertion of (21a)–(21c):

- 20. Susan believes that Peter Hempel taught at Princeton University.
- 21a. Susan believes that the philosopher, Peter Hempel, taught at Princeton University.
- 21b. Susan believes that my neighbor, Peter Hempel, taught at Princeton University.
- 21c. Susan believes that the man standing over there, Peter Hempel, taught at Princeton University.

Soames also uses the distinction between bare singular propositions and the descriptively enriched propositions that a sentence expressing a singular proposition may be used to assert to explain how the Millian can account for antisubstitution intuitions. Consider

- 22. Peter Hempel was Carl Hempel

and

- 23. Carl Hempel was Carl Hempel.

Even though the two sentences express the same proposition, the sentences can be, and sometimes are, used to assert or convey different descriptively enriched propositions in different contexts, explaining the intuition that they differ in cognitive value. A similar story explains our intuitions about my utterances of

- 24. Susan believes that Peter Hempel was Carl Hempel

and

- 25. Susan believes that Carl Hempel was Carl Hempel.

While the semantic content of the embedded sentences is a singular proposition, the sentences can be used to assert descriptively enhanced propositions. It is this mechanism of descriptive enhancement that explains our antisubstitution intuitions. It provides an explanation as to why we sometimes think that substitution of coreferential names changes the cognitive significance of the resulting sentences, as well as why we sometimes believe that such substitution fails to preserve truth value.

Soames's account suffers from some of the same problems as does Salmon's view. That is not very surprising since Soames's account is compatible with Salmon's account, even though there are some significant differences in

the detail. Like Salmon, Soames relies on pragmatic mechanisms to explain many of our antisubstitution intuitions. It seems therefore that some of the critical comments that apply to Salmon also apply to Soames. In particular, it is evident that ordinary speakers would not recognize Soames's account as applying to them. If an ordinary speaker, someone untutored in the nuances of the semantics of proper names and pragmatic implicatures, utters something like (18), then it is very unlikely that she will agree to having asserted (19a)–(19c) as well.

There are other reasons as well to question Soames's account. According to Soames, your intuition that (24) can be false while (25) is true is to be explained by your confusing the semantic content of the propositions, namely, the embedded singular proposition, with the semantic content of some descriptively enhanced propositions that one uses (24) to assert, or some descriptively enhanced propositions that are asserted or conveyed along with an utterance of (24). Supposing that you are well versed in linguistics and supposing that you are very careful about not confusing one proposition with another, it appears to me that you could nevertheless accept (25) as true while denying the truth of (24). But, if Soames's theory is correct, then, since you have eliminated the element of confusion, you should realize that (24), just as (25), expresses a true proposition. It thus seems that Soames has not located the source of the problem and, hence, has not explained away our antisubstitution intuitions.

Consider further that one can assert (24) and (25) without by doing so intending to assert, or convey, or suggest, different sentences or propositions. Perhaps the point is best brought out when one considers that when I utter (24), I need not be committed to any descriptive content you might think (24) asserts or conveys, and I need not be committed to any descriptive content at all. One can understand the utterances of (24) and (25) in different ways without that understanding involving different propositions with different descriptive contents. Since Soames questions the possibility of entertaining a singular proposition without also entertaining a descriptive enhancement of it, he would be hard-pressed to acknowledge that possibility. While I agree that one often has a reason to prefer uttering either (24) or (25), for they certainly do convey different information (in most contexts), the difference in information does not need to be couched in different descriptive sentences. Since I think that it is reasonable to believe that one can represent objects, for example, pictorially, the difference in information between two uttered sentences might lie in different pictorial information that is elicited from the listener and not in different descriptive content. I will discuss this option in greater detail later. By specifying that one needs to account for the multiple belief problem in terms of asserting descriptively enhanced sentences and believing descriptively enhanced propositions, Soames has limited his view to linguistic components, and such a limitation does not seem warranted. As we have already seen, an account that relies on a linguistic approach to the problem of substitution

is too narrow. We have seen that the multiple belief problem as well as the problem of information content can be raised without relying on names, and so a solution to the problem that relies on linguistic items is, at best, only a partial solution.

HIDDEN INDEXICALS AND UNARTICULATED CONSTITUENTS

One of the underlying assumptions of naïve Russellianism is that it accepts the principle of full articulation, namely, that the proposition expressed by a sentence is a function of the semantic values of its parts and the logical form of the sentence. Not everyone agrees with this principle, especially when applied to belief reports. One way to deal with the counterintuitive consequences of naïve Russellianism when it comes to belief reports is to reject the principle of full articulation.⁵ The resulting view is aptly called a hidden indexical view—*hidden* because there is a reference to constituents that are not articulated by any expression in the belief report, and *indexical* because what it is that is referred to can change depending on both the sentence used and the context of utterance.

The idea of unarticulated constituents and hidden indexicals is reasonable in many contexts. One way to introduce and motivate hidden indexical accounts is to point out how they seem to occur in familiar examples. One can reasonably claim that the following contain hidden indexicals:

It is raining.
 Marcus is fast.
 Steven has finished.

In each of these cases, something seems left out. Where is it raining? Relative to what is Marcus fast, and what is he fast at doing? And what has Steven finished? In each case, there is a tacit reference to an additional argument that completes what is expressed. Because there is no indexical in “it is raining” to indicate where it is raining the proponents of the hidden indexical view claim that there is an unarticulated constituent in the expressed proposition. The fully articulated sentence might read as “it is raining here.” The same idea is applied to belief reports.

Advocates of the hidden indexical view hold that the belief relation in belief reports is a three-place relation and not a two-place relation. The relevant relata are a believer, a proposition, and a mode of presentation of the proposition (i.e., the way in which the person believes the proposition). We thus have a belief relation $B(a, p, m)$ where a stands for a person, p for a proposition, and m for a mode of presentation of the proposition. The proposition believed is a singular proposition, and the mode of presentation of the proposition is what Salmon calls the way in which the proposition is believed.

At this point we should not try to specify what counts as a mode of presentation. There is more than one account of modes of presentation that the

hidden indexical theorists have suggested and developed. We can initially say this much: the mode of presentation is determined by how the believer represents the constituents in the singular proposition believed, that is, how the believer represents the object and the property in the proposition. One way to understand the notion of a mode of presentation is functional, namely, a mode of presentation of an object or a property is whatever plays a role in determining a propositional mode of presentation. Further, a propositional mode of presentation is whatever plays the relevant role in belief attributions. Usually the nature of what plays this role is left unspecified, although Mark Crimmins, who is one of the champions of the hidden indexical account, does give us some insights into the possible nature of modes of presentation. In his view, they are concrete cognitive particulars and not just belief types or Fregean modes of presentation. Beyond this, Crimmins does not commit himself to any particular account of the nature of mental representation. He calls representations of individuals “notions” and representations of properties and relations “ideas” and leaves the details of notions and ideas unspecified.

According to the hidden indexical view, when we report beliefs, we are, quite literally, talking about ways of believing in addition to relating what proposition is believed. Crimmins writes,

When we utter a belief sentence, we are talking about an agent’s ideas and notions, and these notions and ideas become unarticulated constituents of what we say. . . . What we claim is that the agent believes a certain proposition in a way such that certain ideas and notions are responsible for representing certain constituents of the proposition.⁶

The idea here is to preserve the Fregean insight that we can and do communicate details about how we represent objects and propositions. However, there is a problem with the way that the hidden indexical account does this.

Given that ways of believing are typically hidden from everyone but the believer, a question that arises is how we can successfully communicate ways of believing. The best avenue for the hidden indexical theorist, and one Crimmins follows, is to resort to implicature. We judge what the intended reference is based on context and circumstance of the utterance, as well as on the assumption that the speaker wants to be truthful and relevant. For example, there is a somewhat typical representation of Clark Kent as Superman, and a somewhat typical representation of Clark Kent as Clark Kent. By using the appropriate names, we tacitly refer to the relevant representations.

We now have enough information about the hidden indexical account to look at a report of Lois’s belief regarding Clark Kent’s having amazing powers. According to the hidden indexical view, assuming that we are working with singular propositions as objects of beliefs, the belief report might be understood as follows:

Lois believes that Superman has amazing powers under a guise like “Superman has amazing powers.”

But this is (1*), which is what was implicated in Salmon’s view. If this is a legitimate understanding of the belief report, then what is the difference between the hidden indexical view and Salmon’s pragmatic implicature view? The salient difference between the two views is that in Salmon’s view, the way of believing the relevant proposition is not relevant to the truth conditions of the belief report itself; it is only relevant to the truth conditions of the implicated proposition that we mistake for the belief report. According to the hidden indexical view, on the other hand, the way of believing the proposition enters the truth conditions of the belief report itself. That is, the way of believing is semantically significant in the hidden indexical account while it is not so in Salmon’s view. While (1*) is a proposition that is pragmatically implicated in Salmon’s account, it is the proposition expressed by the belief report of the hidden indexical view. The difference is significant.

Note that I claimed that the report of Lois’s belief *might* be understood as (1*). It is important to point out that the hidden indexical view does not commit one to refer to a particular mode of presentation when reporting beliefs, although Crimmins relies on such a reference in his theory. It seems as if doing so is too restrictive and that it gives us counterintuitive results. Assume for argument’s sake that belief reports do refer to particular mode of presentation, or a particular way of believing. If so, then if I report Lois’s belief by uttering (1*), I am referring to a specific way in which Lois represents Superman. But a moment’s reflection should tell us that I do not know the details of Lois’s representation of Superman, and so it seems wrong and certainly counterintuitive to claim that I am referring to her specific representation. If we assume that the belief report refers to a particular mode of presentation, then we are all but assured of most belief reports being unsuccessful, since we do not, in a typical case, know the mode of presentation under which people believe propositions, and so cannot refer to such a mode of presentation. Furthermore, you fully understand my report without knowing exactly how Lois represents Superman. These are reasons for claiming that we do not refer to specific representation and that instead we refer to a type of a mode of presentation, or a more general way of believing. My report, then, makes an indeterminate reference to a contextually determinable way of believing. Since I and my respondent are both aware of a number of ways of believing, my respondent is, in a typical case, able to figure out well enough what I mean. If my reference to a way of believing is such that it falls within an acceptable range of ways of believing given the context of utterance, then my report is true. Otherwise it is false.

Without going into details of the various versions of the hidden indexical theory, we can see that there are some problems with the basic ideas that underlie the approach. The first problem is that the hidden indexical view treats “beliefs” as it occurs in belief reports as a three-place predicate and

not as the two-place predicate that it certainly seems to be. Is there a good reason to claim that we are dealing with a three-place predicate? Granted that we do believe propositions in a way, is there a good reason to say that we refer to these ways in belief reports and that these ways enter the propositions expressed? Let us look at a case that might at first seem similar to the one at hand.

Consider how we speak. Most of us are affected by regional pronunciation and intonation and many speak with a noticeable foreign accent. To borrow the language from our belief talk, we all speak in a way. Does the fact that we speak in a way need to be referred to when I report what people said? For example, if I report “Kennedy said that . . .,” do I then need to refer to Kennedy’s way of speaking in addition to what he said? Clearly not. While there might be occasions when I do refer to his way of speaking in addition to what he said, our typical cases of reports of what someone said are just that; reports of what someone said. In fact, usually it seems fairly transparent whether or not a given predicate is a two-place predicate or a three-place predicate, and we need fairly strong overriding reasons to overturn our intuitive judgment in that regard. So, clearly, there must be some powerful reason that forces the hidden indexical theorist to introduce the three-place relation.

Of course, the hidden indexical theorist claims to have such powerful reasons, namely, the puzzles that we have been dealing with. What better way, she might ask, do we have to deal with these puzzles? Still, the puzzles do not show that we need to, or have to go the route of the hidden indexical theory. Alternate accounts and explanations are available. Still, even though other accounts and explanations are available, the hidden indexical account might remain a plausible account of the linguistic behavior of ordinary speakers. Or does it?

Suppose that when talking with Stuart on the phone I utter, “It is hot.” Stuart asks me whether I mean that it is hot *now*, and I easily recognize that as being what I meant. He further asks me whether it is hot *here* (i.e., where I am), and I, again, easily recognize that as being what I meant. “Yes,” I might claim, probably somewhat frustrated. “It is hot here now!” When presented with what I meant to say, and when presented with statements that explicitly present the hidden indexicals, then I recognize and readily acknowledge that this is what I meant to say.

Suppose now that during a later conversation, Stuart, who is not one of my philosophically informed friends, tells me that Sarah believes that Wim Wenders’s next film will be a commercial hit. I want to flesh out the meaning of what Stuart said (i.e., just like he uncovered the hidden indexicals in my utterance, I want to uncover the hidden indexicals in his utterance). “Which of Sarah’s ways of believing this about Wenders are you referring to?” I ask. Not surprisingly, there is no sign of recognition on Stuart’s behalf. Instead he is somewhat incredulous about my question. So, I continue, trying to spark a light of recognition in Stuart. “When you told me that Sarah believes that Wim Wenders’s next film will be a commercial hit, you uttered

something that has an unarticulated constituent,” I explain. “I need some clues to uncover what you meant to say. Can you perhaps help specify further exactly what you meant?” Still no hint of recognition. Instead, Stuart, rather annoyed, tells me that he meant exactly what he said: that Sarah believes that Wim Wenders’s next film will be a commercial hit. There is no sign of recognition of reference to ways of believing that should be included in what he said. There is also no indication that Stuart wanted me to think of Wim Wenders in any particular way when he reported Sarah’s belief, just as there is no sign that he was referring to a way in which Sarah believes that Wim Wenders’s next film will be a commercial hit. As a theory of belief reports, the hidden indexical theory does not seem to strike a chord with ordinary speakers, while ordinary speakers do recognize hidden indexicals in other contexts when presented with them.

Of course the advocate of the hidden indexical account might claim that the test above is not a fair test and that the hidden indexical theory works admirably where it is supposed to work, namely, in the contexts where we are likely to object to substitutions of coreferential names. Suppose then that my friend Robert reports that Rachel believes that Superman has amazing powers. Again, I start inquiring about the report. As was the case with Stuart, Robert does not recognize himself as referring to, or talking about, Rachel’s ways of believing. He might recognize that he is, indirectly, talking about the caped superhero, and he might recognize that we tend to share a number of beliefs about Superman. But it is very unlikely that he recognizes that he was *referring* to Rachel’s way of believing. It seems much more reasonable to understand Robert as having assumed that when he used the name “Superman,” he, in a way, described Rachel’s belief, or that he assumed that we all share some core information about Superman that allows us to communicate about him. But describing a belief, or indicating how a belief is held by using one name rather than another name, or assuming that we share information that we associate with the name “Superman” that allows us to communicate, is very different from claiming that we are referring to ways of believing. The first two alternatives, for example, do not come with the semantic baggage as does the hidden indexical account with its reference to ways of believing.

The alternatives mentioned provide very different ways of understanding Robert’s reports. The first one relies on his describing Rachel’s belief or somehow indicating how she holds a belief by using one name rather than another. The second relies on the assumption that we share similar information that we associate with the name “Superman” and that this information need not depend on semantics. Neither of these alternatives has to resort to semantics to explain why we use one name rather than another, as the hidden indexical account does.

When I ask Robert whether he thinks differently about Superman than he does about Clark Kent, he, as well as most of us, readily agrees. But it is quite possible that the hidden indexical theorist is taking psychological information and trying to force it into being a part of the literal meaning of

what we say, or as being a part of semantic meaning. We can certainly agree that when we report beliefs, we do hint at ways of believing with our choice of names in cases where we tend to resist substitution. But it does not seem to be the case that ordinary speakers are referring to ways of believing as the hidden indexical view claims that they do.

RICHARD'S ENHANCED SINGULAR PROPOSITIONS

Mark Richard has provided one of the most impressive recent attempts to deal with belief reports, while accepting Frege's intuition that we cannot freely substitute in attitude contexts. Richard takes as a starting point of his theory of belief ascriptions the Fregean intuition which tells us that attitude reports involving embedded sentences that contain different but codesignative names can differ in truth value. While he wants to acknowledge this intuition, he also wants to maintain the Russellian idea that the referents of names are constituents of propositions. In an attempt to do so, Richard introduces us to items of beliefs he calls RAMs (Russellian Annotated Matrixes).

Consider the following assertions about the Babylonian astronomer Hammurabi:⁷

26. Hammurabi believes that Hesperus is a planet.

27. Hammurabi believes that Phosphorus is a planet.

Hammurabi assents to the embedded sentence in (26) but dissents from the embedded sentence in (27), since he does not know that Hesperus is Phosphorus. According to Richard Hammurabi does *not* believe the Russellian proposition that we represent as

28. <being a planet, Venus>.

Instead he believes a fusion of the Russellian interpretation of the that-clause and the sentence expressing it. Richard is therefore building language items into the proposition believed and by doing so he is giving us much finer-grained propositions than does the naïve Russellian.⁸ Hammurabi believes a proposition under the embedded sentence in (26), and he does not believe it under the embedded sentence in (27).

Richard obtains RAMs by first pairing linguistic items with their Russellian referents to get annotations. The following are examples of annotations:

<“is a planet,” being a planet>
<“Venus,” Venus>

where the first item of the ordered pair is a linguistic item and the second item their referent. When the annotations are paired together, we get RAMs. So, the RAM determined by the that-clause in (26) is

29. <<“is a planet,” being a planet>, <“Hesperus,” Hesperus>>.

If, on the other hand, (27) is the sentence in question, the RAM named by the that-clause is

30. <<“is a planet,” being a planet>, <“Phosphorus,” Hesperus>>.

So, if two persons believe propositions that contain the same referents, that is, the same objects and properties, under different sentences, then they have different RAMs in their representational systems.

But there is more to Richard’s rather complex theory. One RAM can represent another RAM given appropriate *correlations*. A correlation is a function that maps annotations to annotations and preserves reference. A correlation could map

<“Hesperus,” Venus>

to

<“Phosphorus,” Venus>,

but we cannot have a correlation that maps

<“Hesperus,” Venus>

to

<“Phosphorus,” Mercury>,

for that does not preserve reference. And since annotations are functions, the annotation <“Hesperus,” Hesperus>

cannot be mapped to both

<“Hesperus,” Hesperus>

and

<“Phosphorus,” Hesperus>.

So, RAM_1 represents RAM_2 under correlation f if f maps every annotation in RAM_1 to its image in RAM_2 . RAM (29) would represent RAM (30) under correlation a if a mapped

<“is a planet,” being a planet>

to

<“is a planet,” being a planet>,

and

<“Hesperus,” Hesperus>

to

<“Phosphorus,” Hesperus>.

What we have so far is not sufficient to account for the pretheoretical intuition that (26) might be true while (27) is false, for we can surely find a correlation that maps the annotation in (29) to the annotations in (30). In order to obtain the wanted results, Richard treats “believes” as an indexical, so whether or not a belief ascription is true or false depends on the context in which it is uttered. Different contexts of utterance can carry with them different *restrictions* on correlations. A restriction on a correlation function is a triple, $\langle P, A, S \rangle$, consisting of an owner of an attitude, P , an annotation,

A , and a set of annotations S with the same Russellian content as A . For example, a context in which one would regard it as true that Lois believes that Superman can fly and false that Lois believes that Clark Kent can fly, a restriction would apply which precluded that an annotation containing “Superman” be mapped to an annotation containing “Clark Kent.” Similarly, one context might carry the restriction that an annotation containing “Hesperus” can only be mapped onto annotations containing “Hesperus.” Other contexts might carry with them a restriction that allows an annotation containing “Hesperus” to be mapped onto an annotation containing “Phosphorus.” We therefore get the following truth conditions for belief reports:

“ A believes that S ” is true in context C only if the RAM represented by “that S ” represents a RAM in A ’s representational system on some correlation that is permitted by the restrictions in C .

In one context, I might therefore be able to truly report that Hammurabi believes that Phosphorus is the heavenly body seen latest in the morning (this might include contexts involving a conversation with people who only use “Phosphorus” as a name of Venus), while this would constitute a false report in other contexts. This allows Richard to claim that (26) can be true while (27) is false. Thus, our pretheoretical intuitions about the truth of belief reports are satisfied.

The restrictions that apply in a given context are typically the results of the shared intentions of those participating in a conversation. In some contexts, speakers might be interested in quite a bit of detail of the proposition toward which the agent bears an attitude, as when they want to account for Lois’s love interest in Superman and lack of love interest in Clark Kent. In other contexts, the speakers might only have an interest in which Russellian proposition the agent bears an attitude toward without worrying about the details of the attitude, that is, without worrying about which sentence the agent would use to express the attitude. No restrictions on correlation functions apply in contexts when the speakers only have an interest in which Russellian proposition the agent bears an attitude toward.⁹

It is important to notice that the agent bears an attitude toward a proposition regardless of whether we do or do not have an interest in the attitude and that, in case we have an interest in it, the agent’s attitude does not change to reflect our varying degree of interest in the attitude. If Lois has an attitude toward a proposition containing Clark Kent, then we can pay attention to more or less details of her attitude, thus producing various contextually determined restrictions. But Lois’s attitude can and does remain the same in spite of that. Otherwise it would not be possible to account for Lois having *an* attitude toward a proposition when numerous conversations about her attitude take place simultaneously, each producing different contextually determined restrictions.¹⁰

Once we start looking more closely at various examples and how Richard's theory deals with them, we need to further modify the theory. Linguistically enhanced propositions can only take us so far.

Hammurabi's contemporary, the Danish astronomer Petersen, assented to what turned out to be a direct translation of the that-clause in (26) and so the following is true:

31. Petersen tror Aftenstjernen er en planet.

Since belief ascriptions are partly tied up with the sentences that express them, Petersen does not have a token of (29), namely,

29. <<"is a planet," being a planet>, <"Hesperus," Hesperus>>.

on his mental blackboard. Instead he has the RAM

32. <<"er en planet," being a planet>, <"Aftenstjernen," Hesperus>>.

so Hammurabi and Petersen do not have the same RAM in their representational systems.

Let us go back to our pretheoretical intuitions. They tell us that

26. Hammurabi believes that Hesperus is a planet

is true, and

27. Hammurabi believes that Phosphorus is a planet

is false. They also tell us that

31. Petersen tror Aftenstjernen er en planet

is true. They furthermore tell us that Hammurabi and Petersen have the same belief or share a belief, since both believe that the Evening Star is a planet. So, if we take our pretheoretical intuitions seriously, as Richard does, then there should be some sense in which the two share a belief.

It is insufficient to say that they share a belief because they believe the same Russellian proposition, since it would undermine the intuition Richard is trying to respect. Richard developed his fine-grained account of propositions partly to account for the intuition that (26) can be true while (27) is false. If he resorts to claiming that they share a belief because they believe the same Russellian proposition, he is giving up that intuition. Resorting to that response would entail that Hammurabi has the same belief in (26) and (27), and then he can no longer claim one to be true and the other false.

An attempt to amend the account above by saying that they share a belief because the propositions believed contain the same Russellian core, namely <being a planet, Hesperus>, does not work, since it, too, involves giving up the subjectivity Richard is after. If we accept this amendment, we would have to say that Hammurabi has the same belief in (26) and (27).

Richard can try to account for the sharing of belief by saying that even though Petersen does not have RAM (29) in his representational system, RAM (29) can nevertheless *represent* one of Petersen's RAMs given the right correlations. Given the correlation that "Hesperus" conventionally translates as "Aftenstjernen" and "is a planet" conventionally translates as "er en planet," RAM (29) represents one of Petersen's RAMs.¹¹ Since RAM (29) represents one of Hammurabi's RAMs *and* one of Petersen's RAMs, Hammurabi and Petersen can be said to have the same belief. The key to this account of sharing of belief is Richard's notion of correlation where we correlate *words* or *meanings*. This works if we treat RAMs as containing names (or, more formally, public language word types). But Richard has to abandon the view that RAMs contain names when he discusses Kripke's Paderewski puzzle, and the modification, I will argue, has unwanted consequences.

Recall that Kripke's puzzle is of Peter, who one day hears of a famous musician Paderewski and thinks to himself "Paderewski had musical talent." Another day, Peter hears of a Polish statesman, Paderewski, and, believing that all politicians are poor musicians, he thinks to himself, "Paderewski did not have musical talents."¹² Since the musician and the politician are the same person, Peter assents to a proposition and its negation, so he seems to have contradictory beliefs. But Peter, being an expert logician, would never accept contradictory beliefs. How does Richard's theory, with its fine-grained propositions, handle the Paderewski example?

In the Paderewski example, we are dealing with identical sentences in a single, unambiguous language, so correlations will not help us. Richard therefore modifies his view that RAMs contain names in favor of a view where RAMs contain *representations*. So, supposing we have a RAM of the form <<*d*, *e*>, <*b*, *c*>>, then *d* and *b* are now representations and not language tokens as before.¹³ Given this revision, Richard can say that Peter has two representations of Paderewski and that he uses one when he thinks Paderewski thus and so, and another when he thinks him not thus and so.

This revision raises a problem for the account of sharing of belief, or of two people believing the same thing. We were able to say that Hammurabi and Petersen had the same belief because we could correlate the annotations in RAMs (29) and (32). But now we see that names are not parts of RAMs; instead *representations* are parts of RAMs. While we understood RAMs as containing linguistic items, we were dealing with public language items that were constituents of the RAMs. What was of importance when accounting for the truth of belief reports was, in essence, finding out whether any permitted correlations allowed us to map public language items in annotation onto other public language items. But with the representational account of RAMs, the emphasis is on how the person whose belief is being reported

represents or thinks about an object. We have gone from *public* objects to *private* objects.

Given this, how can we correlate the annotations in Hammurabi's and Petersen's RAMs? We cannot say as before that RAM (29) represents RAMs for both persons, since RAM (29) consists partially of names, while we now know that the names in RAMs have been replaced with representations. Instead of annotations containing linguistic items, they contain representations, which we can indicate by following a linguistic item with a star, so the linguistic item "is a planet" in an annotation is replaced with the representation "is a planet*." So, the that-clause in (26) now names the RAM

33. <<"is a planet*," being a planet>, <"Hesperus*," Hesperus>>

which indicates that we are dealing with representations instead of linguistic items. Correspondingly, the that-clause in (31) names the RAM

34. <<"er en planet*," being a planet>, <"Aftenstjernen*," Hesperus>>.

Richard does not say much about the nature of these representations, but he allows that they are, for example, something like images acquired through perception.¹⁴ Given that, two things are clear. First, the linguistic item we use to represent the representation does not tell us much at all about the nature of the representation itself (i.e., whether the representation itself is linguistic in nature, an image, or perhaps something else). And second, even though two people have a representation of the same kind, for example, an image of the same object, the representations themselves need not be alike. I might know a woman as a loving mother and homemaker and represent her accordingly; someone else might know the same woman as a tough and hard-nosed CEO and represent her accordingly; and a third person might have known her only as a child and represent her accordingly.

Suppose we try to proceed as before and find a correlation that maps the appropriate annotations in RAM (33) onto the appropriate annotations in RAM (34). Remember that a correlation only has to preserve reference. It does not have to preserve representation. Given that, and given how unlike two representations of the same object can be, a correlation from the annotations in one RAM to the annotations in a second RAM tells us at most that the two RAMs contain representations of the same object. That there is a correlation between the annotations tells us nothing about how like or unlike the representations are. It does not even tell us whether the representations are of the same kind or whether one is, for example, imagistic, while another is linguistic. And since it is not a sufficient condition for two persons sharing belief that both have *a* representation of the same object, a correlation between Hammurabi's and Petersen's relevant RAMs is not sufficient for them sharing belief.¹⁵

Richard briefly discusses two sorts of conditions, “outside” and “inside” conditions, which together would be necessary and sufficient for two tokens to determine the same representation.¹⁶ The outside conditions include as a necessary condition for two tokens to determine the same representation that they be of the same thing, and that they be a part of the same causal chain of transmission. Thus, the name “Aristotle” will not determine the same representation when it names the shipping magnate as it does when it names the philosopher, and “Hesperus” and “Phosphorus” do not determine the same representation because they are a part of different chains of transmission. The inside condition Richard discusses is a recognition condition. The recognition condition has to do with how one files information. For example, if I take new information I hear of a man named Clinton to be about Clinton the former U.S. president, then I file the new information with other information I have about that person. If it was in fact Clinton the former president who was being discussed, then the new token of “Clinton” and the old presidential tokens I have of “Clinton” will all determine the same representation. So, two name tokens are a part of the same representation for a person provided that (a) they are of the same word type, and (b) that the person groups them together as if they named the same thing.¹⁷

Unfortunately, Richard’s discussion of necessary and sufficient conditions for tokens to determine the same representation does not help us with Hammurabi and Petersen. The inside conditions he discusses do not apply when our concern is with representations of two people, in our case Hammurabi and Petersen. They only apply when a person is determining whether to file incoming data as if they were of the same thing. And the outside condition that it is necessary for two tokens to be of the same word type in order for them to determine the same representation does not help either. The reason that it does not help has already been discussed, namely, that representations of the same object can vary greatly, so it is clearly not a sufficient reason for two name tokens to determine the same representation that they name the same thing. Richard clearly agrees with this, for otherwise he would not impose “inside” conditions of sameness in addition to the “outside” conditions.

Perhaps Richard can account for how people can share a belief by claiming that if two persons share a belief, their representations of the object in the RAM are identical, so Hammurabi and Petersen represent the Evening Star in exactly the same ways. This response would solve the problem at the cost that it would be almost impossible for any two people to share a belief. Mental representations of an object vary depending on what features of the object we attend to and even depending on from what exact angle we saw the object and in what surroundings we saw the object. Further discriminating details are introduced if we include tactile stimuli or the specific appearance of the object at the time we saw it. Given the great variety in which we can be acquainted with most objects, the chance of two people representing the same object in the exact same way becomes a virtual impossibility.

The fact of the matter is that agents can and do form different representations of the same object. It is therefore both possible and very likely that the representations of Hesperus in Hammurabi's head and Aftenstjernen in Petersen's head are, for all we know, as different as the representations of Hesperus and Phosphorus in Hammurabi's head. And if the difference in representations of Hesperus in Hammurabi's head is sufficient for us to attribute two beliefs about Hesperus to Hammurabi, the difference in representations of Hesperus in Hammurabi's and Petersen's heads should also be sufficient to attribute to them different beliefs about Hesperus.

Richard is thus faced with the problem that if RAMs contain linguistic items, such as names, and sharing of beliefs is determined by whether there is a correlation between annotations, then he cannot account for the Paderewski puzzle. If RAMs contain representations, then the Paderewski puzzle can be accounted for, but Richard's account becomes too fine-grained, so we can no longer account for sharing of belief.

Someone might say that violating the pretheoretical intuitions about having the same belief is a small price to pay for an otherwise elegant theory. But more has to be done. While Richard respected our pretheoretical intuitions about the truth values of belief ascriptions, not only does he not respect them when it comes to our intuitions about sharing beliefs, but he also is unable to give us any convincing account within his theoretic framework of people sharing beliefs.

Furthermore, now we see that in Richard's final account of belief ascriptions, the truth or falsity of belief ascriptions depends partly upon the believer's representation of the object in the proposition—a representation that is hidden from everyone except the believer. Since the truth of belief ascriptions now depends partly upon a representation that is hidden from everyone except the believer, it becomes impossible to judge whether or not a belief report is true except in contexts where no restrictions apply, that is, except in contexts where our only concern is to which Russellian proposition the agent bears an attitude. Judgments in contexts involving restrictions would involve *RAM probing* (i.e., looking at the elements in a given RAM), and since RAMs contain representations instead of linguistic items, they are essentially private. The fact that Richard's theory prevents us from judging, with good conscience, the truth values of simple belief reports and belief ascriptions is enough to make his theory suspect.

I have pointed out that Richard presents two very different accounts of RAMs and that each account of RAM faces problems that cannot be overcome. The linguistic account of RAMs, as Richard acknowledged, cannot account for the Paderewski example. In order to account for the Paderewski example, Richard introduced the representational account of RAMs, but once he does that, we become unable to account for sharing of beliefs, as well as unable to confidently attribute beliefs to persons. The principal reason the representational account fails is that representations are private objects.

There is a lesson to be learned from this failure—that we had better not include representations in propositions. If we do include them, then the

resulting propositions become too fine-grained, and so we have a hard time accounting for shared beliefs. Also, we encounter a version of a problem we raised for Frege. When discussing Frege, we observed that, in natural languages, we rarely find customary meanings of names, since it varies greatly how people represent objects. Similarly with Richard, once we start building representations into propositions and acknowledge that how we represent objects depends to a large extent on how we are acquainted with them, then we start having a hard time reporting exactly which proposition, that is, which RAM it is that is an object of belief.

ON SOLVING THE WRONG PROBLEM

There are good reasons to believe that all the attention that reporting attitude has received is to some degree misplaced. As mentioned before, in the introduction to *Naming and Necessity*, Kripke pointed out that he never intended to argue for a doctrine of universal substitutivity of proper names. He pointed out that the sentence “Hesperus is Phosphorus” can sometimes be used to raise an empirical issue while “Hesperus is Hesperus” cannot be used in the same way. Sentences that are not embedded, simple sentences, resist substitution, as well as do sentences embedded in attitude contexts. That is, our intuitions about substitutions are not limited to embedded sentences. We also have strong intuitions about substitutions in simple sentences, namely, sentences that express singular propositions and that are not embedded in intentional contexts. Consider, for example, the following sentences.

- 35. Bob Dylan has a beautiful voice.
- 36. Robert Zimmerman has a beautiful voice.

And,

- 37. Bob Dylan is Bob Dylan.
- 38. Bob Dylan is Robert Zimmerman.

Chances are that most people will resist substituting “Robert Zimmerman” for “Bob Dylan” as we have done in (36) and (38).

Many accounts that try to explain why we cannot substitute coreferential names in belief reports fail to carry over to simple sentences. The reason is that the strategy that is typically used when dealing with belief reports differs from the strategy typically used to deal with simple sentences. The strategy dealing with the former tends to focus on pragmatic implicatures and ways to create more finely grained propositions, while strategies dealing with simple sentences might only focus on ways of believing. But why should we not try to find a unified solution, a single solution that deals with both simple sentences and attitude ascriptions? “Well,” someone might

respond, “the problems are different, and so the solutions have to be different!” But, I claim, the problems only *seem* different, and it is possible that a single solution suffices. The strategy for finding a unified solution should start with the simpler of the two, namely, simple sentences, the reason being that attitude ascriptions might introduce complications that are absent in simple sentences—complications that distract us from finding a unified solution. The strategy is familiar and sound; start with the simple problem and work towards the more complex ones. Jennifer Saul has discussed simple sentences and seems to advocate the same general approach to a solution of our antisubstitution intuitions, while David Braun seems to hold the view that our antisubstitution intuitions for simple sentences and embedded sentences differ, the latter being stronger, and so that indicates that he advocates a different solution for the two kinds of cases.¹⁸

The various accounts of substitutions in embedded sentences discussed above, perhaps with the exception of Soames’s view, while interesting and ingenious, fail to extend to and account for our antisubstitution intuitions for simple sentences. Let us start by looking at Salmon’s view.

It is clear that Salmon’s view about why we resist substitutions in belief contexts does not readily extend to simple sentences. His account of belief reports depends on an existential generalization over a three-place relation, and there is no such generalization and no such relation present in simple sentences.

The hidden indexical view does not extend to simple sentences. According to the hidden indexical view, belief reports include a tacit reference to modes of presentation, and these items are semantically significant (i.e., they affect truth value). There is no such tacit reference in simple sentences, and most hidden indexical theories accept the view that simple sentences express singular propositions.

Finally, Richard’s view does not extend to simple sentences. His way of dealing with our antisubstitution intuitions regarding belief reports included introducing a new kind of propositions, namely RAMs. RAMs include the elements of singular propositions but add to them linguistic items and, eventually, representations. These elements are not present in simple sentences, as simple sentences express singular propositions in Richard’s view. As a result, his solution that accounts for our antisubstitution intuitions in belief reports does not extend to simple sentences.

Granted, unless one is seeking a holistic solution for how to deal with our intuitions regarding substitutivity, the fact that these accounts of belief reports do not extend to simple sentences does not create a problem. My contention is that we should be seeking a holistic account—one that can account for our antisubstitution intuitions in both simple sentences and embedded sentences. If we have antisubstitution intuitions for simple sentences, and we have antisubstitution intuitions for attitude reports which embed those simple sentences, then it seems (assuming semantic innocence) that we should look for the reasons for those intuitions in the simpler cases,

which in this case are the simple sentences, and then see whether the solution for the simpler cases can be extended to the more complex cases.

If the approach needed to solve the multiple belief problem requires that we start with simple sentence and how we believe the propositions that they express, namely, singular propositions, then we need to look at what it takes to believe a singular proposition in addition to in what ways we can believe them. My contention is that direct reference theorists have made believing singular propositions much too easy, or as easy as assenting to a sentence expressing such proposition. My contention is that more than that is required. What else is required is the subject of the next chapter.

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5 Singular Propositions and Acquaintance

When the direct reference theory was first introduced, it utilized two main ways of fixing the reference of names. Reference could be fixed with ostension (understood rather loosely), or it could be determined with a stipulative descriptive reference fixing. Typical examples of someone fixing the reference of a name ostensively require that the reference fixer be somehow able to point out the object referred to, as in *this* (pointing) is the object I am talking about. Typical examples of someone fixing the reference of a name via stipulative descriptive reference fixing involve situations that are such that the reference fixer is not able to point out the object being referred to. A good example of the latter is Donnellan's example of Leverrier fixing the reference of "Neptune." At the time, Leverrier, and anyone else for that matter, was unable to observe Neptune. Instead he hypothesized that Neptune was the cause of certain perturbations in the orbit of Uranus. It is precisely when one is unable to directly observe the object being referred to, such as in Leverrier's case, when one resorts to descriptive stipulative reference fixing.

In the chapter on propositions, we saw an attempt to argue that if there is no object, there is no thought. That seems wrong. But it still might be true that if there is no object, there is no *de re* thought. A *de re* thought, or a *de re* belief, as it is now usually construed, is a thought that is *about* an object, or *of* an object, and so it seems that one cannot have a thought about an object if there is no object to have thought about in the first place. If Santa Claus does not exist, then how can one have a *de re* thought about him?

Advocates of the direct reference theory have made it very easy to have a *de re* belief—perhaps too easy. I will accept the widely accepted view that if one believes a singular proposition, then one has a *de re* belief of the object in the proposition. However, I will argue that direct reference theorists have made it much too easy to believe singular propositions, and consequently much too easy to have *de re* beliefs. In particular, I will dispute the view that if one sincerely assents to a sentence expressing a singular proposition, then one believes that proposition. First, though, we will look at an early article by Keith Donnellan, who was one of the early proponents of the direct reference theory, in which he discusses some of the conditions for having a

de re belief. Donnellan's article will serve as a foil to arguing that a necessary condition for having a de re belief of an object is that one stands in the right relationship to it, namely, that one perceives it. Since one fails to stand in that relationship to the objects in many, if not most, singular propositions, sincerely assenting to sentences expressing these propositions does not result on a de re belief.

In "The Contingent *A Priori* and Rigid Designators," Keith Donnellan presents a skeptical view of anyone being able to acquire a priori de re knowledge with stipulative descriptive reference fixing.¹ The paper has been highly influential, and philosophers who have dealt with the contingent a priori have tended to accept Donnellan's skeptical view. In spite of that, it is not at all clear, or so I will argue, how Donnellan argues for his skeptical view. Furthermore, contrary to common treatments of Donnellan's arguments, there are good reasons to say that Donnellan is not providing a general argument against the contingent a priori. Instead, it is more reasonable to read the argument as only applying to a special case of reference fixing, namely, when the reference fixer does not have such connection with the object named that she can obtain knowledge of the object, or de re knowledge.² The arguments thus crucially depend on the knowledge in question being de re knowledge. It is this aspect of his paper that I will focus on, namely, what it takes for an attitude to be a de re attitude. The emphasis will be on a necessary condition for having a de re belief, rather than the defining characteristics of such beliefs. As for what it is to have a de re belief, the intuitive notion that Donnellan works with suffices; namely, it is a belief about or of an object.

Donnellan provides tests for whether or not an attitude is a de re attitude and uses those tests as a basis for the arguments for his skeptical view. I will evaluate Donnellan's arguments and argue that what I call his master argument has a great deal of plausibility. Accepting Donnellan's master argument raises some interesting issues for the advocates of the direct reference theory. Direct reference theorists tend to assume that when one sincerely assents to a sentence expressing a singular proposition, then one acquires a de re belief of the object in the proposition if one does not already have such a belief.³ They tend to assume that the de re connection can be "remote and indirect, perhaps consisting of a network of causal intermediaries interposed between the cognizer and the object."⁴ But if Donnellan is right in concluding that one can fix the reference of a name without thereby acquiring de re knowledge of the object named, then we end up with the paradoxical view that the dubber does not acquire de re knowledge of the object named while those she passes the name to do acquire such knowledge.

Phrased in a different way, most direct reference theorists seem to assume that the causal connection to an object that is sufficient for one to acquire a name of it is also sufficient for one to acquire a de re belief of that same object. Those who assume that the causal connection that allows one to acquire a name of an object also allows one to acquire a belief of the object

accept what I call the *semantic/epistemic content requirement*. Given the considerations raised by Donnellan, as I understand them, it appears we should not accept that requirement.

I will first uncover what I take to be Donnellan's view on the possibility of one acquiring de re knowledge with descriptive stipulative reference fixing. Since the conclusion drawn from that discussion is at odds with what seems to be a widely accepted Russellian view, namely, the semantic/epistemic content requirement, I will then discuss what kind of connection between a believer and an object is needed in order for one to have de re attitudes towards an object. Here I will advocate what I call *the strong epistemic requirement*, namely, that one can only have de re attitude towards an object if one has perceived it. Finally, I will discuss how the strong epistemic requirement meshes with a naïve Russellian account of names, advancing a suggestion made by Nathan Salmon between a strong and a weak understanding of proper names.

SOME PRELIMINARIES

The thesis that Donnellan is concerned with is the following:

If a stipulator, *S*, fixes the reference of a name *N* of an object via stipulative descriptive reference fixing, using description *D*, then *S* knows a priori the contingent truth that “if *D* exists, *N* is the *D*.”

One source of confusion in Donnellan's article is that he starts it with a general introduction of Kripke's view that one can introduce a name of a person or an object by using a definite description that fixes the reference of the name. In a typical case of fixing the reference of a name of a person, one is in close contact with the person. In most cases of baptism one has seen the person who is being named, and one is typically in close touch with the person. That is not so in the case of the Neptune example, which quickly becomes the focus of Donnellan's article. Instead, Leverrier gave the name “Neptune” to the planet before it was ever seen, fixing the reference of “Neptune” with the description “the planet which causes such and such discrepancies in the orbit of Uranus.” Thus, the proposition that Donnellan is primarily concerned with is the one expressed by the following sentence:

If the planet that caused such and such discrepancies in the orbit of Uranus exists, then Neptune is the planet which caused such and such discrepancies on the orbit of Uranus.

Because Donnellan mentions both fixing the reference of a name of a person and the name of a planet, namely, Neptune, when he introduces reference fixing by description, and then focuses exclusively on the Neptune

example, one might think that Donnellan is arguing that descriptive reference fixing in general cannot provide one with de re a priori knowledge. But this reading of Donnellan would not be very charitable. The type of connection one typically has with a person whom one names is significantly different from the type of connection Leverrier had with Neptune, and we cannot simply assume that a skeptical conclusion about the latter would carry over to the former.⁵

I take Donnellan to be arguing primarily against one being able to acquire de re knowledge of an object via stipulative reference fixing. Since the focus is on belief acquisition, or knowledge acquisition, and not on the metaphysical modality of the propositions in question, I will not be concerned with whether we are dealing with potential examples of the contingent a priori. If Donnellan is successful in arguing for his skeptical conclusion, then it is of little significance whether the proposition we cannot know is contingent or necessary.

DONNELLAN'S DE RE PRINCIPLES

When discussing de re knowledge, Donnellan admits that the notion of de re propositional attitudes is a notoriously difficult one, and, while he does not want to push the whole matter under the rug, he claims that he wants to step around "the messy areas" for the purposes of the point he wants to establish in the paper. Donnellan wants to step around the messy areas by introducing two "loose" principles, or tests, concerning names and propositional attitude. He then bases two arguments on the principles. Unfortunately, by stepping around one mess, he steps right into another. As I will argue, the two principles that he introduces are too loose and do nothing to clarify the issue at hand.

Robin Jeshion has discussed one of Donnellan's principles, the one I call DRP_2 , and she claims that it "constitutes all of what could appropriately be regarded as his argument against Kripke's claims,"⁶ namely, the claims that Leverrier has with the stipulation secured a priori and de re knowledge. My main focus in this section will be on Donnellan's first principle, the one that Jeshion does not discuss, and I will show that the principle falls prey to essentially the same kinds of examples that Jeshion uses against the second principle, namely, examples that utilize a version of Frege's puzzle. But, more significantly, I will then focus on Donnellan's third argument, namely, an underdeveloped argument that I will nevertheless call his master argument for the skeptical conclusion. Jeshion does not discuss that argument at all, even though I believe that it is the argument that truly deserves attention. Further, I argue against the possibility of acquaintanceless de re beliefs, for which Jeshion argues, and in favor of a view that requires acquaintance with an object in order to have a de re belief of that object.

Let us start with the first of the two de re principles Donnellan introduces.

DRP₁: If an object is called by one name, say *N*, by one group of people and by another name by a second group, say *M*, and if, in the language of the first group “*N* is *p*” expresses a bit of knowledge of theirs and if “is *q*” is a translation of “is *p*” into the language of the second group, then if the relevant facts are known to the second group, they can say truly that the first group “knew that *M* is *q*.”⁷

For example, suppose that an Icelandic Beatles fan makes the following claim: *Hvita Albúm Bítlanna er góð plata.*” Given the relevant translations, an English speaking person can truly say of that Icelander that she “knows that the Beatles’ White Album is a good record.”

Donnellan explains why the Neptune example would fail the intuitive test provided by DRP₁. Assume that Leverrier had introduced via descriptive reference fixing a name of Neptune as a rigid designator and that he had a different name for Neptune than do the Neptunians. Given that, Donnellan says that the Neptunians should not admit that Leverrier knew that Enutpen, which is what they call their planet, was the cause of the perturbations in the orbit of Uranus (i.e., the Neptunians should not admit that Leverrier had de re knowledge of Neptune). The test turns on our intuition that while Leverrier knows that *something* was the cause of the perturbations of Uranus, he did not know that Enutpen, *that very object*, was the cause.

We can now use DRP₁ to formulate Donnellan’s first argument for the skeptical conclusion that one can acquire de re knowledge via descriptive reference fixing:⁸

1. Absent an alternative account of why descriptive reference-fixing cases appear to fail DRP₁, the subjects never acquired a de re knowledge.
2. There is no alternative account of why descriptive reference-fixing cases appear to fail the test.
3. Hence, the subjects of such cases never acquired a de re knowledge.

There are two reasons for not accepting this reasoning. First, DRP₁ does not seem to be a reliable test for de re knowledge, and second, there is an alternative explanation for why descriptive reference fixing cases appear to fail the test. I will consider both reasons below.

First, DRP₁ is not a reliable test for de re knowledge. The following example should help bring home the point that DRP₁ gives us results that are counterintuitive and wrong. Some years back a Portland bistro chef, Alice Metzinger, revealed that she was in fact Katherine Ann Power, a fugitive bank robber who had been on the run for twenty-three years.⁹ Suppose that members of the first group, her fellow bistro workers, only knew her as Alice Metzinger, and suppose that members of the second group, the

gangsters she ran with, only knew her as Katherine Ann Power. The gangsters she ran with did, however, know of her cooking skills. According to DPR_1 the gangsters should say of the members of the first group, the bistro workers, that if they knew that Alice Metzinger was a superb chef, then they knew that Katherine Ann Power was a superb chef.¹⁰ But whether they knew that is a matter of substantial contention.

Although both the Neptune example and the Metzinger example fail DPR_1 there is an interesting difference in why the two examples fail to pass the principle. Donnellan says that the Neptunians should not admit that Leverrier knew that Enutpen, their planet, was the cause of the perturbations in the orbit of Uranus. Even though Leverrier knew that *something* was the cause of the given discrepancies in the orbit of Uranus, that is not sufficient for him to know that *Neptune* was the cause (rather than some other object). DPR_1 seems to be intended as an intuitive test of whether someone has a *de re* belief of an object, and Donnellan is concluding that whatever belief Leverrier has after the dubbing, it is not a *de re* belief of Neptune. While Leverrier certainly did not seem to have *de re* knowledge of Neptune, Alice's coworkers surely had *de re* knowledge of her. So, even if we grant that both parties (i.e., Alice's coworkers and her fellow gang members) have *de re* knowledge the example nevertheless fails the test.

The Metzinger example introduces elements similar to those found in Frege's puzzle. Still, there is a difference between that example and the typical examples used to raise the puzzle. Frege's puzzle focuses on a certain kind of apparent cognitive dissonance when a person both accepts and denies a single proposition without being able to detect any contradiction within her beliefs.¹¹ For example, assuming that "Superman saved Lois" and "Clark Kent saved Lois" express the same proposition, I might assent to the first sentence and dissent from the second, be an expert logician, and not be able to detect a contradiction or even an inconsistency amongst my beliefs. Since DRP_1 talks about groups of people and thus states that we have more than one subject holding the relevant beliefs, we will never have the force of the apparent cognitive dissonance within an individual that drives Frege's puzzle. At first sight, the ingredients in DRP_1 seem not right for us to evoke Frege's puzzle. Still, one can argue that Frege's puzzle can be extended to groups of people, saying that one group of people thinks of an object in one way and that a second group thinks of the same object in a second way. Instead of getting an apparent cognitive dissonance within a person, one would get a sort of an apparent cognitive dissonance between the groups when each group fails to realize that it holds beliefs that are contradictory or inconsistent with the other group's beliefs. But this faces a problem; groups do not hold beliefs—individuals do—and so we would have to focus on beliefs of individuals instead of beliefs of a group. So, the question is whether it is reasonable to extend Frege's puzzle across individuals. I think it is.

Suppose that you and I agree to solve all our cognitive disagreements. You say that Superman saved Lois. I examine my beliefs and report that we

do not have any disagreements here, since the only belief that I have that seems relevant is that Clark Kent did not save Lois. You agree, and we move on. Neither one of us, in spite of our proficiency in logic, recognizes that we have agreed on sentences that express contradictory propositions. Although the puzzle we have here is a little different from Frege's puzzle, as that puzzle involved identity statements, the problem is similar in nature. A solution to the puzzle might go as follows: we explain the failure to recognize the inconsistency in terms of *how* (i.e., under what guise), we are familiar with Clark Kent. If we now extend Frege's puzzle across individuals and provide a solution along the lines suggested above, then we can, contrary to what the argument based on Donnellan's principle, provide an alternative explanation of why descriptive reference-fixing cases appear to fail DPR₁. Namely, the members of one group tend to think of the relevant object in one way, and the members of another group tend to think of it in another way, and because of that, the members of the relevant groups may not realize that they hold these beliefs of the same object. Consequently, there is an alternative account of why descriptive reference-fixing cases appear to fail DPR₁, and Donnellan's argument thus fails to establish the skeptical conclusion.

Donnellan has another loose *de re* principle to which to resort, namely the one Jeshion focuses on in her discussion:

DRP₂: If one has a name *N* for a person, and there is a bit of knowledge that one would express by saying "*N* is *F*," then if one subsequently meets the person it will be true to say to him, using the second person pronoun, "I knew that you were *F*." (We can replace the name *N* with a demonstrative, such as "this planet," when appropriate).¹²

Given the principle, Donnellan's argument can be stated as follows:

1. Absent an alternative account of why descriptive reference-fixing cases appear to fail the DRP₂ test, the subjects never acquired *de re* knowledge.
2. There is no alternative account of why descriptive reference-fixing cases appear to fail the test
3. Hence, the subjects of such cases never acquired *de re* knowledge.

There are at least two reasons for not accepting this line of reasoning. First, DRP₂ seems to be too strong. To use a well-worn example, upon seeing Superman saving Lois, I acquire a bit of knowledge, namely, that Superman saved Lois. When I later that day meet Clark Kent it is, at best, questionable that I can truly say to him "I *know* that you saved Lois."¹³ Whether I know that Clark saved Lois is a matter of substantial debate between Fregeans and direct reference theorists and even amongst direct reference theorists themselves. Some direct reference theorists argue that since "Clark Kent saved Lois" and "Superman saved Lois" express the same singular proposition, if

one knows one, one knows the other.¹⁴ Other direct reference theorists find it counterintuitive that one can substitute coreferential names in attitude contexts, and have developed theories that account for their antisubstitution intuitions. So, DRP_2 faces Frege's puzzle, and in the face of the puzzle, it is not clear that the principle is true.

The first premise says that in the absence of an alternative account of why descriptive reference fixings appear to fail the DRP_2 test, the subject does not have *de re* knowledge. But there is an alternative account of why the descriptive reference cases appear to fail the test, and it is that the test invites Frege's puzzle and, consequently, explanations of the kind typically used to respond to the puzzle.¹⁵ The reason, one might say, that I know that Superman saved Lois while I appear not to know that Clark Kent saved Lois is that I think of Superman in one way and Clark Kent in another way, and, because I do so, I do not realize that I am thinking of the same person in two different ways. So we can, for the sake of argument, grant that I do have *de re* knowledge of Clark Kent (Superman) and, in spite of that, appear to fail the DRP_2 test. Donnellan's argument, thus, fails to support the skeptical conclusion.

So much for Donnellan's attempt to step around the messy areas by introducing his two "loose" *de re* principles. Donnellan's loose principles do little to clarify what should count as *de re* knowledge, and due to the complications that arise when one looks closer at the two tests, they invite confusion and misunderstanding rather than providing clarity and increased understanding. To find out what Donnellan thinks about *de re* knowledge, we need to move away from his two tests.

DONNELLAN'S MASTER ARGUMENT

What I call Donnellan's master argument has not received the attention that his two loose *de re* principles have received, and so there is reason to stress the importance of this argument. Jeshion, for example, discusses the second of Donnellan arguments based on the *de re* principles and concludes on the basis of her discussion of them that Donnellan fails to establish his skeptical conclusion. She never discusses what I am calling his master argument. The reason for the lack of attention that this argument has received is probably that it needs to be developed, as it relies on the notoriously vague "en rapport" notion.

Before introducing the two *de re* principles, Donnellan emphasizes the *aboutness* of *de re* knowledge. *De re* knowledge has to be *of* or *about* an individual.¹⁶ Suppose that we stipulate that Newman 1 will be the first child born in the twenty-second century. When discussing the sentence "Newman 1 will be the first child born in the twenty-second century," Donnellan says that if we have any knowledge other than just of linguistic matters as a result of a stipulation concerning the sentence, it would have to be *de re* knowledge.¹⁷ "That is, it would have to be knowledge *about* an individual

in the sense that there is (or will be) an individual about whom we now know something and if that individual turns out to be John we now know something about John.”¹⁸ This knowledge is different from *de dicto* knowledge we might come to have, such as that the child will be bald due to chemical pollution. This latter piece of knowledge would not be knowledge about a certain individual.¹⁹ He continues

I make this assumption that the knowledge, if we have it, would have to be *de re* not simply on the grounds that “Newman 1” is a rigid designator. It does not follow from the fact that a term is a rigid designator that when it enters into a statement of propositional attitude, the attitude ascribed must be *de re*. It does not follow because not all rigid designators lack descriptive content.²⁰

While Donnellan talks about rigid designators, namely, a designator that refers to the same object in all possible worlds in which it exists, the term can be replaced by talk about direct designators for our discussion. After making the assumption quoted above, Donnellan moves on to introduce his two principles previously discussed. I take it that the two tests are supposed to capture this aboutness of *de re* beliefs that Donnellan requires.

At the end of his paper Donnellan characterizes the requirement for having *de re* knowledge in a slightly different way. When discussing Kaplan’s view that in order to have a *de re* propositional attitude toward an entity one must be *en rapport* with it, Donnellan states that a minimal requirement for having a *de re* attitude towards an object is to possess a name for it, and that a requirement for a name to be a name is that a speaker can use it to assert something about an entity.²¹ He further emphasizes that one is *not en rapport* with an object when one resorts to using stipulative descriptive reference fixing. Donnellan’s emphasis on the aboutness of *de re* knowledge and his minimal requirement for having a *de re* attitude towards an object provide us with a third, and what I think is the master, argument in Donnellan’s paper, the argument that he deliberately avoided discussing when he tried to “step around the messy areas” by introducing his loose principles.

1. In order to have *de re* knowledge of an object, one must be *en rapport* with it.
2. When using stipulative descriptive reference fixing, one is *not en rapport* with the object being named.
3. So, stipulative descriptive reference fixing does not provide one with *de re* knowledge.

The problem with this argument is that the *en rapport* relation is not spelled out. Nevertheless, we can take some steps towards indicating what Donnellan thought was required. In the quote above he indicates that if it were not for the fact that not all rigid designators lack descriptive content,

the attitude ascribed by a statement of propositional attitude that contains a rigid or a direct designator would have to be *de re*. So, when a rigid or a direct designator enters into a statement of propositional attitude, the attitude ascribed is *de re* if the designator lacks descriptive content.

The connection between the designator lacking descriptive content and the attitude being *de re* is not clarified by Donnellan, but it is plausible to construe the connection as follows. If the designator lacks descriptive content, then it cannot contribute descriptive content to a person's attitude. But if it cannot do so, then the person needs to be in contact with the object named in such a way that she can form an attitude towards it without the mediation of a description and without descriptive content. Such contact needs to be direct (i.e., it cannot be mediated inferentially as in the Neptune example, or via communication with others). Leverrier's knowledge regarding Neptune is, in this sense, inferential, for it is only via causal effects on Uranus that Leverrier posits Neptune's existence. Our knowledge regarding Newman 1 is inferential as well, for Newman 1 does not even exist at the present time and thus cannot be directly known.

It is precisely when one does not have a direct contact with objects, when one does not perceive the object, as Leverrier with regard to Neptune, that one resorts to stipulative descriptive reference fixing. And this appears to be at the core of Donnellan's rejection of stipulative descriptive reference fixing enabling us to acquire *de re* beliefs of the object named. Because the stipulator is not in the right relationship with the object being named, she cannot acquire knowledge *about* or *of* the object. Because she cannot acquire such knowledge, she does not acquire *de re* knowledge.

Leverrier did acquire some knowledge when he introduced the name "Neptune." The knowledge he acquired was rather limited and uninteresting, namely that the name "Neptune" refers to whatever is the cause of the perturbations in the orbit of Uranus. That piece of knowledge is not *about* or *of* Neptune. It is, instead, knowledge of linguistic matters. Given Leverrier's relation to Neptune, that was the only knowledge available to him. He was not in direct contact with the object, and that prevented his knowledge from being *de re* knowledge.

Donnellan's master argument so understood has a great deal of plausibility. What gives the argument added interest, though, is how its conclusion fails to mesh with the prevailing Russellian view that accepts the semantic/epistemic content requirement, namely, that the causal connection that allows one to acquire a name of an object also allows one to acquire a *de re* belief of that object.

THE CONNECTIVITY REQUIREMENT

While Donnellan allows for names to be introduced via stipulative definitions, he clearly requires that, in order for one to have *de re* knowledge

of an object, one has to have a closer, or more direct causal, contact with the object than one has when resorting to such a definition. This raises an interesting issue because Russellians, at the very least, tend to accept that one can have de re knowledge of objects that they do not have very close contact with, such as historical figures, simply by coming to believe a singular proposition that contains the object in question. They tend to say that if I, living in the twenty-first century, sincerely assent to the sentence “Bonaparte was a short general,” then I have a de re belief of Bonaparte. There certainly seems to be a lack of agreement between the Russellian view and the lesson we came away with from Donnellan’s Leverrier example.

If we find it plausible that Leverrier does not have a de re belief of Neptune, then we have a good case for it requiring more to acquire de re belief than acquiring a name of the object, or assenting to a sentence that expresses a singular proposition containing the object in question. It is wrongheaded to claim that Leverrier did not have de re knowledge of Neptune following his stipulative definition, but if he, after performing his stipulative definition, told someone that Neptune is the cause of the perturbations of Uranus, then that person would have de re knowledge of Neptune.

Assume that Leverrier does not have de re belief of Neptune after he introduced the name by stipulative definition. If that is so, then no one who is told by him that Neptune causes perturbations in the orbit of Uranus acquires de re belief of Neptune. But if the causal connections that allow one to acquire a name for an object are sufficient for having a de re attitude towards that object, then anyone who is told by Leverrier that Neptune causes perturbations in the orbit of Uranus would thereby acquire de re belief of Neptune. So the causal connections that allow one to acquire a name of an object are *not* sufficient for acquiring a de re belief of the object.

Direct reference theorists, including Kripke, as well as Kaplan in “Afterthoughts,” agree that a name can be introduced nonostensively, such as via a definite description, when the object has never been directly within sight or touch of the dubber.²² They would accept Leverrier having named Neptune and that the name “Neptune” directly refers to Neptune. Since most direct reference theorists agree that we can name unborn individuals (such as Newman 1) as well as causally inert numbers, it is fair to say that direct reference theorists, in general, do not favor a connectivity requirement for *naming*.

Direct reference theorists hold a version of a semantic connectivity requirement for use of names. That is, at the very least they maintain that for the typical case of a name of an object there needs to be a causal chain connecting the user of a name to its bearer. The nature of the causal connection is usually not spelled out, but typically it suffices that the users of a name use it with the intention to refer to the same object it referred to when they acquired it. Someone like Donnellan could accept the semantic connectivity requirement and still maintain that acquiring a name of an object does not entail that one acquires de re beliefs of the object. He could also maintain that one could

sincerely assent to a simple sentence containing the name without acquiring a *de re* belief of the object in the proposition expressed by the sentence. But if that is so, then semantic connectivity is not sufficient for epistemic connectivity; that is, neither the causal chain that maintains the semantic connection between an object and a name, nor the name itself, carries with it information that allows one to form *de re* belief of the object so named.

The issue we need to address is whether a name carries with it the relevant information that enables one to acquire a *de re* belief when acquiring the name. If one can introduce a name with a stipulative definition, which is the kind of introduction of a name that does not give the dubber a *de re* belief of the object named, and then holds that the name carries with it information that allows one to form a *de re* belief of the object named, then, paradoxically, the name could provide information that the stipulative definition fails to provide. While Leverrier does not have a *de re* belief of Neptune, most direct reference theorists hold a view that entails that if he tells a colleague that Neptune is the cause of the perturbations in the orbit of Uranus, thus passing along the name “Neptune,” and the friend comes to believe this, then the friend has a *de re* belief of Neptune. This is an intolerable result.

Direct reference theorists have said little on the subject of the epistemic connection that needs to obtain between a believer and the object named in order to acquire a *de re* belief of the object.²³ Still, Kaplan provides some help. In “Afterthoughts” he writes,

On my view, acquisition of a name does not, in general, put us *en rapport* (in the language of “Quantifying In”) with the referent. But this is not required for us to use the name in the standard way as a device of direct reference. Nor is it required for us to apprehend, to believe, to doubt, to assert, or to hold other *de dicto* attitudes toward the proposition we express using the name.

The *de dicto* hedge reflects my current view that *de dicto* attitudes, even those toward propositions expressed using directly referential terms, cannot easily be translated into *de re* attitudes.²⁴

So Kaplan believes that semantic connectivity alone does not provide the information needed for one to hold a *de re* attitude towards a proposition. It seems clear that, according to Kaplan, one needs a stronger connection to an object in order to have a *de re* attitude about it than is present in an attitude towards a singular proposition that contains that object.

Donnellan does not talk about or presume singular propositions in his article. Instead he simply talks about our having *de re* knowledge of an object. But it is reasonable to say that Donnellan’s view does not lose anything when translated into talk of *de re* attitudes involving singular propositions. What matters for him is direct connection to an object, such as Neptune, and thus the connection to an object in a singular proposition. One could then have a

de re attitude towards a singular proposition only if one has direct connection to the object in the proposition. That is, one needs to be, in Kaplan's terms, *en rapport* with the object. So understood, it appears that Donnellan's view and Kaplan's view in "Afterthoughts" nicely complement each other.

EPISTEMIC CONNECTIONS

A somewhat typical Russellian account of de re beliefs goes as follows: A name (and an indexical) contributes the object named (referred to) to the proposition expressed by the sentence in which it occurs. Since the object is *in* the proposition, any belief of that proposition will be *of* the object, and hence a de re belief.²⁵

Donnellan certainly rejects this line of reasoning with his discussion of Leverrier, for even if Leverrier has the directly referring name "Neptune," he does not, according to Donnellan, have de re beliefs about Neptune. And when Kaplan discusses semantic and epistemic connections he writes,

Those names that were properly introduced, by ostension or based on some other form of knowledge of the referent, carry and transmit the requisite epistemic connection [for one to have de re attitudes]. But in a tiny fraction of cases the connection is absent . . . and in these cases we have direct reference, and expressibility, but no apprehension.²⁶

Kaplan goes on to claim that a name may later take on the required epistemic connection, as when a name is introduced with a stipulative definition, and the referent later appears upon the scene and is recognized as the named object. Kaplan therefore agrees that when names are introduced with a stipulative definition, the dubber does not acquire de re knowledge, and he also holds that when the name is subsequently passed on to others before the referent happens upon the scene, they do not acquire de re knowledge. It is clear, therefore, that Donnellan and Kaplan do not accept what has come to be the dominant Russellian view of de re attitudes of direct reference theorists.

The view that it takes more than a semantic connection, namely, passing on a name from user to user, to have a belief about an object garners support from Gareth Evans. In *The Varieties of Reference* he writes:

Of far greater significance, as a subversion of traditional ways of thinking about reference . . . was the claim, endorsed in one or two places [by Kripke] . . . that not only were subjects capable of *referring* to—*saying* things about—individuals which they could not distinguish from other, but, further, they could hold *beliefs* about—be *thinking* of—those same individuals. To my knowledge, this is the first explicit challenge to what

I have called Russell's Principle . . . : the principle that in order to have a thought about a particular object, you must *know which* object it is about which you are thinking.²⁷

Evans goes on to point out that the evidence Kripke marshaled against Russell's principle was only an observation that in some rather special cases we might find it natural to say that someone held or expressed a belief about a referent of a name, and Evans questions whether we find it natural, in general, to say so. Evans further argues that

“if we are to say that the sheer introduction of a subject to a name which has a reference in the community may suffice to enable that subject to have thoughts about the referent . . . in contravention of Russell's Principle, then we are committed to saying that the subject has thereby acquired a capacity to entertain indefinitely many thoughts about the referent”²⁸

And this Evans finds highly counterintuitive.

Evans's Russell's Principle may be too strong, for it requires that one be able to identify the object one is thinking about in order for the thought to be of the object. As Evans puts it, one must have a discriminating conception of the object—a conception which would enable the subject to distinguish it from all other things.²⁹ That seems to require too much. It certainly seems that I can have beliefs about a childhood friend even if she has changed to such a degree that my conception of her would not distinguish her, nor allow me to distinguish her from her twin sister. But while Russell's Principle may be too strong, I find it reasonable to require that when one forms a *de re* belief about an object, one knows which object one forms the belief of (i.e., that one be able to discriminate it from other objects as *this very object* at the time the belief is formed). Donnellan and Kaplan do not endorse such a requirement explicitly, but their writing seems consistent with their accepting it.

Let us consider three epistemic content requirements as they relate to *de re* beliefs.

The semantic/epistemic content requirement: All that is needed for one to have a *de re* belief of an object is that one acquire a name of the object, or that one sincerely assent to a sentence expressing a singular proposition containing the object.

The weak epistemic content requirement: One can have a *de re* belief of an object without perceiving it, although some natural connection is required that is stronger than that provided by a name introduced into a language by someone who did not himself perceive the object.³⁰

The strong epistemic content requirement: One can only have a *de re* belief of an object if one has perceived it, and, at that time, one was able to discriminate it from other objects as being *this very object*.

Interestingly, while most direct reference theorists, including Russellians, assume the truth of the semantic/epistemic content requirement, Kaplan, Donnellan, and Evans reject it. As can be seen in the quote above Kaplan appears to endorse the weak epistemic content requirement, and, while given the context of his paper, it is not clear whether Donnellan is committed to the weak or the strong epistemic content requirement, he clearly does not advocate the semantic/epistemic content requirement. He is advocating a view that entails that Leverrier does not have a *de re* belief of Neptune after introducing the name “Neptune” via a stipulative definition. However, he does not discuss cases where names are passed from one speaker to another.

Contrary to those who assume the truth of the semantic/epistemic content requirement, I think that Donnellan and Kaplan have provided good reasons *not* to accept the semantic/epistemic content requirements for *de re* belief. It seems to me that the strong epistemic account has an intuitive appeal over the weak epistemic account and the semantic/epistemic account that makes it *prima facie* attractive. The appeal can be brought out with the following examples.

Suppose that I see an object and acquire a name of it, and then pass the name on to Holmes, who never has seen the object. Suppose further that Holmes does not know whether or not I have seen the object. Why should we then say that Holmes has, or can have, a *de re* belief of the object on the basis of so acquiring the name? From Holmes’s point of view, he has not acquired any more information, or different information, when he hears the name from me than when he hears the name from someone who has never seen the object. So, it becomes a task for the supporter of the weak epistemic content requirement, and a difficult task at that, to give an account of the transmission of *de re* beliefs that enables Holmes to have a *de re* belief of the object when he acquires the name from me, and that does not allow him to have a *de re* belief of the object when he acquires the name from someone who has never seen the object and only introduces the relevant name with a stipulative definition.³¹ Further, as far as Holmes knows, I might even be making up a name, and so I might for all he knows be using a name that fails to refer. As I will argue later, an account that allows one to have *de re* beliefs of nonexistent objects is not very plausible, and so any view that allows for such beliefs is problematic.

The following gives reasons to favor the strong epistemic requirement over the semantic/epistemic content requirement. Suppose, to expand a bit on Donnellan’s Neptune example, that Leverrier introduces the name “Neptune” as Donnellan describes it happened and subsequently tells Maurice about Neptune. But Leverrier, perplexed by the complexity of the perturbations of Uranus, thought at the time that the perturbations were better explained by the presence of two objects rather than one. He correctly hypothesizes that Neptune lies outside of Uranus, but also thinks that there is an object between Uranus and Neptune. He stipulates: let Peptune be the planet that lies between Uranus and Neptune. Leverrier then proceeds to tell Maurice about Peptune. If Donnellan is right, then Leverrier has *de re*

beliefs of neither Neptune nor Peptune. If the received Russellian view is right, then Maurice has a de re belief of Neptune after hearing about it from Leverrier, but Maurice does not have a de re belief of Peptune, since Peptune does not exist. Still, from Maurice's point of view, there is no detectible difference between the two names and the two beliefs, namely, the belief that Neptune is a planet and the belief that Peptune is a planet. It seems plausible to say that Maurice, like Leverrier, has de re belief of neither planet.

The important point that the strong epistemic content requirement gets right is that it neatly separates *semantic* and *epistemic* issues. When a name is passed on to me, it keeps denoting the same object. In that sense the name carries with it semantic information. But the name does not determine how I think of the object named, nor does it carry with it sufficient information to help me form a de re belief of the object denoted. Instead, it is just a tag, as Kripke put it in *Naming and Necessity*. Something besides the acquisition of a name is needed for one to form a belief of an object. Information that allows me to form a de re belief of an object needs to be obtained by a more direct contact with the object named. As Donnellan pointed out with the Leverrier example, since it is doubtful that an indirect contact with an object allows one to acquire de re knowledge of it when one names it, it is reasonable to conclude that we need to perceive the object and be able to identify it to form a de re belief of it.

Both Donnellan and Kaplan allow that one can introduce names of objects without being in direct contact with them, and by doing so establish a semantic connection between a name and an object. Neither assumes that when the name is passed on, the audience acquires a de re belief of the object named. Further, both assume that the epistemic connectivity requirement that allows one to have de re belief has to be stronger than the semantic connectivity requirement that allows one to refer to objects. If they are right, and I think they are, then one cannot assume that coming to accept a sentence expressing a singular proposition results in a belief of the object in the proposition. Instead, the resulting belief could be of a general proposition and not a belief of a singular proposition.

An immediate consequence of a separation of epistemic and semantic connectivity requirements and the difference in their strengths is that we can no longer assume that simply acquiring a name of an object will result in a de re belief or that assenting to a sentence expressing a singular proposition indicates that one believes that proposition. Instead we might need to look at how the believer is acquainted with the object named when determining whether her belief is de re or de dicto.

UNDERSTANDING NAMES

If we assume that Donnellan is correct in holding that one cannot acquire a de re belief of an object just by stipulating that the name *N* is to refer

to the *F*, and we assume that the semantic content of a proper name is its referent, then it seems like the Russellian has to reject one of the following theses:³²

Stipulative Reference Fixing: It is possible for a stipulator to introduce a name *N* into the public language by stipulating that its reference is to be fixed by the definite description “the *F*.”

Accessibility of Content: For all expressions *E* in the language *L*, and all sentences *S* in *L* expressing some proposition *P*, if agent *A* understands all the expressions *E* contained in *S*, then, if *A* were apprised of all the relevant contextual information, then *A* could have an attitude having *P* as its content by understanding *S*.

Robin Jeshion claims Accessibility of Content borders on being analytic.³³ However, the argument of this chapter suggests that we should accept stipulative reference fixing and that it is accessibility of content that should be rejected, at least in its present form. In rejecting accessibility of content, I advance a suggestion made by Nathan Salmon.³⁴ Salmon has suggested that there is a strong and a weak understanding of proper names, where strongly understanding *N* requires that one stand in some relevant relation to *N*. This suggestion is compatible with the view presented here that to acquire a *de re* belief of an object one needs to perceive it, and so one could have *de re* beliefs of an object only if one had a strong understanding of *N*. I will argue that one should only accept accessibility of content on a strong reading, and, when so understood, the thesis is incompatible with stipulative reference fixing.

The apparent difficulty here is that it seems hard to carve out a weak understanding of proper names within the Russellian framework. Jeshion puts the point as follows: “If you finally met me, would you thereby better understand the term ‘Robin Jeshion’? Surely this is something that the Millian denies.”³⁵ However, there are good reasons for the Russellian and the Millian to say that one would have a better understanding of the name “Robin Jeshion” after one meets her. Doing so allows the Russellian to remain a skeptic about descriptive reference fixing generating *de re* beliefs, allows her to remain a purist about the semantic content of proper names, and allows her to introduce names via stipulative reference fixing.

A Russellian who has never met Jeshion should argue that he does understand the name “Robin Jeshion” better after meeting her than he did before doing so. Before meeting her he had a *general understanding* of the name, that is, he knew the semantic role the name plays as a proper name. But since he did not know who the referent was, he did not have a *specific understanding* of the name, that is, he did not know that it was *this very individual* who was the semantic value of the name.³⁶ Since he has specific understanding *and* general understanding of the name after meeting her, he now has a better understanding of it than he did before meeting her. Perhaps

he will one day lose the specific understanding, but at least as long as he makes the connection that the name is of Robin Jeshion, that very person, he has a specific understanding of the name.

In light of this, we can say that when one introduces a name via stipulative reference fixing, then, we can only have a general understanding of the name on the basis of the introduction. While having general understanding may suffice to successfully use the name in a public language, it is insufficient to provide one with *de re* beliefs, or beliefs of the object. It is not until one acquires specific understanding of the name that one is in a position to have *de re* beliefs of it, for only then do we have the epistemic connection to the object to acquire such beliefs.

Suppose now that Proposition *P* in accessibility of content is a singular proposition. In order to understand *P*, one needs to have a specific understanding of the name in the sentence that expresses the proposition. So, when one considers singular propositions the accessibility of content thesis only applies if one has specific understanding of a proper name. But one only resorts to stipulative reference fixing, namely, using an identifying description to pick out an object when one is not in a position to otherwise point out that object. Consequently, stipulative reference fixing does not provide one with a specific understanding of a name. So understood, the two theses are inconsistent.

We can tie the previous discussion together as follows. Before meeting Jeshion, the Russellian only satisfied the weak epistemic content requirement and therefore could only have a general semantic understanding of the name “Jeshion” and could only have a *de dicto* belief about her. After meeting Jeshion, he satisfied the strong epistemic requirement and therefore could have a specific semantic understanding of the name “Jeshion” and so also could have a *de re* belief of her.

Donnellan argued that Leverrier did not have *de re* knowledge of Neptune, that is, he did not have knowledge of or about Neptune. It is further plausible to conclude that if Leverrier did not have *de re* knowledge of Neptune then those to whom he passes the name “Neptune” do not have such knowledge either. Nevertheless, direct reference theorists have generally embraced the view that a sufficient condition for acquiring knowledge of objects, or *de re* knowledge, is to sincerely assent to a sentence expressing a singular proposition containing that object. It appears that the direct reference theorists have made it too easy to acquire *de re* knowledge of an object.

RELATION AND CONTENT

I have not said anything about *de re* modes of presentation, the reason being that I am not sure that there is such a thing as a *de re* mode of presentation if by that we mean that there is something about the qualitative

nature of the mode of presentation that makes a thought *de re*. Instead, I have emphasized that the salient factor that enables one to have *de re* thoughts is the *relation* between the thought and the object thought about.³⁷ Without the relevant relation, one cannot have a belief about or of the object in question.

I have already discussed and criticized Evans's and McDowell's view that if there is no object, there is no thought. Unlike McDowell, Kent Bach views *de re* modes of presentation as being types and not tokens. As a type, a mode of presentation does not determine a reference, Bach argues. It does so only as a token, that is, with respect to a context. It appears correct to me to argue that types of modes of presentation are not object-dependent while tokens of modes of presentation might be object-dependent. Suppose, for example, that I have a mode of presentation of a cat. If this mode of presentation is caused by a cat, then it seems right to say that this very mode of presentation would not have existed had it not been caused by the cat. Had I perceived a different but otherwise identical cat, I would have had a different token due to the fact that the mode of presentation was of a different cat. And if I had a qualitatively indistinguishable mode of presentation of a hallucinated cat instead of a perceived cat then that, again, would be a different token. So, while the modes of presentation might in these cases be indistinguishable to me, it is reasonable to argue that the tokens are different due to their different origin; namely, two are of different objects, while the third one is not of anything. As a type, the mode of presentation is not object-dependent, but since tokens are in part individuated by what they are a token of, a token of an object is, trivially, object-dependent. If some tokens are not of objects and they are otherwise qualitatively indistinguishable from object-dependent tokens, then that shows that qualitatively there is no difference between modes of presentation that are *de re* and those that are not *de re*. That is, when individuated narrowly, there is no difference between modes of presentation of objects and hallucinated modes of presentation. This is compatible with the view I have presented so far, namely that what enables one to have *de re* beliefs lies in the relation between the believer and the object that the relevant belief is of. And here I call for a more direct relation between the believer and the object than direct reference theorists have typically required.

BACK TO SINGULAR PROPOSITIONS

What I have labeled Donnellan's master argument is brief and needs an elaboration and support that Donnellan does not provide. When elaborated, the results of the argument conflict with a widely accepted variant of the direct reference theory. Donnellan argues that Leverrier does not have *de re* knowledge of Neptune. It is further plausible to conclude that, if Leverrier does not have *de re* knowledge of Neptune, then those to whom

he passes the name “Neptune” do not have such knowledge either. Given the plausibility of Donnellan’s argument, as I have interpreted it, it appears that the direct reference theorists have made it too easy to acquire *de re* beliefs of an object and, consequently, too easy to believe singular propositions.

I have argued that in order for one to acquire a *de re* belief of an object and to believe a singular proposition, one needs to be acquainted with the object in the proposition in the sense of being able, at the time of belief acquisition, to identify the object in the proposition as *this very object*. For one to have a *de re* belief or believe a singular proposition, the belief of the object, namely, the object in the proposition, cannot be mediated inferentially. Instead one needs to stand in a more direct relationship with the object—close enough so that one is able to perceive it. The most prominent examples of such perception are sight and touch. When you can see an object or touch it, it is easy to identify the object of which the belief is about as *this very object*.

The restriction I have placed on what is needed in order to believe a singular proposition is significantly stronger than what direct reference theorists typically assume. One of its consequences is that a sincere assent to a sentence expressing a singular proposition might not indicate that one believes that proposition. If I assent to the sentence “Kasparov is a grandmaster” and can only represent Kasparov with a description or a set of descriptions due to me not being acquainted with him in the sense required, then it seems reasonable to claim that I believe a Fregean proposition, or a set of Fregean propositions, and not a singular proposition. In that case, I lack a specific understanding of the name, and instead I only have a general understanding of the name. My thoughts are of Kasparov, whoever it is, and not Kasparov, *this very person*. If my connection with Kasparov is such that I am not acquainted with him, and so at the time of belief formation I cannot identify him as *this very person*, then I can only form a belief of a Fregean proposition when assenting to the sentence “Kasparov is a grandmaster.” Of course, as Kaplan points out, if Kasparov later happens onto the scene, and I become acquainted with him in the right way, then the name can take on the required epistemic connection, and I can form a *de re* belief of Kasparov and believe the relevant singular proposition.

While the restriction I have placed on what is needed in order to believe a singular proposition is strong, it allows for *de re* beliefs to be held in a variety of ways. The salient condition for having *de re* beliefs, I have argued, is not to be found in the nature of the representation of the object, or in how a singular proposition is believed, but rather in the epistemic relation one has to the object or, in the case of singular proposition, the epistemic relation to the object in the proposition. If the epistemic connection with the object is not of the right kind, then accepting a sentence that expresses a singular proposition does not result in, or reflect, a belief of that singular proposition (i.e., the assent does not result in a *de re* belief). However, if the relation is

of the right kind, then one can represent the object in the proposition in a variety of ways and, consequently, there are a variety of ways in which one might believe the singular proposition.

As is to be expected there are a number of situations that are not clear-cut. Am I able to form a *de re* belief of Kasparov and believe a singular proposition about him when I have never met him but am shown a photo of him? One way to test the case is as follows. If you were to introduce the name “Kasparov” on the basis of the photo, would that introduction amount to a stipulative reference fixing? If the answer is yes, then you cannot form a *de re* belief of Kasparov, and you cannot come to believe a singular proposition about him on the basis of the photo.

Such cases aside, we do have clear examples to work with. There are clear cases, such as Leverrier’s Neptune case, where Leverrier does not have a *de re* belief about Neptune and does not believe a singular proposition about Neptune in spite of having acquired the name “Neptune.” And there are clearly cases, such as if I were to be introduced face to face to Kasparov, where I can form a *de re* belief about him, and I can come to believe a singular proposition about him. That is a significant distinction, and that is enough to allow us to move on and find out *how* we might believe singular propositions.

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6 Beliefs and Belief Reports

As already discussed, Nathan Salmon has advanced a theory according to which many of our intuitions about truth conditions of belief reports are due to pragmatic implications carried by utterances of these sentences in a given context, and not due to the semantic content of those sentences.¹ According to him, the semantic contribution of a name to the proposition expressed by the sentence it occurs in is its reference. This view, together with other plausible semantic principles, gives the result that belief reports that differ only in that they contain different but coreferential names have the same truth value. This leads to the result that if (1) is true, then so is (2):

1. Diana believes that Bob Dylan has a beautiful voice.
2. Diana believes that Robert Zimmerman has a beautiful voice.

This is so because the names “Bob Dylan” and “Robert Zimmerman” refer to the same person, and so the embedded sentences in (1) and (2) express the same proposition. While most of us find this result counterintuitive, Salmon explains that we do so because the utterances of (1) and (2) carry with them implicatures that indicate *how* Diana holds a belief in addition to *that* she holds it. Even though Diana does not realize that Bob Dylan is Robert Zimmerman and so would never assent to (2), Salmon nevertheless claims that (2) is true. What needs to be done is to explain why we take (1) to be true and (2) to be false.

Salmon’s primary emphasis is on the semantics of belief reports. His semantic account includes that a belief report is true if the believer stands in the belief relation to the singular proposition expressed by the sentence in the belief report. The singular proposition is a structured proposition, made up of individuals and properties. While the belief relation is binary, it can be analyzed into an existential generalization that is a three-place relation, BEL, which involves a believer, a proposition, and a guise under which the proposition is apprehended. Since the BEL relation is an existential generalization, the believer believes the proposition she accepts under some guise.²

Salmon has only provided a sketch of what might be implicated by a belief report. While (1) and (2) have the same semantic content, they pragmatically implicate different propositions. The utterance of (1) implicates something like

- 1*. Diana believes that Bob Dylan has a beautiful voice under a guise like “Bob Dylan has a beautiful voice.”

While the utterance of (2) implicates something like

- 2*. Diana believes that Robert Zimmerman has a beautiful voice under a guise like “Robert Zimmerman has a beautiful voice.”

Because of the pragmatically implicated propositions, listeners will likely mistake the proposition expressed by (1*) for the one expressed by (1), and the proposition expressed by (2*) for the one expressed by (1). Sentences (1*) and (2*) show more explicitly the three-place BEL relation instead of the two-place belief relation in the original sentences. Consequently, the implicated propositions include a guise, or a way in which the original proposition was believed. The guises in the implicated propositions are not carefully specified, but are something like sentences, and the implicatures are something like the implicatures exemplified above. One of the problems with this account is that it focuses exclusively on belief reports, while there are also substitution issues with simple sentences (i.e., sentences that are not embedded or do not occur in opaque contexts).

I believe that the approach that Salmon and many others take, namely, an approach that treats simple sentences and belief reports as raising fundamentally different problems, is mistaken. Instead, I believe that the preferred way to deal with substitution problems is to view substitution in simple sentences and embedded sentences as raising the same problem, in which case we should be able to find a unified solution. We have intuitions that tell us that we cannot substitute freely in simple sentences, and we have intuitions that tell us that we cannot substitute freely in belief contexts. I believe that the same intuitions are at work in both instances, and the same kind of an explanation as to how to account for these intuitions should apply to both cases. The solution that I will present focuses on singular propositions and ways of believing them, and it embraces naïve Russellianism. The idea that we can believe singular propositions in different ways is, I believe, fundamentally sound. But it is possible to advance this basic idea in various ways, or to tell different stories about how one can believe singular propositions in different ways. The story I will tell is not one of systematically mistaking one proposition for another (i.e., it will not be a story about pragmatic implicature). Instead, it will be a psychological story about how we might represent objects and elicit information about objects when so prompted.

FIVE PROBLEMS

The direct reference theory faces several well-known problems that have dominated the discussion of the theory and defined the various attempts to defend it. I will raise variations of the problems for the direct reference theory using the familiar case of Superman and Clark Kent, assuming all along that they are not fictional characters, as well as a version of Kripke's Paderewski example.

Lois, as is well known, admires Superman a good deal while she wonders why Clark Kent always seems to disappear when problems are near. Now consider the following two sentences:

3. Superman is Superman.
4. Clark Kent is Superman.

Lois would readily assent to (3) and accept it as being trivially true. At the same time, she would claim that (4) is false. The naïve Russellian is committed to saying that (3) and (4) express the same proposition, and so she has to explain how it is that Lois can, apparently, believe a proposition and its negation the same time without detecting any inconsistency.

Suppose that I report Lois' beliefs as follows:

5. Lois believes that Superman is Superman.
6. Lois believes that Clark Kent is Superman.

The naïve Russellian is committed to saying that the embedded sentences in (5) and (6) express the same proposition, and so, assuming semantic innocence, namely, that sentences express the same proposition when embedded within attitude contexts as they do outside of such contexts, the naïve Russellian is committed to saying that both (5) and (6) are true. Nevertheless Lois would accept (5), while claiming that (6) reports a false belief, and she would do so without detecting any inconsistency in her beliefs.

It is tempting to argue that the explanation of Lois's beliefs has to lie in the *sentences* used to state the proposition, or that it has to lie in the *name* used for the person in the proposition. That, however, does not seem to be a promising approach, since the problems, as well as some additional problems, can be stated using a single name and identical sentences.

Suppose that Paderewski, who is both a politician and a piano player, is known to Karina as a Polish politician, and so Karina accepts the sentence "Paderewski is a politician." Later she sees Paderewski play the piano, and, since she thinks that no politicians are competent piano players, forms the belief that Paderewski is not a politician. In spite of believing both that Paderewski is and is not a politician, Karina detects no inconsistency in her beliefs.³ Now suppose that Karina, vacationing in Germany, sees Paderewski speak at a political function. Not recognizing him, she comes to believe

that Paderewski is a German politician. Karina thus believes twice over that Paderewski is a politician. If we indicate Karina's use of the name "Paderewski" when she takes it to refer to Paderewski the Polish politician with "Paderewski_p," her use of the name when she takes it to refer to Paderewski the German politician with "Paderewski_G," and her use of the name when she takes it to refer to the piano player with "Paderewski_M," then we can indicate Karina's beliefs with the following three sentences:

7. Paderewski_p is a politician.
8. Paderewski_G is a politician.
9. Paderewski_M is not a politician.

Again, the naïve Russellian is committed to saying that (7) and (8) express the same proposition. But already familiar considerations raised by Frege show that there are serious problems for that view. One of the main points in "On Sense and Meaning" was to demonstrate a need to build into propositions modes of presentation associated with the terms in the statements expressing them. The cognitive significance of (7) and (8) can be different in spite of both using the name Paderewski, and Frege accounts for this by arguing that the sentences express different propositions.

Suppose that Karina does not have a very high opinion of Polish politicians and that she is fascinated by German politicians. Later in the day after hearing Paderewski speak in Germany, I see Paderewski and say to Karina, "Paderewski is right across the street." In response Karina shows the kind of excitement that she would never show if she thought that Paderewski the Polish politician was across the street. "I want to see him," she says, and hastens across the street—an effort she would never have undertaken had she believed this to be the Polish politician. It seems reasonable to say that different beliefs and different information correspond to (7) and (8), and so the direct reference theorist has to explain how different beliefs can correspond to one and the same singular proposition. Let us call this the *multiple belief problem*.

The second problem is a version of Frege's puzzle. Consider the following identity statements:

10. Paderewski_p is Paderewski_p.
11. Paderewski_p is Paderewski_G.

Many advocates of the direct reference view, including the naïve Russellian, claim that (10) and (11) express the same singular proposition. In spite of that, accepting what these sentences express can have significantly different cognitive implications in Karina's situation. When Karina thinks about Paderewski as the Polish politician, she might entertain the trivial information expressed by (10). If she, after running across the street in Germany and seeing Paderewski there, comes to believe that Paderewski the Polish

politician is the same person as Paderewski the German politician, then we are tempted to say that she came to believe what (11) expresses. However, we seem unable to do so, since (10) and (11) express the same proposition, and Karina already believed what (10) expresses. So the direct reference theorist has to explain two things: how what (11) expresses can be informative while what (10) expresses is not informative, and how Karina can believe what (10) expresses while seemingly being ignorant as to what (11) expresses.

The third problem has to do with belief reports. When reporting Karina's beliefs, I might utter the following sentences:

12. Karina believes that Paderewski_p is a politician.
13. Karina believes that Paderewski_G is a politician.
14. Karina believes that Paderewski_M is a politician.

The naïve Russellian holds that the embedded sentences in (12), (13), and (14) express the same singular proposition, so one would expect that all three report the same belief. In spite of that, Karina might accept (12) and (13) as being accurate, while claiming that what (14) expresses is false. Karina also might be unable without further empirical investigation to detect an inconsistency among her beliefs.⁴ Let us call this the *consistency problem*.

Several questions come to mind when considering these problems. We often use different sentences, substituting coreferring names, to raise the problem above. Why does it make a difference to the agent's behavior how we express a given proposition, that is, why does our choice of names make a difference to our attitude and behavior? And since we can raise the problem using identical sentences, where should we locate the explanation of different attitudes and behavior if not in the sentences themselves?

The problems cut to the core of the issue by pointing in a general direction for a possible solution of all three problems. The solution will involve the familiar move of cutting the close ties between propositions and beliefs in favor of an account that includes ways of believing. A solution along these lines would not only solve the first problem in a fairly obvious way, but it would also provide a solution for the other two problems. Different ways of believing (10) and (11) would explain how Karina can discover the truth of (11) while all the time believing what (10) expresses. In a similar way, she can accept (12) and (13) as being accurate reports without accepting what (14) expresses. The main problem is to provide a plausible account of ways of believing, one that does not run into the difficulties of the accounts previously discussed.

It seems reasonable to assume that a solution that focuses on simple sentences will carry over to embedded sentences. At the very least, it is a good working hypothesis to assume so. If we can solve the problems that arise for simple sentences by providing an account of ways of believing, then it appears that we should be able to solve the problems that arise for embedded

sentences by employing that same account of ways of believing. Following the old advice that one should start with the simple problems and work towards the more complex, it appears that the simple sentences provide the challenge that first demands our attention. We have already seen how some of the attempted solutions of the problems that arise for embedded sentences do not, and cannot, be applied to simple sentences. For example, Salmon's approach to embedded sentences, namely to introduce a three-place BEL relation that includes a way of believing a proposition, cannot be applied to simple sentences, because the relevant BEL relation is not to be found in them. The lesson to learn from the attempts that start with belief reports is that dealing with simple sentences embedded in an attitude context invites complications that lead to unnecessarily complex solutions. It thus seems likely that simple sentences provide the more fundamental problem together with fewer distractions.

Two more problems deserve mention and we should keep them in mind when working towards a coherent and plausible solution of the three well-known problems already stated. The *translation problem* arises when we realize that people who do not share a language can nevertheless share beliefs, or believe the same things. Accounts that, for example, build linguistic items into the objects of beliefs in an attempt to create fine-grained propositions have a hard time dealing with the translation problem. And the *no name problem* arises when we accept that we can have beliefs about objects that we have no names for, and, more controversially, someone might have beliefs about objects in spite of having very limited language capabilities. An account that focuses all its attention on names and other linguistic items has a hard time dealing with this possibility.

MODIFICATIONS AND THE GENERALITY CONSTRAINT

When discussing the substitution problems facing the direct reference theory, it is common to raise them in the context of how the relevant proposition is presented, namely, by showing how using different sentences or choice of words when uttering a sentence can result in the relevant proposition being believed in different ways. But it is clear that while the choice of words does play a role in some typical cases, the same kind of puzzles can be raised without the sentences expressing the relevant proposition containing different words. Kripke's Paderewski example demonstrates the point. One thing that the Paderewski case shows is that we cannot resort to the shape of the sentences expressing the proposition as making the relevant difference to information value, for the sentences that give rise to the problems may look the same. We need to look for a solution somewhere else.

The problems introduced so far are fairly typical for the types of problems raised for the direct reference theory. But we should not assume that there is something unique about the direct reference theory that invites these

problems, as they can easily be raised without using any specific theory about names and how names refer.

First, it seems that the type of problems can be raised with indexicals instead of names, and so the problems are not unique to names. Suppose that I see the head and the tail of a snake, the middle part of it being blocked from vision by a large box. Someone familiar with the snake points first at its tail and then at its head while uttering “this (pointing at the tail) is that (pointing at the head).” I get it. The tail and the head, much to my surprise, belong to the same snake. What I previously thought of as parts of two snakes I now think of as parts of the same snake.

Further, it seems that we can raise the same type of problems with the use of pictures or scents instead of using names. Suppose that I show Karina two identical pictures of Paderewski giving a political speech. She immediately recognizes the person in the photograph. I then show her two different pictures, one of Paderewski tending to his political constituents and another picture that shows him on stage playing the piano. Neither picture contains any relevant new information for Karina, as we can assume that they were taken at events that she attended. We can easily say that in the first case, where I show Karina two identical pictures, the second picture provides Karina with no additional information, while, in the second case where I show her two different pictures, the pictures can provide a good deal of information once she recognizes that the two pictures are of the same person. It might take some work for Karina to uncover the identity of the pianist, and so it is possible that she would have to do some investigating before realizing that the two pictures are of the same person, namely, Paderewski. Further, if I were to report Karina’s belief, I could, somewhat inventively, display the pictures in the appropriate way instead of using words. When asked about Karina’s beliefs, I might, for example, display the two pictures of Paderewski, the one when he is in the political area and the one where he is playing at the concert. Such a display, together with, for example, the identity sign, could easily report Karina’s belief that the men in the pictures are identical. The case described is sufficiently similar to the more traditional cases involving identity statements to show that Frege’s puzzle does not have to be tied to names. Other referring devices, or other ways of identifying objects, can be used to raise what is essentially the same problem.

Consider another example, this one using scent as an identifying device. Suppose that one evening I and a friend of mine see a shadowy figure pass by, leaving behind a faint and unusual flowery scent of perfume. A second evening another shadowy figure passes by, leaving behind a strong and musky perfume odor that is clearly different from the faint scent we had smelled the evening before. The second shadowy figure clearly used different perfume than the first shadowy figure. After some investigation, we identify the two perfumes used. When thinking about the two shadowy figures, I remember that both of them had the same distinct limp. I lift the two perfume bottles

and, after first holding them apart, slowly move them together until they touch. My friend looks at me somewhat surprised and then says, "I think you are right. They are the same person." Here we used scent to identify the person and were able to use scent when indicating that what we thought were two persons is in fact one person.

The lesson to be learned from these examples is that the problems traditionally associated with names and, more recently, with the direct reference theory can be raised without any talk of names. The problems are not specifically about names. That is not so surprising if we consider that names and other linguistic items are not the only referring devices that we have, although they are arguably the most convenient and widely used of any such devices. The problems seem to be more general problems about information and attitudes. Any solution to the problems needs to be sensitive to the fact that it needs to apply broadly, and not just to names. We can call this constraint on potential solutions the generality constraint. While the focus here will continue to be on names, we need to be mindful that the scope of the problems extends beyond names and so any solution to the problems needs to take account of the generality constraint. A solution that focuses too much on some specific features of names and language will probably not be successful because it will in all likelihood be too language-specific and thus unable to take into account, for example, the example where Frege's puzzle is raised with demonstratives or with the help of pictures instead of names. We have seen attempts to deal with the substitution problem that build language tokens, such as names, into propositions. Such a solution is bound not to satisfy the generality constraint. So will approaches that maintain that a solution of the puzzles has to focus on linguistic meaning, such as descriptive meaning.

With the generality constraint in mind, I will continue focusing on the puzzles as they are typically presented, namely, as puzzles having to do with names. The generality constraint will force me to keep any solution of the problems free of language tokens and language meanings as such solutions that cannot be applied to nonlinguistic representations.

BRAUN'S AND SAUL'S MISTAKEN EVALUATION

Recently Jennifer M. Saul and David Braun have, independently as well as together, presented an attractive account of beliefs of simple sentences.⁵ The crux of their view is that substitution failures are ultimately to be explained as *mistaken evaluations*. However, while mistaken evaluations can explain some of the problems that the direct reference theory faces, the view fails to explain other problems. While I do like a number of aspects of Saul's and Braun's account, I will show that the mistaken evaluation view does not work because it does not adequately account for our antisubstitution intuitions.

Even the naïve Russellian has a hard time denying our ant substitution intuitions. There is certainly something that makes even the naïve Russellian cringe a bit when she claims that we can freely substitute coreferential names in sentences. It is quite possible that theoretically trained intuitions more than untutored intuitions convince the naïve Russellian that we can so substitute. Arguing that truth value is preserved when so substituting and providing complex accounts that allow one to say that truth value is preserved is a long way from showing that freely substituting coreferential names has intuitive support. After all the theorizing, there is still something that makes one feel uneasy when claiming that truth value is preserved during substitution. The naïve Russellian cannot simply brush away the pretheoretical intuitions that favor rejecting free substitutions of coreferential names. I will attempt to honor our pretheoretic intuitions against free substitutions and at the same time agree with the naïve Russellian view that truth value is preserved when substituting coreferential names, both in simple sentences and in belief reports. The key move in accomplishing this is to distinguish what our intuitions are working with—semantics or information. Once we recognize that our intuitions are working on two levels, namely, with information and with semantics, we can provide an account that recognizes both the naïve Russellians' intuitions and our uneasiness with substitutions. But first, I will present Saul's and Braun's views more fully.

Braun provides an account of belief ascriptions that relies only on guises as opposed to both guises and implicatures. He proposes that guises are mental states that are sentencelike. That view, he writes,

“is convenient, vivid, and plausible (in my opinion). It identifies these mental states with states involving mental representations. On one view of this sort, to believe a proposition is to have in one's head (in the right way) a mental sentence that expresses that proposition. These mental sentences express propositions because of their structures and because their constituents refer to individuals and express properties and relations. . . . Such a state, of having-sentence-S-in-one's-head, can have the causal role of a belief state.”⁶

Suppose, Braun writes, that Mary rationally understands both (15) and (16) and thinks that the former is true and the latter is false.

15. Hammurabi believes that Hesperus is visible in the evening.
16. Hammurabi believes that Phosphorus is visible in the evening.

If guises are sentencelike, then one way in which a person can believe the proposition expressed by (15) is by having (15) itself in one's belief box, and one way in which a person can believe the proposition expressed by (16) is to have (16) itself in one's belief box.⁷ Mary could have both sentences in her belief box and thus believe the proposition twice over. Or, she could

have (15) and not (16) in her belief box. Or, she could have (15) and the negation of (16) in her belief box, without detecting an inconsistency in her beliefs. Given that the mental sentence determines the proposition Mary believes, all of this is rational.⁸ The explanation of how a rational person can hold these combinations of beliefs is explained by the sentencelike guises and not by assuming that the utterances of (15) and (16) pragmatically convey different propositions.⁹

In a more recent paper, Braun and Saul team up and develop a view that is very much in the spirit of Braun's previous paper in that it does not rely on pragmatic implicature.¹⁰ Consider the following sentences:

17. Superman leaps more tall buildings than Clark Kent.
18. Superman leaps more tall buildings than Superman.

It appears that (17) is true, while (18) is false. Braun and Saul suggest that one may maintain two cognitively separated sets of beliefs about Clark Kent, one which is associated with the name "Superman" and another which is associated with the name "Clark Kent," and that these sets attribute different properties to Superman/Kent, and affect how one believes propositions containing Clark Kent. That we maintain two cognitively separate sets of beliefs about Clark Kent seems right to me, as I have advocated a similar view and investigated how it affects justification of beliefs of singular propositions as well as a priori knowledge.¹¹ Braun and Saul write,

These two pools of information attribute different properties to Superman/Clark. For instance, the "Superman" pool attributes to him the property of leaping tall buildings, while the "Clark" pool does not. You also associate different images with the two names. When you *quickly* evaluated the proposition semantically expressed by [17], your pools of information and images appeared to you to support that proposition's truth. Therefore, you judged that [17] was true. You did not pause to consider the identity [Superman is Clark Kent] long enough to notice its logical consequences. Or, if you did, you erred in not considering this good reason to alter your original judgment.¹²

Braun and Saul imply here that an enlightened speaker, one who knows that Superman is Clark Kent, and one who is attentive, would see, and accept, that both (17) and (18) express falsehood. By the same token, an enlightened and attentive speaker should accept that both

19. Clark Kent saved the city
- and
20. Superman saved the city

express truth, given that she knows that Superman has prevented the destruction of their city. Our standard intuitions about sentences like (17)–(20) are incorrect, they claim.

Saul develops the Braun-Saul view further in her recent book.¹³ There she further argues that, when we have a reason to believe that a subject often stores information about the individual in different nodes or folders, when learning about an individual, that information is presented in different ways. Citing research in psychology, Saul points out that when subjects learn, for example, that “James Bartlett rescued the kitten,” then a James Bartlett node or folder is formed, and the information *rescued the kitten* is placed in that node or folder. Suppose then that the subjects are given some information about a lawyer so that they form The Lawyer node or folder. Eventually the subjects are told that James Bartlett is the lawyer. In spite of now knowing the relevant identity, namely, that James Bartlett is the lawyer, it takes the subjects longer to verify “The lawyer rescued the kitten” (which they had not seen before) than it took them to verify that “James Bartlett rescued the kitten,” (which they had seen before). However, if the subjects are told up front that James Bartlett is the lawyer (instead of them being told after being fed information about James Bartlett and the lawyer, while the subject does not know that they are the same person), and then told that “James Bartlett rescued the kitten,” then the subjects are about as quick to verify “The lawyer rescued the kitten” as they are to verify “James Bartlett rescued the kitten.” This, Saul infers, provides some empirical evidence for the claim that people form different nodes or folders in which they store information separately.¹⁴

So, why is it then that we tend to have the intuition that (17) is true? Saul’s answer is that we fail to reflect on the identity of Superman and Clark Kent and hence do not integrate the information about Superman and Clark Kent. Since we have good reasons for not reflecting on the identity and not making the relevant inferences, we don’t do so. Hence, Saul concludes, we take (17) to be true.¹⁵

But what if we are aware of the relevant identity and do reflect upon it and still don’t realize that (17) and (18) must have the same truth value? Saul’s answer is that, even if we reflect upon the double life of Clark Kent, that does not mean that we make all the inferences that one can make about him. Saul provides several possible explanations for this failure to make the relevant inferences. We might simply fail to make some of the inferences, just as students sometimes fail to make simple inferences. Or, it might be the case that we are more convinced of the truth and falsity of the relevant statements than the inference that shows that both have the same truth value. Or, it might be the case that one has greater confidence in one’s truth-conditional judgments than one’s inference making.¹⁶ So, the fundamental answer that Saul provides for our reluctance to freely substitute coreferential names in simple sentences remains the same as before: we fail to make the relevant inferences.

Saul further emphasizes her view that our intuitions against substitution depend on us failing to make the relevant inferences when she tries to explain why we speak the way we do. Speakers do utter sentences such as

21. Shostakovich always signaled his connections to the classical traditions of St. Petersburg, even if he was forced to live in Leningrad.

The speaker may be aware of the identity in question, namely, that St. Petersburg is Leningrad, and so it is not lack of awareness of the relevant identity that explains this utterance. In fact, the speaker might take herself to be communicating something true and relevant. The speaker seems to be communicating a contrast between living in St. Petersburg and Leningrad. However, if St. Petersburg is Leningrad, there cannot be such contrast. Presumably the speaker would never utter (22).

22. Shostakovich always signaled his connections to the classical traditions of Leningrad, even if he was forced to live in Leningrad.

So how can we explain that a speaker who is aware of the identity of St. Petersburg and Leningrad utters (21) while she would never utter (22)? Here is Saul's answer.

The answer is simple. Sometimes, as argued earlier in this chapter, enlightened speakers well aware of particular identities will fail to make all the inferences that they could from the relevant identity claims. . . . The utterer of [21] knows that St. Petersburg is Leningrad, and indeed reflects on this at the time that he utters [21]. Nonetheless, he may think that [21] is true, and not odd. This is because he simply doesn't use his knowledge of the identity in question to infer from [21] to [22], which might give him pause.¹⁷

Surely an unenlightened speaker would utter something like (21). However, Saul retains the primary explanation of the Braun-Saul view when her main claim is that an enlightened speaker would only utter something like (21) if she fails to make the relevant inferences. Again, the antisubstitution intuition that we have when we know the relevant identity is explained by a failure to make the relevant inferences.

One of the main projects of this chapter will be to present a view that shows that even an enlightened speaker who makes all the relevant inferences still has a good reason to utter something like (21), and still has a good reason to not freely substitute in simple sentences, contrary to what Braun and Saul argue. That is, I will maintain that truth value is preserved with the substitution but that nevertheless our antisubstitution intuitions should be respected. I will therefore present a view that is strongly opposed to Saul when she writes "If . . . I decide that Naïve Millianism is right, I will

have good reason to believe that substitution of coreferential names always succeeds—in any context.”¹⁸

TRUTH VALUES, CONVEYED INFORMATION, AND ELICITED INFORMATION

We reach the conclusion that both (19) and (20) express a true proposition, that (17) and (18) express false propositions, and that (21) and (22) express the same proposition as a result of accepting some fairly sophisticated semantic theories. Laymen have a hard time accepting these results, as do philosophers who do not accept semantic theories of the ilk of naïve Russellianism. Even some naïve Russellians, including myself, have a hard time accepting that we should be able to freely exchange “Clark Kent” and “Superman” in (19) and (20). If Lois reports that Clark Kent saved the city, then that surely seems to be very different news than if she reports that Superman saved the city. Unenlightened readers would certainly be taken by surprise by the news. I will explain below why not only the unenlightened readers but also the *enlightened* readers, namely, those who are in the know about Superman’s identity, would and should be taken by surprise. The enlightened readers would understand Lois’s report that Clark Kent saved the city using the name “Clark Kent” very differently than had she reported that Superman saved the city using the name “Superman.” While the sentences express the same proposition and thus have the same truth value, the sentences certainly convey different information to, and elicit different information from, the reader. Even when I consider the identity and am in the know about it, I still do, and rightly so, resist substitution in most contexts, contrary to what Braun and Saul suggest, and so it does not seem that my antisubstitution intuitions can be fully explained by mistaken evaluation.

Suppose that we suggest that a very simple story explain all of the above-mentioned problems, namely, that if we individuate beliefs by the causal roles they have as belief states, then that provides the fundamental explanation needed. The story might then continue and say that when one believes both that Paderewski is and is not a politician, the mental name “Paderewski” plays different functional roles in one’s mental life and contributes accordingly to the mental sentences in which it occurs. But to resort to functional roles without a fuller explanatory account of how it might be that the names and sentences play different functional roles does no more than recognize that there are problems to deal with and that we do believe propositions in different ways. That is, it does no more than say that believing singular propositions in different ways results in different mental states. Clearly, this is not satisfactory as an account of how we believe singular propositions. What we need is a more complete story of how assenting to, for example, a single proposition twice over might result in different beliefs, and how it is that names of the same individual, even the

same name, can elicit different information about the individual. We already know that we can believe propositions in different ways, and, if beliefs are individuated functionally, then this amounts to saying that instances of beliefs of the same proposition can play different functional roles. But saying that instances of believing the same proposition can play more than one functional role in our belief system does not advance our understanding of how we believe propositions in different ways, and it does not advance our understanding of why we resist substitutions. If we simply appeal to functional roles without further explanations and elaborations, then we fail to give an account of how assenting to two sentences expressing the same proposition can result in different belief states.

The naïve Russellian needs to tell an explanatory story that accounts for how (19) and (20) express the same proposition and that they, consequently, have the same truth value, while explaining how we rightly have strong antisubstitution intuitions, even when enlightened about the relevant identity. It is such a story that I will tell.¹⁹ The story will rely on a distinction between

- a. the proposition expressed by a sentence, and
- b. the information conveyed and/or elicited by a sentence expressing the proposition.

The proposition expressed by a sentence is a function of the semantic value of its components and so a study of (a) is a study in semantics. But often two sentences that express the same proposition nevertheless convey and/or elicit very different information. Sometimes the difference in information between two sentences is due to pragmatic implicature of the type described by Salmon, but my concern is not with those, as we can provide an account of different information conveyed or elicited without resorting to pragmatic implicature. Instead we can rely on how different sentences have different information value by conveying different information to or eliciting different information from the audience depending on how he or she organizes information. For example, (19) and (20) express the same propositions, and so I cannot claim that (19), namely, “Clark Kent saved the city,” expresses a false proposition. However, if I bring someone the news that Clark Kent saved the city, using the sentence “Clark Kent saved the city,” then that certainly conveys the wrong and misleading information that he did so in his Clark Kent outfit and not in his Superman outfit.

Two different sentences that express the same proposition can, and often do, convey and elicit different information because they access different webs of information in the audience. I will argue that we often rightly resist substitution of coreferential names because the names play a key role in accessing webs and eliciting the various information we have about the subject.

My antisubstitution intuition is *not* incorrect, I will argue, when we are working with information conveyed or elicited by a sentence. Nevertheless,

it often is incorrect if we are working with the truth value of the proposition expressed. However, the layman in all likelihood is not cognizant of the relevant distinction and is most likely more concerned with information conveyed or elicited by a sentence than its strict propositional content, so I will contend that the layman's antisubstitution intuition, given that she is working with her intuition about the information conveyed or elicited, is usually correct, and certainly correct about sentences such as (19) and (20).

I believe that the basic explanation that Braun and Saul provide of our semantic intuitions is a good one. However, I do not believe that their account adequately explains why we have antisubstitution intuitions. That is, I do not believe that the source of the problem and what lies behind our antisubstitution intuitions is mistaken evaluation. Even when I am informed about the relevant identity, that is, even when I am in the know, and consider the relevant statements and the relevant identity, there is still something that gnaws at me. Even when I know that Superman is Clark Kent, there is still this lurking feeling when I consider the relevant statements, a feeling that I share with Fregeans and many neo-Fregeans, that we cannot always substitute coreferential names. Even though I understand the semantic machinery that underlies names and that allows me to claim that truth value is preserved, my intuitions still have me resist substitution, and so there is a reason to believe that there is *something else* at work, something beyond semantics, that makes me resist substitution.

I will argue that the ambiguity that makes us feel ambivalent about substitutions is not the kind of ambiguity that direct reference theorists have focused on so far. It is not a semantic ambiguity, nor is it an ambiguity, or a confusion, about propositions expressed and propositions implicated, nor is it ambiguity about propositions asserted. Instead it is an ambiguity about what our intuition is working with: semantics or information.

WEBS OF INFORMATION

It is plausible to maintain that we file information away in our minds and that we normally organize information about individuals so that different pieces of information about what we take to be the same individual are kept together in a single web of information, or in a single file. Several philosophers have used the analogy of a file, including my former self, suggesting that it provides a plausible explanatory account of how information is stored. The file analogy seems misleading for at least two reasons: first, it suggests that all pieces of information are equally important and, second, it doesn't explain why it is that some pieces of information are more central than other pieces of information, and thus more readily recalled when one thinks of the object. The web analogy, on the other hand, much like Quine's web of belief, suggests that some pieces of information are more central than other pieces of information, and that some are therefore more stable

and more readily evoked than others. For example, it is likely that central to most people's web for Garry Kasparov is information such as him having been a world champion of chess, being an aggressive player, being innovative over the board, and taking an interest in Russian politics. It is probably less central to most people's webs about him that he took his mother's last name, what size shoes he wears, that he has an interest in soccer, and what city he is from.

In general, information that a person *S* has about an object *X* consists of descriptions, predicates, and representations that *S* takes to be true of *X*, or accurately reflect how *X* is. Most chess enthusiasts are therefore likely to have at least some information about Kasparov that is couched in predicates, such as that he *was a world champion*, that he *is an aggressive player*, and that he *has taken an interest in Russian politics*. Some information might be couched in descriptions, such as *the most complete chess player in recent history*, *the chess player formerly known as Weinstein*, *the player who won the world title from Karpov*. Finally, some information might not be linguistic in nature, but might instead be couched in, for example, pictures, sounds, and moods, to name a few possibilities. For example, when thinking of Kasparov, I might recall his intense expression when focusing over the board, or I might recall a picture of him vacationing on a beach at the Black Sea. As indicated before, it is possible that this last type of information can be reduced to linguistic information (i.e., it is possible that one can describe the picture or mood adequately). However, even if that is possible, there is evidence to show that many of us employ pictures in thought. For example, many of us are so constituted that when trying to find our bearings in a new place, we recall a mental picture of a map and navigate accordingly. Other people seem not to recall such a picture of a map. Instead of recalling a mental picture, they produce descriptive directions that they then follow.²⁰

Philosophers tend to assume that only propositions can have truth values, and so one has to wonder whether I can have a true nonlinguistic belief. That is, when I see Kasparov in my mind's eye or recall an image of him and represent him as having graying hair, do I then have a true belief about Kasparov, provided that his hair is graying? There are at least two possible and plausible ways to answer this question. The first is to question the claim that only propositions can have truth value.²¹ One can then try to argue that when images accurately represent the world, they could and should be labeled as true representations. Or, one can accept the view which I favor, that only propositions can have truth value and that nonlinguistic content can at the very least usually be verbally described, and so the nonlinguistic content would have a derivative truth value. That is, a nonlinguistic content can be labeled true if an accurate description of it results in true propositions.

Talking about webs or files of information is obviously a handy metaphor for our having information about objects organized in a fairly systematic way. I think it is plausible to assume that in typical cases I form a web of information about what I take to be a new and unique object and

then place information that I take to be of the object in the web. When my daughter was born, I already had a web in place for her—what we might call my Dagný web. When I had my son, I formed my Atli web. In the years since then, I have gathered all kinds of information in the two webs. Some information is represented linguistically, that is, I believe a number of propositions about my two kids. Other information is not couched in linguistic form but rather in imagistic forms, or nonlinguistic form. I can recall vividly and see it in my mind’s eye, much like if I was watching a film or a snapshot, how the kids ran around when younger, how they looked on a soccer field, and how they looked when sleeping in their beds. I can of course describe my mental episodes when I recall these moments, but I recall them not as propositions but rather as images or episodes. In some cases, I can vividly recall scent and mood from certain events in their lives and so the webs have a varied and, sometimes a vast, amount of information.

While there are in most cases some prominent features or characteristics of objects that people notice and store away in their memory, it seems wrong to claim that there is a standard feature set that is represented by everyone who has a web about a given object. Suppose that I meet a new colleague, Andrew, and form a belief of him. When I do so, I form a web of information about Andrew and from now on place new information that I take to be about him in that web. Once I have just met Andrew and formed my initial beliefs of him, then what might be in the web? I do not think that we can give a definite answer to the question, as further details about the beliefs depend on several factors. What is in the web at that point depends to some extent on what I pay attention to about Andrew, as well as whether I am likely to represent him with linguistic information or in some other way or, as probably is the case, both. When I think about Andrew later in the day I might think to myself “Andrew seems to be at least six feet tall,” that is, I might entertain a proposition about him. Or I might picture him in my mind’s eye as standing significantly taller than my other colleagues.

A friend who also met Andrew for the first time that day might of course have different information in her web depending on what she pays attention to and depending on how she tends to represent information. Once we get to know Andrew better, our webs of information about him become larger, and the kinds of information will likely expand as well.

Suppose that I believe the singular proposition expressed by the sentence “Andrew is tall.” Given the variety of ways in which one can represent objects, there is no way of representing Andrew that can be called *the* way of doing so, and so there is no way of believing the proposition that can be called *the* way of doing so. How I believe the singular proposition expressed by “Andrew is tall” depends to a large extent upon what I pay attention to when seeing Andrew. I need to represent him somehow in order to have a belief about him, and the representation depends on a number of factors about him, the circumstances in which I met him, and what I happened to pay attention to about him when we met.

My friend who met Andrew for the first time at the same time I did also believes that Andrew is tall. That is, we believe the same proposition that we represent as

(Andrew, being tall).

One believes a proposition simply by standing in a belief relation to that proposition. I and my friend both stand in a belief relation to the proposition expressed by “Andrew is tall,” and so we believe the same proposition, or have the same belief. But since my friend tends to pay attention to very different features when meeting people than I do, we represent Andrew in significantly different ways, and so we believe the proposition in different ways. I might, for example, tend to form imagistic representations of people, while my friend tends to form linguistic representations. Or, less dramatically, I might pay attention to people’s facial features, while my friend might pay more attention to people’s builds. Nevertheless, since both of us stand in the belief relation to the proposition expressed by “Andrew is tall,” we both believe that singular proposition.

As we get to know Andrew better, he and I just remain colleagues, while he and my friend become close. Our respective Andrew webs grow, but since our relationships and interactions with Andrew are quite different, the information that we gather about him is quite different as well. If anything, the more information we gather about Andrew and the more diverse the circumstances in which we gather it, the more difficult it is to estimate or make an educated guess as to how each of us represents him and thus how exactly each of us believes the singular proposition.

Sometimes we have more than one web of information about the same person. Karina, for example, collects information about Paderewski the Polish politician into one web and information about Paderewski the German politician into a different web, because she takes them to be different individuals. Similarly, Lois collects information about Superman in one web of information and information about Clark Kent in a different web of information.

Beliefs that one takes to be important to the identity of the individual and that play an important role in who she takes the individual to be tend to be fairly central to the web, while other beliefs are less important and are often quickly forgotten and/or replaced. Central to a typical web of information about Clark Kent is that he is a journalist, wears glasses, is rather nerdy, and has a tendency to disappear when trouble is near. Information that is less central might include some of the mundane events in Kent’s life, such as what he had for lunch, what floor he lives on, the name of his editor, and the color of his favorite suit. Central to a typical web of information about Superman are most likely the beliefs that he wears a strange looking body suit and a red cape, that he can fly, that he is very strong and has powers that humans do not possess, and that he has a knack for saving innocent people when they are facing grave danger. Beliefs that are central to a web are likely

to focus on prominent and more permanent features of an object and so are more likely to be more stable than other beliefs in the web.

If, like Karina, I mistakenly believe that Paderewski the Polish politician and Paderewski the German politician are not the same person, then I form one web of information for what I take to be each individual. When I later find out about my mistake and discover that the two are the same person, the likely result is that I combine the information in the two webs and retain only one Paderewski web of information. But there are instances when we do not combine the webs when discovering the identity in question.

Suppose that I have one web of information about Clark Kent as Clark Kent and a second web of information about Clark Kent as Superman. I have, in effect, a Clark Kent web and a Superman web. If I now discover the identity of Clark Kent/Superman, then I might retain my two webs about the individual. There are several reasons why I might do this. Suppose that I initially formed two webs of information because I thought I was dealing with two individuals and then later find out that they are one. One reason I might keep the webs separated after the discovery of the identity, as if they were of two individuals, is that most people do not know about the identity of Superman and Clark Kent. If I combine the two webs and all the information that is in them, then it is likely that my future communication with others about Superman/Clark Kent would be confusing and fraught with misunderstandings. If I, because I have combined the information in the two webs, indicate in conversation that Clark Kent, using the name "Clark Kent," is strong and faster than a speeding train, then it is likely that my respondent will be lost, as she has no such information in her Clark Kent web, and, in fact, what I am saying contradicts much of the central information in her Clark Kent web.

Second, I might know from the start about the relevant identity of Superman/Clark Kent, and nevertheless form two webs of beliefs about him and file information accordingly. The reason for my doing so might be the same as above—avoiding confusion in communication. But, additionally, if someone is developing a persona that is significantly different from who he or she is, then a new web might be useful. For example, if I go to a David Bowie concert, then I expect one type of show and music. If, on the other hand, I go to a Ziggy Stardust concert, then I expect a different type of a show and not the music that would be performed at a Bowie concert. The personas are different enough so that one has very different expectations about a Ziggy Stardust concert than one has of a Davie Bowie concert. That is, one takes many things to be true of David Bowie in his Ziggy Stardust guise that one does not take to be true of David Bowie when not in his Ziggy Stardust guise. Hence, it is often useful to keep the webs of different personas separated even though one knows that they are of the same object. Accordingly, if we have a good reason to keep webs separated even if we know the relevant identity, then we are hesitant to make inferences that result from combining the two webs, as the results of such inferences

are likely to be misleading. For example, if I know that I should expect a glam show at a Ziggy Stardust concert, it would be misleading to conclude that I should expect a glam show at a Davie Bowie concert, even though I know the relevant identity. One of the reasons for keeping the Bowie web and the Stardust web separated is the fact that the two put on a very different show.

Given that there are many reasons to keep more than one web of information about someone, even when the identity in question is known, we need to revisit why it is that we form a web of information about an object. Earlier I claimed that we file information of what we take to be the same individual or object in a single web. That now has to be amended.

We file information of what we take to be the same individual or object in a single web, except if that individual develops personas or displays aspects so different from his or its usual self that we expect significantly different looks and/or behavior from that persona/aspect than we do from his or its usual self.

Similarly, when we discover the identity of a person or object that we had taken to be two (or more) persons or objects and thus had created two (or more) webs of information about it, then we tend to combine the information in the webs unless the persons or objects are so different that we expect significantly different looks and/or behavior from the two.

ACCESSING WEBS

I suggest that the web of information I have about an individual can be accessed by a marker. A marker therefore directs one's thought to where information about the relevant individual or object is stored and so allows one to deposit or retrieve information about that individual or object. A marker is a name, a description, or a representation that we associate with a web in a given context. For example, the name "Superman" is a marker for a Superman web as is "The Man of Steel," and so is a picture or an image of the flying superhero. Similarly, the name "Clark Kent" is a marker for my Clark Kent web and so is associated with my Clark Kent web in such a way that when I see or hear the name, it accesses the web. So, when I hear or see a sentence containing the name "Clark Kent," information is added to or elicited from the Clark Kent web, and similarly, when I see or hear a sentence containing the name "Superman," information is added to or elicited from the Superman web. Typically the information that is central to the web, the information that typically represents the most prominent features of the person or object, is the information that is most readily accessible, and so the information that is most easily elicited. Accordingly, when, for example, a conversation about Clark Kent prompts me to recall something about him, then some of his most prominent features are most likely to be elicited. The drab bespectacled reporter comes to mind as the drab bespectacled reporter,

while his tie color or shoe size, the more peripheral information that is less central to my web, is less likely to be brought up.

The information elicited from a web determines how I represent the object in the proposition believed and thus determines to a large extent how I believe the proposition. It is therefore of great importance how a proposition is presented to me. It makes a big difference whether a proposition containing Clark Kent as a constituent is presented to me with a sentence that contains the name "Clark Kent" or a sentence that contains the name "Superman." The two names are markers for different webs, and so it depends on the name used in the sentence which web of information is accessed and which web information is elicited from.

The name "Clark Kent" is a marker for my Clark Kent web and so elicits information from that web. The name "Superman" is a marker for my Superman web and so elicits information from my Superman web. Accordingly, if someone tells me that Superman saved the city, then the name "Superman" elicits information from my Superman web, and I believe the proposition expressed accordingly. However, if someone tells me that Clark Kent saved the city, then the name "Clark Kent" elicits information from my Clark Kent web. The result is likely to be confusion or disbelief on my behalf, since the information elicited from the Clark Kent web has me represent the hero as Clark Kent and not as Superman.

We can expect similar result if different markers for the same webs are used. Suppose that I am shown a picture of Superman charging his way to a meteor and then moving it to a safe distance from Metropolis. The image of Superman is a marker for my Superman web, and so that is the web that is accessed for past and additional information about the superhero. Superman's acts are perfectly consistent with the information that I already have about him, and so this is just one more heroic act. Suppose, on the other hand, that I am shown a picture of Clark Kent in his journalism garb charging towards the meteor and subsequently moving it. The picture of the journalist accesses my Clark Kent web and elicits information from it. This time around the new information does not fit what I already know about Clark Kent, the journalist. The result is, again, likely to be confusion and disbelief.

Of course, markers are contextually sensitive. If someone tells Karina that Paderewski is across the street, then contextual factors are likely to help her determine whether to access the web for Paderewski the Polish politician or the web for Paderewski the piano player. If she knows that Paderewski is performing one of his piano pieces in the area, then she is likely to access the web for Paderewski the piano player. Assuming that she is a fan of the artist, she is likely to run across the street to try to meet him. If, however, she has heard that Paderewski is performing in a different country at this time and, unknown to her, he had to cancel the concert so that he could attend an important political meeting where Karina is located, then Karina will in all likelihood not access the web for Paderewski the piano player. If she knows of the relevant political meeting, she will likely access the web for

Paderewski the Polish politician. As she is not a fan of Paderewski the politician, Karina is not likely to cross the street to try to meet him.

SIMPLE SENTENCES, UNENLIGHTENED AND ENLIGHTENED SUBJECTS

The web of information I have on Clark Kent figures heavily in how I believe a singular proposition that has him as a constituent when the proposition is presented to me with a sentence containing “Clark Kent.” The web of information I have about him as Clark Kent is what I draw from when I entertain the proposition, and it thus largely determines the way in which I believe the proposition. Similarly, when I believe a singular proposition that has Clark Kent as a constituent, and the proposition is presented to me with a sentence containing the name “Superman,” then the web of information I have about Clark Kent as Superman is drawn upon and information is elicited from my Superman web. Accordingly, I believe the proposition in different ways when it is presented to me with the two different sentences.

The picture presented provides a simple explanation of why I might assent to the sentence “Superman can fly” and dissent from the sentence “Clark Kent can fly” while being fully rational. The names used to refer to the object in the proposition expressed by the sentences elicit information from different webs of information, and so I believe the proposition expressed in different ways. If I am not aware of the identity of Clark Kent and Superman, then I treat the names as referring to different individuals, and my webs are set up on the assumption that they contain information about different individuals. The two sentences express the same singular proposition, and so, as we wanted, substitution of coreferential names preserves truth value. However, we preserve our antisubstitution intuitions, as we can explain those with different names used in the sentences expressing the proposition eliciting information from different webs. As long as we focus on semantics, substitution is fine. Once we turn our attention to information, we resist substitution.

The reason that the names elicit information from different webs is *not* that I take the names to refer to different individuals, for, even if I am in the know about Clark Kent being Superman, I nevertheless find it useful to keep two webs, since the two personas are so different. Accordingly, even when I am enlightened about the identity of Clark Kent and Superman, the name “Clark Kent” still typically elicits information from the Clark Kent web, and the name “Superman” typically elicits information from the Superman web. The reason that the names elicit information from different webs is that the names are markers for different webs, and so typically access and elicit information from different webs. This helps explain our antisubstitution intuitions for cases when we are enlightened about the relevant identity.

Suppose that I am enlightened about the identity of Clark Kent and Superman. My antisubstitution intuitions are still there, and for a good reason. For example, suppose that someone who has witnessed Superman saving the city tells me that Clark Kent saved the city, using the name “Clark Kent.” The use of the name “Clark Kent” prompts me to think of Clark Kent *as Clark Kent* saving the city and so indicates that he saved the city while in his Clark Kent persona—a highly unlikely scenario. The use of the name “Clark Kent” results in the Clark Kent web being accessed, and since the web does not contain information about Clark Kent *as Clark Kent* having super strength, the report of Clark Kent saving the city indicates that the superhero has revealed his identity to the public. Again, substitution of coreferential names, while preserving truth values, conveys and elicits very different information.

The same is true if I know that my respondent is also in the know about the relevant identity. So, even if the two of us know that Clark Kent is Superman, we do not freely substitute the names when talking with each other. We are fully aware of the dual lives that Clark Kent lives and, accordingly, we have two webs of information for him: one for Superman and one for Clark Kent. If my respondent now reports that Clark Kent has saved the city, using the name “Clark Kent,” then that indicates that Clark Kent has revealed his identity. The consequence would be not only that I would need to place new information in my Clark Kent web. The consequence would also be that information would flow more freely between the two webs, even if it did not result in their combination.

Even when I am in the know about the identity of Superman, I resist substitution in most situations because the information elicited by a sentence containing the name “Clark Kent” is different than the information elicited by a sentence containing the name “Superman.” Contrary to Braun’s and Saul’s view, there is no mistaken evaluation here. I am in the know about the identity, I might make all the relevant inferences, and I still resist substitution, the reason being that, even though the two sentences express the same proposition, the information conveyed and elicited is very different. The information elicited does not affect the truth value of the proposition expressed, but it does affect the cogency of free substitution.

Let us revisit Saul’s example of St. Petersburg and Leningrad. The two problematic sentences were

21. Shostakovich always signaled his connections to the classical traditions of St. Petersburg, even if he was forced to live in Leningrad

and

22. Shostakovich always signaled his connections to the classical traditions of Leningrad, even if he was forced to live in Leningrad.

Saul wrote that even an enlightened speaker might utter (21) because she failed to make the relevant inferences. If she used her knowledge of the relevant identity and inferred (22) from (21), then that might give her a pause.

Suppose that the speaker initially formed two webs of information about the city, one Leningrad web, and one St. Petersburg web. Later she learns that these are names of the same city, and so that provides some reason to merge the two webs. However, as she continues to learn more about the city she finds out, among other things, that the city was named “Leningrad” during most of the Soviet era, and “St. Petersburg” both before the rise of the Soviet Union and after its fall. This knowledge provides reason to keep the webs separate, as there is a fairly important element of time that signals the name changes. It is very likely that people will speak of the city using the name “Leningrad” when they are talking about the city during the Soviet reign, and that they will use the name St. Petersburg otherwise. For example, people talk of the siege of Leningrad and not the siege of St. Petersburg during the second World War. So, while the enlightened speaker will know that St. Petersburg and Leningrad are one city, the enlightened speaker will also know that the names refer to the city during different time periods. It makes sense, then, that the enlightened speaker will store information from one time period in the St. Petersburg web and information from a different time period in the Leningrad web, and that includes information about a very different political climate during the time periods. Sentence (21) will therefore convey information to and/or elicit information from two different webs. One web contains information about St. Petersburg during the Soviet era, the other not. Soviet officials appear to have been attentive to a similar distinction, as the following is true:

Shostakovich’s signaling his connections to St. Petersburg instead of to Leningrad resulted in him having to make a public recantation for some of his works!

I dare say that that once the relevant information is in place, there is nothing odd about the previous sentence.

BELIEF REPORTS

An account of belief reports advances along similar lines. The choice of words in the belief report is important because it elicits in the listener some information about how the proposition is believed. It is reasonable to assume that those who know about Clark Kent have similar information at the center of their Clark Kent webs, and so there is some central information that comes to most peoples’ minds when they think about Clark Kent. The same goes for Superman. It is reasonable to assume that those who know

about him have similar information at the center of their Superman webs. When I report that Lois believes that Superman can fly, using the name “Superman,” I am indicating that Lois holds the belief in such a way that it is Clark Kent *as Superman* who can fly. If I were to report that Lois believes that Clark Kent can fly, using the name “Clark Kent,” then I indicate that Lois believes that Clark Kent, *as Clark Kent*, can fly.

When I report that Lois believes that Superman can fly, how I report the belief carries with it important information, since I am assuming that my audience has similar key information about Superman as the rest of us have.²² In addition to indicating which proposition Lois believes, my report provides *some* information about how she believes it. The name “Superman” is a marker for the Superman web and so accesses that web, and not the Clark Kent web. Consequently, if I report the belief using the name “Superman,” then that indicates that Lois believes that Superman *as Superman* can fly. How exactly she thinks of Superman and what exact information she has in her Superman web is something that we do not know, and so we do not know exactly how she believes the relevant proposition. However, on the assumption that she has similar information at the center of her Superman web as the rest of us, we have a pretty good idea of how she believes the proposition. For most purposes, it is enough to know that she believes the proposition in a way that represents Superman *as Superman*.

While my report provides some information about how Lois believes the proposition, there is no assumption of the speaker or listener entertaining or believing any proposition(s) that might be pragmatically implicated apart from the singular proposition in question, as Salmon has suggested, and there is no assumption about the listener believing any proposition(s) that might be pragmatically implicated and mistaken for the proposition expressed. The information as to how Lois believes the proposition is instead passed on by a choice of words used to express it, words that are selected so that they access one web and not another.

Furthermore, there is no assumption that I am asserting several propositions when uttering a sentence or reporting a belief, as Soames would have it. Due to the variety of information in a person’s webs of belief and due to the fact that different people have different information about people and objects, there is always a question of how much detail about how a proposition is believed an utterance can provide. When I assert that Superman can fly, that indicates that I believe that Superman can fly. It also gives *some* indication as to how I believe the proposition, namely, that I represent the object in the proposition as Superman and not as Clark Kent. Beyond that, it provides very little about the details of my belief. There are a number of sentences that are compatible with the one I uttered, and they might provide a reasonable interpretation of how I believe the proposition that Superman can fly. But that is not to say that I assert any or all of those sentences when asserting that Superman can fly.

The same is true for belief reports. No simple belief report can indicate how *exactly* Lois represents Superman and how *exactly* she believes the proposition that Superman can fly. Due to the lack of detail of information inherent in belief reports, there are usually a number of sentences that one can accept as being compatible with the one used to report the belief, and there is a range of interpretations that one can accept as being a reasonable way of understanding the report. When I report that Lois believes that Superman can fly, my report normally provides some information about Lois's belief, namely, that she represents Clark Kent as Superman and that he can fly. We can probably assume that Lois represents Superman, or at least his most prominent features, in a way similar to the rest of us. But the details of Lois's representation are not a part of what is reported. Assuming that Lois represents Superman in a way similar to the rest of us, we can presume that she has a number of other beliefs about Superman, and so we can reasonably claim that Lois believes, for example, that the caped superhero dressed mostly in blue and red can fly. But that is not what is asserted in the belief report. Rather, it is something that we can assume Lois believes given that she has similar key information about Superman in her web as we have about him in our webs.

Finally, what are we to do about Kripke's puzzle? One way to present the puzzle is as follows. Both of the following belief reports seem true, namely,

Karina believes that Paderewski is a politician, and
Karina believes that Paderewski is not a politician.

Karina is an expert logician who pays attention to her beliefs, and she does not detect an inconsistency in her beliefs. Nevertheless, the two reports report inconsistent beliefs.

The account that I have presented explains how Karina got herself into this predicament, namely, she takes the name "Paderewski" to refer to two different people and so has two webs of information on which she draws. Since the name "Paderewski" is a marker for two of her webs, she has to rely on contextually salient information when determining which web to access when coming across the name. From her point of view, the beliefs are no more inconsistent than are my beliefs that Bill Clinton was a president and that Henry Kissinger was not a president. However, the fact of the matter is that there is only one Paderewski, and we know that there is only one Paderewski, even though Karina does not know that. Since there is only one Paderewski, we can claim that Karina holds inconsistent beliefs. The two embedded sentences cannot both be true. The problem that Kripke's puzzle raises is how to explain why it is that Karina the expert logician did not detect this. The explanation is to be found in Karina's belief that "Paderewski" names two individuals together with the information that she has gathered about what she takes to be two individuals. The organization of her beliefs before she finds out that there is only one Paderewski makes it impossible for her to detect an inconsistency.

Is Karina fully rational in spite of having inconsistent beliefs? I would say that yes, she is. It seems that having inconsistent beliefs is not a sufficient condition for not being fully rational. In particular, if the inconsistent beliefs are of such a nature that one cannot detect their inconsistency with a careful inspection of one's beliefs, then the inconsistency should not affect the judgment of the person's rationality.

SPECIFICATION AND THE GENERALITY CONSTRAINT

Kent Bach has explored a novel account of belief reports that is motivated by similar concerns as those I discuss above, namely, that belief reports do not seem to capture with great accuracy how one believes a singular proposition.²³ Without going into the details of Bach's account, we will suffice it to say that he resorts to a view according to which belief reports do not report propositions believed; instead a belief report describes a belief. On the view he endorses, it can be true that Peter believes that Paderewski had musical talents, and at the same time be true that Peter disbelieves that Paderewski had musical talents, the name "Paderewski" referring to the same person both times, because the that-clauses do not specify what it is that Peter believes. Specifically, the two reports do not indicate that Peter believes and disbelieves the same proposition. The that-clause does not specify a belief as much as it describes the belief. Bach thus rejects what he calls the specification assumption, which assumes that the that-clause in a belief report specifies the thing (proposition) that the believer must believe if the belief report is true.²⁴ In fact, Bach claims that it is the specification assumption that creates the main problems for the accounts of belief reports that assume its truth.²⁵

Rejecting the specification assumption raises its own problems, the most pressing being how to account for the truth of belief reports. Since belief reports, on Bach's view, do not report which proposition is believed, we cannot evaluate the truth of the belief report by finding out whether the person whose belief is reported stands in the belief relation to the proposition expressed by the that-clause. Instead, in order for a belief report to be true, the person whose belief is reported must believe something that requires the truth of the proposition expressed by the embedded sentence.²⁶ It is not clear how the details of this suggestion will be worked out.

I prefer to avoid the difficulties Bach's view faces as long as we can retain his main insight together with the more traditional view that belief reports report propositions believed in addition to giving some indication of how they are believed. Bach's main reason for rejecting the specification assumption is that beliefs are more fine-grained than can be specified with a singular proposition. That, in turn, results in belief reports that seem to run counter to our intuitions, such as when we substitute coreferential names in belief reports. But the view that one believes a proposition in a way is compatible with the claim that exactly how one believes a proposition is not specified

by the singular proposition believed. Further, while the singular proposition does not specify how one believes it, one's choice of words when expressing the proposition can provide much-needed clues as to how one believes the proposition. At the same time, the choice of words, while providing some help, cannot provide the details of how one believes the proposition expressed, for each person's web of information associated with a name is likely to be somewhat different, and the information elicited from the web upon hearing the name is likely to differ from one person to the next.

The account presented to some extent captures Bach's insight that a belief report describes a belief, for there is a sense in which the choice of words when one reports the belief describes how a belief is held. Using one name instead of another prompts one to access and elicit information from one web rather than another. But the information elicited is not in any way a part of the proposition believed or reported. Instead, the information elicited is a part of how each person represents the object that is in the proposition; its nature is psychological rather than semantical. In addition to telling us what proposition is believed, a belief report provides at best a very rudimentary indication as to how a proposition is believed because the information we have about individuals differ greatly. The information we have in the so-called "famous people" cases might differ less than in other cases, as famous people cases often focus on very specific aspects of their features, and as some facets of their lives are commonly held beliefs. But other cases, the more mundane and more typical cases, are different. The information people have in their webs about, for example, their neighbors, are most likely very different from the information the neighbors' family members have in their webs about them. Here webs of beliefs about the same people differ greatly and probably have less in common than the famous people cases typically do, and any "description" of their contents that a choice of words provides is rather incomplete and imprecise.

While I have so far concentrated on names, it is not only names that can prompt one to elicit information from one web of information rather than another. A picture can work in the same way as a name in the sense that if one is shown a picture of Clark Kent as Superman, then that prompts one to elicit information from a different web than if one is shown a picture of Clark Kent as Clark Kent and, consequently, one may construct similar puzzles about assent and dissent, belief and their reports, with the help of pictures instead of using names. In other cases, a certain scent, just as a name, might prompt one to elicit information from a web about someone, and a certain tune can prompt one to elicit information from a particular web and think of a certain individual in a particular way. While we should acknowledge that not only can names be used to create puzzles of the type we have been dealing with, but also the particular puzzles at hand have to do with singular propositions, and we do tend to express them with the help of sentences.²⁷ Nevertheless, the account is not limited to linguistic items, and so the generality constraint is satisfied.

WHEN SUBSTITUTIONS ARE PERMITTED

It is evident that our choice of words is of great importance when reporting beliefs. If Diana sincerely assents to “Bob Dylan has a beautiful voice” but does not know that Bob Dylan is Robert Zimmerman and does not assent to “Bob Dylan is Robert Zimmerman,” then it seems true that

1. Diana believes that Bob Dylan has a beautiful voice,

while it seems false that

2. Diana believes that Robert Zimmerman has a beautiful voice.

In spite of that, the naïve Russellian holds that the embedded sentences express the same proposition, and that the two reports have the same truth value.

We find the same resistance to substitution when faced with simple sentences. Consider Lois as she is presented with

3. Superman is Superman

and

4. Clark Kent is Superman.

Before finding out about the identity, she would readily accept (3), while she would not accept (4).

One thing to note about our resistance to substitution is that our intuitions about substitutions in belief reports depend to an extent upon our audience and their knowledge. If I am reporting Diana’s belief to someone who has never heard of Robert Zimmerman but who knows Bob Dylan, then it seems at the very least misleading to say that, if I told the person that Diana believes that Robert Zimmerman has a beautiful voice, then I have informed her that Diana believes that Bob Dylan has beautiful voice. My respondent does not know who Robert Zimmerman is and so makes no connection between the names “Bob Dylan” and “Robert Zimmerman.” Sure, the embedded sentence in my belief report, namely, “Robert Zimmerman has a beautiful voice,” expresses the same proposition and so has the same truth value as does “Bob Dylan has a beautiful voice.” But the two embedded sentences convey and elicit different information due to different names being employed in them.

However, if we are reporting Diana’s belief to someone who is in the know about both of Dylan’s names, then it appears that we can, in that particular case, accurately report Diana’s belief with either (1) or (2), that is by using either of Dylan’s names. We can do so because our respondent knows

about the relevant identity, and Dylan's is not a case of developing an alternate persona, but rather a case of a person changing his name. But, as I have argued, even though we can so report in this particular case, it is not always the case that we can use names interchangeably even when reporting to someone in the know about the relevant identity. In particular, we cannot do so in the cases that have been of most interest in the discussion of substitution, namely, when our respondents are not aware of the relevant identity or when a person has developed a significantly different persona, in which case knowledge of the identity still does not allow free substitution.

Unlike the Bob Dylan case, different names of the same person are often associated with different characters the person might portray. Many people who knew Bob Dylan when he was young probably use the name "Robert Zimmerman" when talking about him. Those who know him as the singer Bob Dylan probably use the name "Bob Dylan" when talking about him. It seems appropriate that both names are in use and that one can use either name to talk about Dylan with those who are in the know about the name change. The same is not true of David Bowie and the persona he created, Ziggy Stardust, nor is it the case with Superman and Clark Kent, due to the significantly different roles these characters play. If Lois sees Superman save the city from a meteor, then a belief report that says that Lois believes that Clark Kent saved the city is true, but certainly misleading, for Clark Kent *as Clark Kent* (i.e., in the guise of Clark Kent), never performs such feats. He only performs such feats in the guise of Superman. If we report that Lois believes that Clark Kent saved the city, then that indicates, wrongly, that he has revealed his true identity and shown his superpowers in the guise of Clark Kent or that he has in some other way revealed his true identity to Lois. And it would be outrageous to claim that, if I report that Lois believes that Kal El (Kent's given name on Krypton) saved the city, my respondent never having heard the name "Kal El," I thereby inform her that Superman saved the city. Even though the sentences "Kal El saved the city" and "Superman saved the city" express the same proposition, they convey and elicit very different information.²⁸ At the same time, it is not altogether wrong to so report the belief, for it truly reports that Lois believes the singular proposition expressed by "Kal El saved the city." Truth value is preserved, while the information conveyed and elicited prevents free substitution.

LOOSE CONNECTIONS AND TRAINS OF THOUGHT

Sometimes the use of a name that serves as a marker for one web calls up information from another web, and so we might wonder how tight the connections are between a given marker and its web. In most cases, the connections are pretty tight. When I hear the name "Bill Clinton," the name accesses the appropriate web of information. Similarly, when I hear the name "Henry Kissinger," the appropriate web is accessed. However, it

often happens that when one accesses a web of information, other webs are accessed as well. There are two main ways in which that can happen.

Suppose, first, that someone mentions to me that Chelsea Clinton grew up in the White House. The name “Chelsea Clinton” accesses my Chelsea Clinton web. The important pieces of information I have about her include her *being the daughter of Bill Clinton*. So, the name “Bill Clinton” comes up when I access my Chelsea Clinton web, and so I am prompted to access my Bill Clinton web. That might, in turn, prompt me to access my Hillary Clinton web, as an important piece of information in my Bill Clinton web includes him *being married to Hillary Clinton*. So, someone mentioning Chelsea Clinton to me might have me access various webs in addition to my Chelsea Clinton web. The reason for that is not that the name “Chelsea Clinton” serves as a marker for many webs. Rather, once I access my Chelsea Clinton web, various other markers are called up, and they provide access to other webs.

Second, once we are in the know about a relevant identity, we might maintain two webs, one for each persona, in spite of some information flow between the two webs. As mentioned, there are good reasons to keep separate webs for Clark Kent and Superman, even though we are in the know about the identity. Since we are in the know about the identity, we might sometimes use, for example, the name “Superman” to access our Clark Kent web, although we usually do not do so. For example, suppose that Clark Kent knows that I am in the know about him being Superman, and so he tells me that he is going on a vacation to a distant planet. A few days after he is supposed to leave for his vacation, someone tells me that Superman, once again, showed up and performed another impressive feat. Hearing this might prompt me to think of what Clark Kent told me. That is, it appears that the name “Superman” has me access my Clark Kent web. A likely explanation of this is that my being in the know about the identity loosens a little the ties each name has to its primary web, and so, at least sometimes, the name “Superman” has me access my Clark Kent web. But it is also likely that, when Clark Kent told me about his vacation plans, the relevant information filtered into my Superman web as something that Clark Kent told me. If that is so, then my Superman web contains information about Clark Kent telling me about his vacations plans.

THE FIVE PROBLEMS, AGAIN

We started this chapter by listing five problems that arose in connection with the direct reference theory. It is now time to look at them again together with my preferred way of dealing with them.

The multiple belief problem arose when Karina believed twice over that Paderewski is a politician. We can now account for this by saying that Karina has two different webs of information about Paderewski. The reason

she has two different webs is that she takes Paderewski the Polish politician and Paderewski the German politician to be different persons, and the information she has on him is placed in webs accordingly. (In fact, she has three Paderewski webs, for she believes that Paderewski the piano player is different from the other two.) Because of this, Karina's information on Paderewski is from her point of view no different than if she had information on two different persons, both named Paderewski.

The consistency problem arose when we reported Karina's beliefs about Paderewski. We reported that Karina believes that Paderewski the Polish politician is a politician, while also reporting that Karina believes that Paderewski the musician is a politician. Both beliefs seem true, and, in spite of that, Karina would accept one report as true and reject the other, claiming it to be false. An adequate explanation of the problem is that Karina takes the two sentences to be about two different persons. Karina does not detect any inconsistency because she takes Paderewski the Polish politician to be different from Paderewski the piano player. Consequently, she places information about Paderewski into different webs, as if they were information on two different persons. Because the information is placed into two different webs and Karina works under the assumption that the webs contain information about two different people, she does not detect any inconsistency, for the assumption is that the webs contain information about different persons.

Frege's puzzle is solved along the same lines, namely with reference to webs of information. If Karina is working with a name that she takes to be of a single individual, and she takes herself to only have one web of information about that individual, then an identity statement containing the name will not be informative. If, on the other hand, she is working with a name or names that she takes to be of two different individuals, and she has different webs of information about those individuals, then, if she discovers that the two individuals she took to be different are in fact the same individual, there is a flow of information between the two webs. It usually takes some empirical work to discover that the two individuals are the same, but once one discovers that, then, assuming that the two relevant webs contain different information, one uncovers new information about that individual. For example, when I discover that Clark Kent is Superman, I find out that Clark Kent sometimes wears a cape and that he has super strength, which is something I had not realized before.

The translation problem arose because we have a strong pretheoretical intuition that people can believe the same proposition in the same way in spite of speaking different languages, and an account that wedds ways of believing to sentencelike guises or propositions containing linguistic items has a hard time allowing for that. The account that I have provided does not depend on sentencelike guises. It does not require that information particular to one's language determine how one believes a proposition. Consequently, nothing prevents the possibility of people who speak different languages being able to believe the same proposition in the same way. Granted, given

the variety of information that one can have on any given person or object and given the different access people have to other people and objects and the different interests they have in them, it becomes rather unlikely that any two people believe the same proposition in exactly the same way. But the issue is not whether, in fact, they do believe the same proposition in the same way, but rather whether they *can* believe the same proposition in the same way, and the account I have provided allows for that possibility.

Finally, the no name problem arose as it seems possible that the various problems, including Frege's puzzle, can arise for people who do not have names of the relevant objects, but rather represent the objects in alternate ways. It also seems possible that a version of the puzzle might arise for people who have very limited language skills or even for the most part lack a language. The problem can be dealt with on the view I have presented because, as I pointed out in the previous section, a picture or a scent can just as easily elicit information from a web of information as a name. Consequently, the account does not require that names be a part of the content of the web, nor does it require names to be the only kind of marker that allows access to the webs of information or to elicit information from them.

Our antisubstitution intuitions can be explained once we distinguish between the proposition expressed and the information conveyed or elicited. If our focus is on semantics and truth value, then we can freely substitute coreferential names. However, our focus in everyday life tends to be more on information than semantics, and the different ways in which we express a given proposition can provide different information. Hence our antisubstitution intuitions. The sentences "Superman saved the city" and "Clark Kent saved the city" might express the same proposition. In spite of that, a lot depends on the name used in the sentence expressing the proposition, and only one of the sentences indicates that Clark Kent has revealed his identity. Our antisubstitution intuitions are explained with us having webs of information that are accessed by markers. Different markers, in this case the names "Clark Kent" and "Superman," access information from different webs of information, explaining how it is that the sentence "Clark Kent saved the city" provides new information about Superman's identity while the sentence "Superman saved the city" does not.

The account presented here is thoroughly Russellian in that it assumes direct reference, semantic innocence, and singular propositions. At the same time, while it is compatible with mental representations being individuated functionally, it can hardly be viewed as an account that relies in any way on sentencelike guises. The metaphor of a web of information is, I believe, a very useful explanatory tool that has the added advantage of seeming to be compatible with a large variety of ways in which one might represent objects. How exactly we represent objects and propositions is for cognitive scientists to find out. But regardless of how exactly we represent them, be it propositionally or nonlinguistically or both, we do seem to collect

information and sort it rather systematically. Webs of information capture that broad idea without a commitment to a particular type of representation being the correct one.

COMPARING WITH THE OTHER CANDIDATES

It might at this point be useful to look very briefly at some of the other accounts that have been developed as a response to the substitution issues that arise in connection with the direct reference theory.

The position that I have presented retains singular propositions, and so that sets it apart from positions that introduce enhanced propositions to account for belief reports. Consequently, there is a fundamental difference between the view I present and the views advocated by, for example, Richard, as well as by Crimmins and Perry. The latter introduce unarticulated constituents to propositions, while Richard advocates RAMs, or Russellian Annotated Matrixes, with their additional items. These views attempted to deal with problems that arise with belief reports by introducing finer-grained propositions than singular propositions. As I have argued, there is no need to advocate enhanced propositions over singular propositions, and attempts to do so run into problems of their own.

Salmon's favored solution to substitution problems focused on belief reports, and it is not easy to see how the proposed solution can be extended to simple sentences. Contrary to Salmon, I started with what I considered the basic problem, namely, substitution issues with simple sentences, and I then extended the solution provided for simple sentences to belief reports. So already there is a significant difference both in methodology and scope.

Even more significantly, while Salmon's explanation for our antisubstitution intuitions in belief reports depends on us systematically confusing the proposition expressed with a proposition implicated, the account I have presented does not rely on any such confusion, nor does it rely on implicated propositions. An example might help here.

On Salmon's account the belief report

23. Lois believes that Superman has amazing powers

pragmatically implicates something like

24. Lois believes that Superman has amazing powers under a guise like "Superman has amazing powers."

However, the following belief report does not pragmatically implicate (24):

25. Lois believes that Clark Kent has amazing powers.

Listeners, Salmon claims, are likely to mistake the pragmatically implicated proposition expressed by (24) for the proposition expressed by (23), and so they resist substitution.

The account I have presented does not include implicated propositions and so does not rely on a systematic confusion of propositions of the type Salmon specifies. Only one proposition is involved, namely, the proposition expressed by the embedded sentence. However, the sentence conveys and elicits information, and the name used in the sentence indicates where the information is to be stored and/or retrieved from. The name “Superman” and the name “Clark Kent” are markers for different webs of information, and so which name is used matters greatly. So, a lot depends on what sentence is used to express the proposition, since different sentences can use different markers, and different markers typically access different webs of information.

The view that I have presented does presuppose that most people have similar key information about Superman and Clark Kent in their respective Superman and Clark Kent webs of information. Hence, when someone reports that Lois believes that Superman has amazing powers, uttering (23), then the use of the name “Superman” indicates what web of information to access, namely, the Superman web and not the Clark Kent web. Assuming that we have similar information in our webs, the use of words provides some information as to how she believes the relevant proposition.

Soames’s account is based on a speaker’s being able to assert several propositions when uttering a sentence. In some cases, names are descriptively enriched, resulting in the propositions asserted being correspondingly descriptively enriched. For example, sentence (26) can be used to assert and convey the propositions expressed by (26a)–(26c):

- 26. Peter Hempel taught at Princeton University.
- 26a. The philosopher, Peter Hempel, taught at Princeton University.
- 26b. My neighbor, Peter Hempel, taught at Princeton University.
- 26c. The man standing over there, Peter Hempel, taught at Princeton University.

There are, of course, significant similarities between the accounts provided by Soames and Salmon. In particular, both of them explain our intuitions regarding substitutivity by relying on a rather systematic confusion of propositions. In Soames’s case, the confusion arises due to one sentence being used to assert an array of propositions.

Again, the account that I have provided does not depend on a multitude of propositions being conveyed or asserted with an utterance of a single sentence. However, I am sympathetic with Soames’s intuition that the utterance of a single sentence can result in a variety of information being brought up. While he explains the variety of information with the single utterance resulting in many propositions being asserted, I explain the variety of information

in terms of what is elicited from peoples' webs. The name "Peter Hempel" is a marker for Peter Hempel webs, and there is a variety of information in those webs. Two persons who know Hempel from the different roles that he plays (e.g., one as a family man and another as a scholar), are likely to store very different information in their webs. Even further, those who know him as a scholar are likely to have different information about him and so recall him in different ways. So the utterance of (26) can elicit different information from different people. However, Soames's explanation and my explanation of how to account for this differ greatly.

Finally, the Braun-Saul view focuses primarily on truth values of propositions and how speakers seem to fail to realize that substitution of coreferential names preserves truth values. In this light, it is understandable that they explain our ant substitution intuitions in terms of mistaken evaluation, namely, the speaker's failing to realize that substitution preserves truth value. Further, they argue that an enlightened speaker, namely, someone who is in the know about the relevant identity, should not resist substitution. The view I have presented recognizes that, even when we are enlightened about the relevant identity, we are often right when resisting substitutions. Further, I have explained why it is that we should often resist substitution of coreferential names even when enlightened about the relevant identity, the main reason being that each name is a marker for a different web and so conveys information to and elicits information from different webs. Instead of focusing only on truth values, my focus is on both truth values and information. It is the latter that underlies our ant substitution intuitions even when we realize that truth value is preserved with the substitution.

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7 Empty Names

Naïve Russellians hold that names contribute only their referents to propositions, and they hold that propositions are structured entities containing objects and properties. The naïve Russellian holds, for example, that the sentence “Venus is a planet” expresses a proposition that can be represented as

1. ⟨Venus, being a planet⟩

and that the sentence “Herman Melville was born in NYC” expresses a proposition that can be represented as

- ⟨⟨Melville, NYC⟩, being born⟩.

These propositions contain, respectively, Venus, Melville, and NYC as constituents.

Consider a sentence such as “Vulcan is a planet.” What proposition does it express? If we follow the naïve Russellian ideal, then “Vulcan,” being a proper name, should contribute its referent to the proposition expressed. But since Vulcan does not exist, the name has no referent and so has nothing to contribute to a proposition.

One of the most prominent options that the naïve Russellian has is to suggest that simple sentences containing nonreferring, or empty, names express something similar to singular proposition. But while singular propositions contain objects, “propositions” expressed by sentences containing nonreferring names do not contain objects. Empty names, not surprisingly, do not contribute an object to the proposition expressed by a simple sentence containing the name. Accordingly, what “Vulcan is a planet” expresses can be represented as follows:

2. ⟨_, being a planet⟩.

Entities such as the one represented by (2) have been called *incomplete propositions*,¹ *unfilled propositions*,² *structurally challenged propositions*,³ and *gappy propositions*.⁴ I prefer to call these entities *incomplete propositions*,

as they indicate that we are dealing with entities that are less than complete, and so they invite issues and complications that are different from those we face when dealing with full-fledged propositions.

The first part of this chapter will present the main problems that face the naïve Russellian when dealing with empty names. The following sections will discuss some of the prominent attempts to deal with the problems. I will then present an account of sentences containing empty names that enables us to deal with the problems raised in a way that is in a significant sense compatible with our understanding of sentences containing referring terms. The positive account will feature two main components. First, following error theory, it will not assign truth values to incomplete propositions. Second, it will account for information value and explain why we cannot cogently substitute names by using the idea of webs of information into which organize the various beliefs we associate with names and objects. That is, the account provided in previous chapters will now be extended in order to account for some of the problems that nonreferring names generate for the naïve Russellian.

A small but important caveat: until now, I have assumed that Superman and Clark Kent exist and are not fictional characters. The reason for this assumption was that the two names are frequently used in the literature when discussing substitutivity, as they provide a vivid and well-known example of a person having very different personas. In this chapter, I will no longer assume that Superman and Clark Kent exist. Instead, I will assume that they are fictional characters.

PROBLEMS FOR NAÏVE RUSSELLIANISM AND EMPTY NAMES

Several problems arise if we assume that sentences containing nonreferring names express incomplete propositions. The first problem is that of whether one should assign a truth value to incomplete propositions. We certainly talk as if many of these incomplete propositions have truth values, that is, we talk as if they are true or false. We readily say, for example, that it is true that Vulcan is a planet and that Sherlock Holmes was a detective. But when questioned further we might hesitate. When asked whether Vulcan *really* is a planet we might balk and say that no, it isn't really a planet. Similarly, when asked whether Holmes *really* was a detective, then we are quick to point out that he was not really a detective.

The second problem arises when we consider what sentences containing non-referring names express. Compare

2. <__, being a planet>

with

3. <__, being a planet>.

(2) and (3) represent the same incomplete proposition. Nevertheless (2) was obtained from the sentence

4. Vulcan is a planet

while (3) was obtained from

5. Mor-Tax is a planet.⁵

That is, sentences (4) and (5) express the same incomplete proposition since Mor-Tax, like Vulcan, does not exist. Nevertheless, the two sentences seem to provide very different information. They have different cognitive significance.

The observation that the two sentences have different cognitive significance leads to the third problem. It certainly seems like Tom can believe that Vulcan is a planet without believing that Mor-Tax is a planet. That is, it seems like (6) and (7) can differ in truth value:

6. Tom believes that Vulcan is a planet
7. Tom believes that Mor-Tax is a planet.

How can we account for the different cognitive significance when the embedded sentences express the same incomplete proposition, and when there is no object in the proposition to represent in different ways?

There have been several attempts to solve the problems that arise for the naïve Russellian when it comes to empty names. Few, however, attempt to deal with all three problems raised above. I will discuss some of the better attempts to deal with the various problems in what follows. The discussion will reveal that all of the attempts fail to account for some of the basic intuitions that arise in connection with naïve Russellianism and nonreferring names.

THE PRAGMATIC IMPLICATURE VIEW

The pragmatic implicature view, as developed by Adams, Stecker, Fuller, and Dietrich (Adams, hereafter), accepts that simple sentences containing nonreferring names express incomplete propositions.⁶ These propositions lack truth value, and so are neither true nor false. As is typical with pragmatic implicature views, Adams explains our intuition that the relevant sentences express truth-evaluative propositions by invoking implicated propositions. We, in effect, mistake the implicated proposition for the incomplete proposition expressed by the sentence uttered, and so we attribute the truth value of the implicated proposition to the incomplete proposition. The implicated propositions come from the lore associated with a name. All names, referring and nonreferring, have a lore. The lore consists of a set of

well-known descriptions that we associate with the name. As we hear about Superman, we learn that he is from Krypton, that he is sometimes called “the Man of Steel,” and that he is faster than a speeding bullet or a locomotive. Hence, the lore of “Superman” includes “the Man of Steel,” “the man from Krypton,” “the man faster than a speeding bullet or a locomotive.”⁷ So, Adams claims that an utterance of

8. Superman does not exist

pragmatically implicates a complete proposition. We obtain the complete proposition by substituting one of the descriptions in the lore of the name for the name itself, and so from (8) we obtain something like “the man from Krypton does not exist.” Crucially for Adams, he is seeking a unitary account. I take that to mean not only that he is seeking an account that applies both to referring and nonreferring names, but to embedded sentences (attitude ascriptions) as well as simple sentences. The pragmatic implicature account would then extend to sentences like (6) and (7). Nevertheless, Adams’s focus is on simple sentences.

Do we usually understand simple sentences in the way suggested here? I don’t think so, as is evident when we move away from the “famous names” and more toward cases where the speaker has very limited knowledge of the object being discussed. One of the features of the causal reference theory that the naïve Russellian embraces is that it is possible to acquire a name and use it in a meaningful way without having much knowledge of the object named. It suffices to intend to use the name to refer to the same entity as did the person from whom you acquired the name. But if I acquire a name from James and know nothing about the object being talked about except the trivial “the object James was talking about,” then that is the only description that I associate with the name. But that description is certainly not a part of the lore of the name, the lore consisting of a set of well-known descriptions associated with the name. So, in this case, Adams cannot provide an implicated proposition of the type the advocate of the pragmatic implicature view seek when uttering a sentence containing the name, as no implicated proposition from the lore is available.

Further, it is not clear that the typical speaker would recognize that the implicature account is correct. If Travis utters the sentence “G. W. Bush’s foreign policy was shortsighted” or “Santa brings presents,” and I suggest reasonable implicated propositions, then it is very likely that Travis will be taken by surprise, not the least if I associate very positive descriptions with Bush, while Travis thinks of him in negative terms. It is quite likely, that is, that Travis will simply reply as follows: “No, that is not what I meant. I only meant to say that G. W. Bush’s foreign policy was shortsighted,” or “I only meant to say that Santa brings presents.” In all likelihood, the typical speaker does not know about the supposed implications, and it is quite likely that she will not recognize the implicated propositions as what she meant to say.

Since Adams's view depends on implicated propositions obtained by substituting descriptions for names, the generality constraint is not satisfied. If we are to take seriously views that allow for nonlinguistic representations, then, as I have argued, an account that relies on linguistic items is too limiting. As I have argued, some of the puzzles and problems we are dealing with can be raised with the help of, for example, pictures, in which case an account that relies on explaining how we can associate descriptions with names falls short.

Finally, a unified account of names should provide a way of dealing with intentional contexts, such as belief reports. Perhaps Adams wants to refer here to a well-known development of the pragmatic implicature account of belief reports, namely, that of Nathan Salmon. The account claims that we systematically confuse what is said with what is implicated when assessing belief reports.⁸ It is this systematic confusion that allows us to account for our intuitions regarding belief reports. The embedded sentences in (9) and (10) express the same proposition:

- 9. Lois believes that Superman is strong
- 10. Lois believes that Clark Kent is strong.

In spite of that, we tend to think that (9) reports a true belief while (10) reports a false belief. Salmon's reply is to suggest that an utterance of (9) pragmatically implicates something like (11), while an utterance of (10) pragmatically implicates something like (12), namely,

- 11. Lois believes that Superman is strong under a guise like "Superman is strong," and
- 12. Lois believes that Superman is strong under a guise like "Clark Kent is strong."

Consequently, the pragmatically implicated proposition includes guises, or ways in which a proposition is believed. The implicated proposition can therefore be analyzed as a three-place relation between a person, a proposition believed, and how a proposition is believed. The account does not force us to accept the kinds of guises that I have suggested. We can just as well have descriptive guises, where the relevant descriptions are taken from the lore associated with a name.

I have some concerns about the general approach of the pragmatic implicature account, one of which is that it does not seem to capture what really goes on when ordinary people report beliefs. I have already argued that it seems clear that, even if the account applies to some belief reports, it does not serve as a comprehensive treatment of belief reports of ordinary speakers. In most situations, when I report beliefs, I am not very concerned with how the one whose belief I am reporting thinks of the object in the proposition, or how the person believes the proposition. In most situations, my main concern when reporting beliefs is to make sure that I accurately convey

what proposition is believed. If Annemarie tells me that Travis believes that Santa brings presents, then it is of little concern how exactly Travis represents Santa (e.g., whether he represents him as being fat and on a sleigh or as being more slender and working with his elves). When Annemarie provides the belief report, she is probably not concerned with exactly how Travis represents Santa. She is not conveying any details about Travis's beliefs in the report. Instead, she is simply reporting that Travis believes the embedded proposition.

THE ONTOLOGICALLY PERMISSIVE VIEW

What I call the ontologically permissive view has a few variants, most prominent of which are those of Peter van Inwagen, Nathan Salmon, and David Braun.⁹ What they have in common is that they are quite liberal when it comes to what beings do exist. Still, the focuses of the three differ significantly. Van Inwagen and Salmon focus on the existence of the relevant beings, assuming that we can refer to them if they exist. Braun, on the other hand, grants existence and focuses on whether and how we can refer to these beings. Clearly, both issues need to be addressed. It is possible that we cannot refer to something that does exist, in which case we cannot embed the object in singular propositions, and so we do need an account of how we refer to the relevant beings.

While the advocates of the ontologically permissive view admit that there are nonreferring terms, they accept the existence of various kinds of creatures to which we can refer, and so the scope of the problem is greatly reduced if they are right. However, if they provide objects of reference for some of the relevant terms, then they need to provide a principled reason as to why the view does not eliminate all nonreferring terms.

There are three types of objects that we are concerned with here: creatures of fiction, creatures of myth, and creatures of imagination. The salient difference between creatures of fiction, creatures of myth, and creatures of imagination consists of the beliefs or intentions of those talking about them. Van Inwagen and Salmon present the difference regarding existence as consisting of the beliefs of those who talk about the creatures, while Braun emphasizes the intention of those talking about these creatures. I will first look closer at the view that the beliefs of those who talk about the relevant creatures make the salient difference when it comes to existence, and then I will turn my attention to the view that it is intention that makes the difference when it comes to reference.

According to the view that the creatures are created by the relevant beliefs of those talking about them, creatures of fiction are introduced by authors, audience, and/or literary critics, who believe that certain things about these creatures and works of art are true. Compare this with creatures of myth, such as Vulcan, that are introduced with false theories.

In the case of Vulcan, astronomers theorized, and so believed, that there was a planet between Mercury and the Sun. They were wrong when they so theorized. Finally, creatures of the imagination are introduced when even the one doing so does not believe that they exist. Salmon introduced the imaginary creature Nappy as follows. Suppose that an armed fanatic who calls himself “Nappy” has taken over the government of France and, with the support of the United Nations, declared himself the emperor of France. Even Salmon, who introduced Nappy, does not believe that this is true.

Van Inwagen is ontologically the most conservative of the three, allowing only for creatures of fiction. He points out that we believe certain theories of literary criticism and that these theories quantify over theoretical entities, such as the characters in stories or plays. His main argument can be stated as follows:

1. We believe a theory of literary criticism that existentially quantifies over creatures of fiction.
2. If we believe a theory of literary criticism that existentially quantifies over creatures of fiction, then we should believe that these creatures exist.
3. So, we should believe that creatures of fiction exist.

The main motivation behind the ontologically permissive view is to account for the apparent truth of statements about creatures of fiction. Since creatures of fiction exist, we can utter truths and falsehoods about them. Accordingly, the following sentence about the protagonist of *Death of a Salesman* expresses a true proposition about an existing creature.

13. Willy Lowman committed suicide.

While Nathan Salmon supports van Inwagen’s argument for creatures of fictions, his support for these beings does not depend on theories of literary criticism. He, as does Braun, suggests instead that our beliefs and the way we talk seem to commit us to their existence. For example, the following statement seems true, and so we seem committed to the relevant characters existing:

14. Some characters in Miller’s plays are depressed.

Interestingly, while van Inwagen accepts the existence of creatures of fiction but not the existence of creatures of myth or creatures of the imagination, Salmon accepts the existence of creatures of fiction and creatures of myth, but not creatures of imagination.

If fictional objects and mythical objects exist and we can refer to them, then they can be constituents of propositions. Consequently, those who

accept creatures of fiction or creatures of myth can claim that Lowman, Superman, and Vulcan enter propositions. If the names “Lowman,” “Superman,” and “Vulcan” refer to fictional objects (van Inwagen) and mythical objects (Salmon), then these objects enter propositions, and so the propositions expressed by sentences in which these names appear are not incomplete.

Consider what Salmon has to say about Leverrier and his introduction of the mythical planet Vulcan. According to Salmon, when Leverrier hypothesized that Vulcan existed, he did so on the basis of a false theory. Nevertheless, although he failed to name a real planet, he succeeded in introducing and naming a mythical planet. As a result, when he, as well as the rest of us, use the name “Vulcan” we refer to this mythical planet. The proposition expressed by the sentence “Vulcan does not exist” expresses a false singular proposition about this mythical planet.¹⁰ Names that genuinely fail to refer, such as “Nappy,” do not contribute objects to propositions, and so Salmon claims that the resulting propositions are incomplete.

A number of philosophers accept creatures of fiction.¹¹ Some accept creatures of myth.¹² Very few endorse creatures of imagination.¹³ Since van Inwagen does not accept creatures of imagination, and Salmon does not want to commit to them, I take it that it amounts to a reduction of their views if the reasoning for the existence of creatures of fiction and/or creatures of myth can be extended to creatures of imagination. Starting with creatures of fiction, as these are the most generally accepted of the three, can we extend the reasoning of those who accept the existence of creatures of fictions to include creatures of imagination?

Let us first look at van Inwagen’s argument, according to which the critical issue is that we believe some theories of literary criticism that existentially quantify over creatures of fiction. Well, we have people in psychology work with theories of the imagination that quantify over imaginary objects, such as the imaginary friends that some people have. Since that is the case, we get a parallel argument to that of van Inwagen’s for the existence of imaginary objects.

1. We believe a theory of imagination that existentially quantifies over creatures of imagination.
2. If we believe a theory of imagination that existentially quantifies over creatures of imagination, then we should believe that these creatures exist.
3. So, we should believe that creatures of imagination exist.

Consequently, van Inwagen’s way of arguing for the existence of creatures of fiction commits us to the existence of creatures of imagination, as well as to creatures of fiction. Since van Inwagen’s reasoning commits us to the existence of creatures of imagination as well as to creatures of fiction, it proves too much. Note that it is not important for the reasoning how many believe

the relevant theories. After all, there are many theories of literary criticism, and most of them are not familiar to the average person, much as the theories of imagination are not familiar to the average person.

Salmon supports van Inwagen's reasons for the existence of creatures of fictions. Additionally, Salmon argues for the existence of creatures of myths. Salmon writes:

Whatever good reason there is for acknowledging the real existence of [the creature of fiction] Holmes extends to Vulcan. . . . Myths and fictions are both made up. The principal difference between mythical and fictional objects [i.e., creatures of myth and fiction] is that the myth is believed while the fiction is only make-believe. This difference does nothing to obliterate the reality of either fictional or mythical objects [i.e., creatures of fiction or myth].¹⁴

Salmon's argument can be stated as follows:

1. If we have good reasons for acknowledging the existence of fictional creatures, then we have good reasons for acknowledging the existence of mythical creatures.
2. We have good reasons for acknowledging the existence of fictional creatures.
3. So, we have good reasons for acknowledging the existence of mythical creatures.¹⁵

Since Salmon endorses van Inwagen's reasons for the existence of fictional objects, and, as we have just seen, van Inwagen's reasons are not good reasons, as they seem to commit him to too much, we can reject premise (2) of the argument. Consequently, Salmon has provided good reasons for the existence neither of fictional objects nor of mythical objects.

Once we look more closely at the quote from Salmon, then, it is not at all clear why he endorses the existence of mythical creatures and fictional creatures but not the existence of imaginary creatures. Imagination has in common with myth and fiction that it makes things up. However, there is a difference in whether and how the three are believed, namely

Myths are believed.

Fiction is make-believe.

Imagination is neither believed nor make-believe.

Given that the difference between the three only consists in whether and how they are believed, it is of course incumbent on Salmon to show how coming to believe something and coming to make-believe something (which certainly seems less than believing something) can bring objects into existence in a way that entertaining them in the imagination does not. If Salmon

cannot explain why believing falsehoods (namely, myths) and make-believing bring objects into existence, while imagining them does not, then he has no reason for denying that he brought Nappy into existence when imagining him.

Perhaps Salmon can provide an explanation by elaborating on a feature of his and van Inwagen's view that I have not emphasized so far. Both Salmon and van Inwagen believe that when an author pens a story or a play, then she does not refer to a fictional character and so does not create a fictional character. It is only later when readers of the story or play start to reflect on it that the names start to refer to fictional characters, and so it is only after readers start to reflect on the story or play that the fictional character comes into existence. Hence van Inwagen's emphasis on literary theory, which, presumably, is shared by many. In contrast with objects of fiction and myths, which presumably are believed, or make-believed by many, objects of imagination are not widely shared. If that is so, then the one doing the imagining is ontologically impotent, much like the author of a fiction or a myth is on his or her own.

It is hard to see how the attempt to explain the existence of characters by reference to the fact that many believe or make-believe that they exist is helpful. If one person make-believes a story about a made up character, then the character does not exist. Why should that be any different if many people make-believe a story about a made up character? Further, nothing prevents us from applying the reasoning of van Inwagen and Salmon to creatures of imagination. Now that a number of philosophers have read about Salmon's Nappy, does Nappy exist, even if he did not exist when Salmon first penned his name? And if he now exists, then what is the critical number of believers it took to bring Nappy into existence? Van Inwagen and Salmon need to provide answers to these questions. Until they do, the view lacks plausibility.¹⁶

BRAUN ON REFERENCE

David Braun's focus is not on whether characters of fiction, myth, and imagination are created. Braun accepts creatures of myth and creatures of imagination, as well as creatures of fiction. While Braun does not argue for the existence of these beings, he seems partial to the reasons Salmon provides for the existence of creatures of fiction and creatures of myths. Given that the reasons that both van Inwagen and Salmon provided for the existence of these beings are not strong, Braun's focus on reference might seem premature. Still, it is important to find out whether and how we can refer to these beings in case they exist. After all, if we cannot refer to them, then it is unclear how we can talk about them and how they can be constituents of propositions expressed by sentences we utter. Accordingly, Braun is ontologically more generous than both van Inwagen and Salmon. In addition

to allowing for creatures of fiction, not only does he claim that Leverrier's theorizing about Vulcan created a mythical object, he further claims that Salmon's musings about Nappy created an imaginary object. Nevertheless, Braun also believes that we do have genuine empty names. I will argue that Braun's reasons for our being able to refer to creatures of myth, fiction, and imagination place unreasonable restrictions on reference.

Braun claims that it is the author's intentions that determine whether or not his inscriptions of names refer to fictional characters. He writes:

In my opinion, the thoughts and intentions that authors have as they inscribe names determine whether their inscriptions refer to characters. Conan Doyle's inscriptions of "Sherlock Holmes" referred to the abstract fictional character only if he had singular thoughts and intentions about that thing.¹⁷

How do we know the author's intention when inscribing the name? In general, we do not know the intention. That is, we do not know whether, for example, Conan Doyle intended to refer to a fictional character when he penned the story, or whether he intended something less than that in which case "Sherlock Holmes" failed to refer. Braun continues:

Perhaps he just started writing his story with the nonsingular intention that he pretend to refer to something with the name "Holmes." He would then not have had a particular character "in mind." His inscriptions of "Holmes" would then have been nonreferring and his inscriptions of "Holmes smoked his pipe" would have semantically expressed a gappy proposition. While inscribing the latter sentence, he would have pretended to assert the gappy proposition his inscription expressed. His pattern of activity would have created the fictional character Holmes, but his inscriptions of "Holmes" would not have referred to that character.¹⁸

If the author uses the name with the intention to create and refer to a fictional character, then our subsequent use of the name will also refer to that character, assuming that there is a standing intention of our using the name to refer to the same object as the person from whom we learned it. In case the author did not have an object in mind when penning the story, then our use of the name refers only when we intend to so use it. That is, subsequent users of the name can provide the intention that the author did not have and so refer to a fictional character.¹⁹ Consequently, if the relevant intention is present, our simple sentences containing the name express singular propositions and not incomplete propositions.

Given this, Braun's take on Leverrier and Vulcan is perhaps not surprising. Braun argues that Leverrier did not succeed in referring to the mythical object Vulcan, even though he believes that Leverrier did create a mythical

planet. That is, Braun thinks that the metaphysical claim Salmon makes about Leverrier creating a mythical planet is correct, while he disagrees with Salmon on the issue of reference to that planet. In Leverrier's mouth, Braun argues, "Vulcan" referred to nothing at all, and so his utterances of simple sentences containing "Vulcan" resulted in incomplete, or gappy, proposition. He provides two reasons for his claim that Leverrier failed to refer to Vulcan.

Braun's first reason for the claim that Leverrier failed to refer to Vulcan is that

The mythical planet does not satisfy (or even come close to satisfying) any reference-fixing description that Leverrier might have had in mind, for the mythical planet has virtually none of the properties that Leverrier thinks that Vulcan has: it is not a planet, it has no mass, it does not perturb Mercury, it does not orbit the Sun—it is not even a heavenly body.²⁰

It would be helpful if Braun said more about this case. We can, and often do, refer to objects with descriptions that fail to correctly describe the object. Donnellan's classic example of the man mistakenly thought to be drinking champagne comes to mind. In the example, a person succeeds in referring to a person and saying something true about him by using the description "the man drinking champagne," even though the man was not drinking champagne.²¹ Given that we can so refer, Braun owes us a further explanation of why it is not possible in Leverrier's case to refer to the mythical object Vulcan with descriptions that mostly fail to correctly describe it.

It is interesting to note is that it is likely that many fictional characters Braun thinks we can refer to do not have many, or even most, of the properties that the author had in mind when penning them. Fictional characters are always underdescribed, and often severely underdescribed. Even the main characters of novels and plays are usually lacking in detailed descriptions of what they look like, what they wear, and how exactly they interact with others. The less important characters in novels and plays are even more severely underdescribed, as there are sometimes only a few sentences devoted to them. Nevertheless, Braun claims that we can refer to fictional characters.

One plausible view about the development and construction of characters in literature is that the reader is given a more or less incomplete description of a character that he or she then adds to, or completes, with careful reading. If the author left the character severely underdescribed, then there are usually multiple ways to complete the making of the character. While the details of the completion need to be consistent with the basic description provided by the author, they can vary greatly from one reader to the next.²² Given that there are multiple ways to complete a character, and given that readers do complete characters in very different ways, there are often very few descriptions that the characters have in common once completed by the various readers. The end product might bear very little resemblance to the character the author had in mind, just as Vulcan might bear very little

resemblance with the object Leverrier had in mind. If the lack of resemblance does not create problems with reference in the case of fictional characters, then a stronger case needs to be made for the lack of resemblance creating problems for Leverrier.

The second reason Braun gives for Leverrier's not succeeding in referring to Vulcan is that he did not intend to so refer. When Leverrier introduced "Vulcan" then, Braun argues, he intended to refer to a planet in case it existed and otherwise to nothing at all.²³ Because he so intended, he failed to refer, and so his utterances about Vulcan asserted incomplete propositions. Had Leverrier known that Vulcan did not exist and intended to refer to the mythical object he created, then he would have succeeded in referring. In fact, Braun maintains that many of *our* utterances of "Vulcan" succeed in referring. Our utterances refer when we view Vulcan as a mythical object.

Braun's reasoning here seems to commit reference to an unreasonable metaphysical dependency. Consider the following:

If Doyle intended to use "Holmes" to refer to a real object, then his reference failed. If he intended to use "Holmes" to refer to a fictional object, then his reference succeeded.

If Salmon intended to use "Nappy" to refer to a real emperor, then his reference failed. If he intended to use "Nappy" to refer to a fictional creature, then his reference succeeded.

If Leverrier intended his use of "Vulcan" to refer to a real planet, then his reference failed. If he intended his use of "Vulcan" to refer to a mythical object, then his references succeeded.

In each of the above cases, reference only succeeds if the speaker has in mind the correct metaphysical status of the object referred to. For example, Doyle succeeds in referring to Holmes only if he intends to refer to *the fictional object Holmes*. This is a strange requirement that we do not accept in general. It should suffice to point out that ordinary folk certainly do not have any fine-grained ontological categories in mind when they speak of various objects—real, imaginary, religious, or otherwise. Given that they are largely unaware of the ontological categories that philosophers employ, we should conclude that they fail to refer in the majority of their uses of names of fictional, mythical, and imaginary objects because they fail to intend to refer to them as such objects. Resorting to standing intentions to refer to the same object as the person from whom we heard the name does not seem to help much here, as we do not know whether that person had the right metaphysical category in mind.

In addition to raising objections to Braun's view on the basis that most people are ontologically unaware, we can also raise an objection on the basis that some people are well aware of the metaphysical status they have in mind when talking about an object. Suppose that a theist and an atheist engage in a discussion about God. The theist, with her use, intends to use "God" to refer to a really existing object (as opposed to a fictional or mythical object).

The atheist intends to use “God” to refer to a fictional or a mythical object. If the stringent metaphysical requirements on reference that Braun introduces are right, then only one of the discussants succeeds in referring to God. The other fails to refer. This, surely, is an unwanted result. We would like to say that either both succeed in referring or both fail to refer. How they view the ontological status of God surely should not decide the issue. Given this, it appears to me that allowing for the existence of fictional, mythical, and imaginary objects creates more problems than it solves. We will therefore consider an alternative that does not allow for their existence.

AN ERROR THEORETIC ACCOUNT: TRUTH VALUE AND INCOMPLETE PROPOSITIONS

All of the theories of empty names discussed so far leave too many questions unanswered. I will provide an error theoretic account, combining that with the web-based account of cognitive significance previously presented. The error theoretic account borrows from, for example, error theories in ethics. The negative claim that the error theorist makes is ontological, namely, just as the ethical error theorist claims that there are no moral properties, the naïve Russellian error theorist claims that there are no fictional, mythical, or imaginary objects. Just as the ethical error theorist holds that ethical theories that claim there are moral properties are systematically wrong, the naïve Russellian error theorist holds that accounts of reference that claim that there are fictional, mythical, or imaginary objects are systematically wrong. The “error” in error theory is that while people imply or presuppose that the relevant objects or properties exist, no such objects exist.

The positive story that an error theorist needs to tell should explain why people talk the way they do, even when they know the ontological facts of the matter. That is, the error theorist needs to explain, for example, why it is that, even when we believe that Santa Claus is not real, we keep talking as if he is real. The positive story needs to provide a plausible account of what is going on in our thought and with our language.

Since I do not find the arguments for a differential treatment of creatures of fiction, creatures of myth, and creatures of imagination provided by van Inwagen and Salmon convincing, I will treat all of these creatures as simply not existing. Of course we often talk as if they do exist: hence, the borrowing from error theory.

The first problem raised for an account of empty names was whether one should assign a truth value to a simple sentence containing an empty name, a sentence such as

3. Vulcan is a planet.

Interestingly, there is little agreement on whether the incomplete proposition expressed by (3) has a truth value. For example, Braun thinks it does,

while Adams and Stecker in their 1994 article, “Vacuous Singular Terms,” think it does not.²⁴

Braun gives three reasons for the incomplete proposition expressed by (3) being false. First, according to Braun, we have two options. Either the proposition is true, or it is false. Clearly, it is not true, and so the remaining alternative is for it to be false. Second, the incomplete proposition expressed by (3) strongly resembles similar complete propositions, which are truth evaluative. Third, incomplete propositions, including the one expressed by (3), encode important semantic facts.

Adams and Stecker have argued that Braun’s reasons are not very persuasive.²⁵ They point out that, even though complete and incomplete propositions might look similar, that is not a good reason for claiming that both have to be truth evaluative if one is truth evaluative. Further, they point out that, even though questions and commands encode important semantic facts, they are not truth evaluative. Finally, it seems like Braun’s claim that all propositions, including incomplete propositions, are either true or false is *ad hoc*. In particular, it is not at all clear that the principle, even if true, should apply to incomplete propositions. Adams and Stecker seem to be right in their assessment of the reasons that Braun provides.

An error theorist has two options when it comes to assigning truth values to propositions expressed by sentences containing nonreferring terms. For one, she can argue that such propositions are false. For example, an ethical error theorist might want to argue that the proposition expressed by the sentence “being kind to children is good” is false. The other option is to say that propositions expressed by sentences containing nonreferring terms lack truth value. For example, an ethical error theorist might claim that the proposition expressed by “being kind to children is good” lacks truth value, and so is neither true nor false, the reason being that moral properties do not exist. It is reasonable to opt for the latter option, namely, that incomplete propositions lack truth value. An incomplete proposition simply does not contain enough information to be truth evaluative.

Consider the following representation of an incomplete proposition:

15. <_, is fat>.

It seems appropriate to say that there is not enough here to evaluate for truth. When presented with just (15) we have no intuitions that tell us that we should view it as true or false because we do not know what it is that supposedly is fat. Proposition (15) might be obtained from either

16. The Tooth Fairy is fat

or

17. Santa Claus is fat.

Our pretheoretic intuitions will likely tell us that it is false that the Tooth Fairy is fat, while it is true that Santa Claus is fat. That is, when the philosophically uninformed is asked whether it is true that Santa Claus is fat, she will without much hesitation answer that yes, he is fat. Similarly, when the philosophically uninformed is asked whether it is true that the Tooth Fairy is fat, she will without much hesitation answer that no, she is not fat. But when presented with a predicate without a subject, then the philosophically uninformed, as well as the rest of us, need more information before assigning a truth value.

We have an interesting, and by now a familiar, situation here, namely, it seems that the sentences used to express incomplete propositions carry with them more information than do the propositions they express. This, as I have argued, is not to be explained with pragmatic implicature. Instead, I will argue that the additional information is due to names eliciting information from webs of information.

WHY WE TALK THE WAY WE DO

Error theorists of all stripes have to explain why we talk the way we do in spite of the properties or entities that we are talking about not existing. A moral error theorist needs to explain why we talk as if moral statements can be true when the relevant truth-making properties do not exist. Similarly, an error theorist talking about fictional, mythical, and imaginary creatures needs to explain why we so often talk as if these creatures exist and as if sentences about them express true propositions when these creatures do not exist. Why do we, for example, without hesitation, utter a sentence like

13. Willy Lowman committed suicide

and claim that it expresses a true proposition?

In general, names seem to carry with them an existence presumption. That is, ordinary speakers seem to presume that the names we use refer to objects that exist. When we talk about the Alhambra, Mark Twain, Dr. J., and Messi, we presume that these objects exist. Many, for example, children and perhaps even a few adults, work with the same assumption when discussing Santa Claus and the Tooth Fairy. That is, they presume that they exist. The rest of us, while knowing that the existence presumption is not satisfied, usually talk *as if* it is satisfied. We say without hesitation that Santa is fat and that he is a male. We also say without hesitation that the Tooth Fairy is a slender female. Why do we do that? Why do we talk as if they exist when we believe that they do not exist?

Two tandem explanations that I find plausible are habit and convenience. Habit, because we do utter sentences containing referring terms many times each day without any qualifications regarding existence. Instead, existence

is presumed. Convenience because it would be very cumbersome, to say the least, to add existence qualifications to one's talk. It is inconvenient to say, for example, "Santa Claus, who by the way does not exist, is fat," and "Vulcan, which by the way does not exist, is a planet." Instead, we drop the existence qualification and talk as if these characters or objects do exist even when we know better.

The presumption embedded in our talk is easily exposed. When someone claims that Santa is fat, we can turn metaphysical and ask, "Do you believe that Santa *really* is fat; that he is fat in the real world?" The reply is likely to be a clarification of the following sort: "I know that Santa is not real and that he is not really fat. He is not really fat because he doesn't exist. But according to the story/myth, he is fat."

This last reply, "according to the story/myth, he is fat," is interesting as it shows that those of us who are acquainted with the story or myth can talk either as if the story or myth is true (i.e., with the existence presumption), or we can look at the story from the outside and drop the existence presumption. In ordinary talk, we often speak as if stories, myths, and fictions are true. I might speculate about Lowman's state of mind in the same way and with the same seriousness as when I speculate about my neighbor's state of mind, and I might wonder how Lowman would have responded to various situations just as I wonder how real-life salesmen would respond to those same situations. But all the while, I can step back and acknowledge that I am only talking as if the story is true. Because I can step back and acknowledge that the story is just that, a story, I can drop the existence presumption when I so choose.

A speaker can always make it more explicit that she is talking as if something is true when she knows better. Consider again someone who talks as if both of the following express true propositions:

4. Vulcan is a planet

and

5. Mor-Tax is a planet.

When pressed, she might clarify and explain in the following way: "Mor-Tax is not really a planet, but according to the War of the World TV series, it is a planet." Further, she might say that "Vulcan is a planet according to some mistaken astronomers as well as some popular myths."

Note that I have not resorted to the somewhat complex prefixes some prefer, such as "according to creationism about creatures of fiction, Proposition x is true," or "according to creationism about creatures of myths, Proposition x is true," or "according to naïve realism, x is true."²⁶ One reason I stay away from these locutions is that an ordinary speaker is not likely ever to resort to them. Further, I am not assuming that there is a *single* way of paraphrasing sentences that contain empty terms. One reason for not assuming

that there is a single way of doing so is that there are sometimes more than one story or myth that apply to the same name. One person might, for example, resort to the story of Star Trek when explaining her use of the name Vulcan, while someone who is not familiar with Star Trek but who is a student of astronomy might resort to the myth created by the nineteenth-century astronomer Leverrier when explaining her use of the same name. A second reason for not assuming that there is a single way of paraphrasing sentences that contain empty terms becomes more apparent once we acknowledge the varieties of statements containing such terms.

So far I have only mentioned statements about contents of stories or myths. But there are other types of statements that contain nonreferring names. In particular, there are statements that are not about the contents of a story or a myth. Consider for example the following sentence.

18. A certain fictional detective is more famous than any real detective.

This sentence is clearly not about the content of a story, and so one should not expect a paraphrase that includes “according to the story. . .” to explain away existential commitments. Instead one could, for example, paraphrase (18) as

18*. A certain detective described in a series of short stories is more famous than any real detective.

While the treatment of this type of a sentence is different than the treatment of sentences about the content of a story, there is nevertheless a paraphrase available that eschews the realist commitment.

THE INFORMATION ELICITED BY NONREFERRING NAMES

If one accepts the view that simple sentences containing nonreferring names express incomplete propositions, then how can we account for

4. Vulcan is a planet

and

5. Mor-Tax is a planet

having different cognitive impact? One might, for example, assent to (4) while not assenting to (5). Nevertheless, both express the same incomplete proposition, namely, the one we represent as

2. $\langle _ , \text{being a planet} \rangle$.

Similarly, it seems that we can report believing what (4) expresses while not accepting, and even denying what (5) expresses. That is, it seems that (6) and (7) can differ in truth value.

6. Tom believes that Vulcan is a planet
7. Tom believes that Mor-Tax is a planet.

However, if the embedded sentences express the same incomplete propositions, then one needs to explain how Tom can sincerely assent to (6) while rejecting (7) without detecting any problems with his beliefs.

If all we are to do is focus on the proposition expressed by (4) and (5), then we should be able to interchange the names “Vulcan” and “Mor-Tax” in the relevant sentences without problems. But clearly we cannot do so. Even though the proposition expressed by (4) and (5) is the same incomplete proposition, it clearly communicates very different things in each statement.

The first step in an explanation of the different cognitive impact of (4) and (5) is found in Kripke’s suggestion that we should look at the different sentences.²⁷ That is, even though (4) and (5) express the same incomplete proposition, the sentences are different, since one contains the name “Vulcan” and the other contains the name “Mor-Tax.” So, when looking for an explanation of the difference in cognitive impact, one needs to focus on the different roles the two names may play in a person’s cognitive makeup.

The second step is familiar by now. Just as we form webs of information about real objects that we then access with markers, so we form webs of information about fictional, mythical, and imaginary objects that we also access with markers. While nonreferring names do play a different semantic role than referring names, it is reasonable to maintain that they can play the same role as referring names in our general cognitive framework. If someone takes the story of Lowman to be an account of a real-life salesperson and later finds out that Lowman is only a character in a play, then it is unlikely that she thinks very differently about Lowman’s features apart from him being a fictional and not a real person. She still thinks about him as being depressed, being a family man, trying to put on brave face, etc.

In some cases, we form the webs under the misconception that we are dealing with an ordinary existing object. Children, for example, are likely to form their initial webs for Santa assuming that he exists. When they later find out that he does not exist, that information, namely, that he is not real, is added to the web. Much of the rest of the information stays the same, such as his wearing red suit, living on the North Pole, having a beard, being fat, and so on.

In some cases, we form webs fully aware that the object in question does not exist. Most of us, for example, form a Superman web knowing that he is fictional. The same is true when we read novels and plays. We form webs

of information about the various characters in a novel. The information at the center of the web of a given character, the most prominent information, is likely to be some of the key characteristics that are described or presented in the novel. Some of the peripheral information might include that which is contributed by the reader as he or she adds more detail to the underdescribed character. For example, it is likely that those who have read *Oliver Twist* have similar information at the center of their webs, and in this case, most of that information is likely to be provided by the author. But in addition to that, each reader is likely to imagine, for example, some of the details about Oliver's appearance and how he interacts with his surroundings that are not provided in the book, and this detail is less likely to be the same across webs.

Those who are familiar with Vulcan and Mor-Tax have webs of information that contain a variety of information. Even if you know that these planets are not real, you can nevertheless organize information about them in the same manner as you would do with a real planet. Accordingly, when you hear someone talk about Vulcan, the name elicits information from and conveys information to the appropriate web, namely, the Vulcan web. The same goes for Mor-Tax. When you hear someone talk about Mor-Tax, the name serves as a marker for a different web than does the name "Vulcan," and so a different web is accessed and different information is elicited. Accordingly, even though

4. Vulcan is a planet

and

5. Mor-Tax is a planet

express the same incomplete proposition, the two sentences nevertheless elicit different information due to the names accessing different webs of information.

When we assume that Superman and Clark Kent are fictional objects, the explanations of the various substitution problems remain the same as before. Namely, the key to the explanation is that we have a Superman web and a Clark Kent web, and we organize information accordingly. The webs, at least in most cases, include the information that Superman and Clark Kent are not real. Apart from that, nothing changes. The explanatory story remains the same as it does when we are dealing with names of existing objects.

The explanation for belief reports is familiar as well. When dealing with (6) and (7), namely,

6. Tom believes that Vulcan is a planet, and
7. Tom believes that Mor-Tax is a planet,

the embedded sentences express the same incomplete proposition. However, the choice of words in the belief report is important, since the choice of words can provide some information as to how Tom believes the proposition. The name “Vulcan” is a marker for one web, and the name “Mor-Tax” is a marker for a different web for most of us. Assuming that some of the key elements in Tom’s respective webs are the same as they are in our webs, the embedded sentences in (6) and (7) provide some information as to how each incomplete proposition is believed.

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8 Attitude Contexts: Beliefs and Justification

I have so far argued that we can account for the various puzzles and problems that face the direct reference theory within a naïve Russellian framework, namely, a framework that includes the claims that proper names and other simple referring terms are nondescriptive in content, that these terms only contribute their referents to the propositions expressed by the sentences in which they occur, and that the propositions expressed by simple sentences containing these terms are singular propositions. The various puzzles that arise in connection with the direct reference theory can be dealt with without adopting a pragmatic implicature view. Also, we don't need to introduce a view of multiple assertions when accounting for the various puzzles that face the direct reference theory, nor do we need enhanced propositions or unarticulated constituents. Instead, I have argued that we should adopt a holistic explanation, one that can explain not just problems that arise with belief reports, but also problems that arise with simple sentences, as well as beliefs that might not be couched in linguistic terms. The favored explanation is psychological in nature and relies on how individuals represent objects and how they collect information into webs of beliefs. I believe that there are some interesting epistemic consequences that follow from this view and any naïve Russellian view that allows one to believe singular proposition in different ways.

I have been careful so far to talk only about beliefs and belief contexts—not knowledge contexts. The discussion of substitution so far has been limited to what I will call simple belief contexts, namely, contexts in which the agent stands in the belief relation towards the proposition. I have avoided discussing claims that involve justification and knowledge. There is a reason for this, and that will be the focus here. I shall argue that while we can substitute freely in simple belief contexts, we cannot substitute freely in contexts that include justification, and so we cannot substitute freely in knowledge contexts. The reason for this is not to be found in some semantic analysis of “knows.” Instead, the reason is epistemic in nature and has to do with how justification is affected by the semantic mechanism already introduced.

In the chapter on beliefs and belief reports, I discussed how we often convey misleading and wrong information when we substitute names. Here I want to make a different claim, namely, that while we may freely substitute in simple belief contexts and preserve truth value so, if one believes that Hesperus is Hesperus, then one believes that Hesperus is Phosphorus, we cannot freely substitute in knowledge contexts, and so one can *know* that Hesperus is Hesperus and *not* know that Hesperus is Phosphorus. At the end of this chapter, I will discuss how my view affects a traditional account of a priori knowledge, namely, an account that maintains a proposition is a priori only if it can be justified without experience, and I shall argue that we need to relativize a priori knowledge of singular propositions to how the given proposition is believed.

CONFLATING CONTEXTS

Most recent discussion of substitution in attitude contexts has conflated all epistemic contexts. It is very common to see authors shift indiscriminately between talking about one *believing* that *a* is *b*, *a* and *b* standing for coreferential proper names, and one *being justified* in believing that *a* is *b*, and even *knowing* that *a* is *b*. I will call the first of these simple belief contexts. One stands in a simple belief relation to a proposition when one only believes the proposition.

In a very influential discussion on belief attribution and substitutivity, Nathan Salmon writes:

Now, there is no denying that, given the proper circumstances, we say things like “Lois Lane does not realize (know, believe) that Clark Kent is Superman” and “There was a time when it was not known that Hesperus is Phosphorus.”¹

Salmon clearly indicates that we can treat the verbs “realize,” “know,” and “believe” in the same way when it comes to substitutions, and so he treats simple belief contexts and knowledge contexts in the same way when it comes to substitution. Since it seems evident that one cannot realize that Hesperus is Phosphorus without acquiring a justification for Hesperus being Phosphorus, Salmon seems to be implying that one can freely substitute coreferential names in all epistemic contexts. This is further supported when he writes:

[A]nyone who knows that Hesperus is Hesperus knows that Hesperus is Phosphorus, no matter how strongly he or she might deny the latter.²

Scott Soames accepts Salmon’s last claim and agrees that if one knows that *a* is *a*, then one knows that *a* is *b*. However, since accepting this is

clearly counterintuitive, Soames also suggests that, while identity sentences involving different but coreferential proper names semantically express propositions that are not only true, but also both necessary and a priori, they may nevertheless be used to make assertions that are neither necessary nor knowable a priori.³

As the examples show, there is a tendency to treat all epistemic contexts equally. This, I will argue, is a mistake that rests upon not fully appreciating the consequences of there being ways of believing singular propositions. One should not argue against substitutivity in simple belief contexts by arguing against substitutivity in knowledge contexts, or by appealing to intuitions in knowledge contexts. Once we accept singular propositions and ways of believing, we should no longer treat contexts that involve justification in the same way as simple belief contexts.

FREGEAN PROPOSITIONS AND SINGULAR PROPOSITIONS

Remember that, according to Frege, if two people grasp the same proposition, then they have the same belief. Unlike a singular proposition, a Fregean proposition cannot be apprehended or grasped in more than one way; one either grasps the proposition or not, and everyone who grasps the proposition believes it in the same way. If the meaning of the name “Kasparov” is “the highest rated chess player ever,” then the sentence

1. Kasparov is a grandmaster

expresses a proposition that is more perspicuously expressed by

2. The highest rated chess player ever is a grandmaster.

Anyone who sincerely assents to (1), or a proper translation of (1), believes the proposition expressed by (2).

Most direct reference theorists and all naïve Russellians balk at this result. According to the naïve Russellian, the object denoted by the referring term in a simple declarative sentence becomes a part of the proposition expressed by the sentence, thus giving us singular propositions. The proposition expressed by (1) can, accordingly, be represented as follows

3. ⟨Kasparov, being a grandmaster⟩

and (3) can be believed in different ways. The issue now is whether, and how, believing propositions in different ways affects their justificatory status.

Assume for a while that the names “Kasparov” and “Garry” (Garry being Kasparov’s first name), have the same descriptive meaning and that the embedded sentences in (4)–(9) express the same Fregean proposition.

As long as we are dealing with a single Fregean proposition, we can assume that, if it is true that

4. Susan *believes* that Kasparov is a grandmaster,

then it is also true that

5. Susan *believes* that Garry is a grandmaster.

Further, if it is true that

6. Susan is *justified* in believing that Kasparov is a grandmaster,

then it is also true that

7. Susan is *justified* in believing that Garry is a grandmaster.

Finally, if it is true that

8. Susan *knows* that Kasparov is a grandmaster,

then it is also true that

9. Susan *knows* that Garry is a grandmaster.

The reason we can always assume the truth of the proposition expressed by the second sentence given the truth of the first one is that, given that the names have the same meaning, the embedded sentences express the same proposition in spite of the substitution. As long as the proposition remains the same, one is grasping the same proposition in each sentence pair, since one cannot grasp Fregean propositions in different ways. Consequently, if Susan is justified in believing the relevant proposition, then she cannot grasp it in a new and different way that would affect her justificatory status. The typical Fregean explains differences in belief content in terms of different propositions being believed and not in terms of the same proposition being believed in more than one way. For the typical Fregean, if two belief contents differ, then the difference results from different propositions being believed.⁴

If the naïve Russellian tries to accept the same kind of reasoning, she is saddled with the view that if one knows that Kasparov is a grandmaster, then one knows that Garry is a grandmaster, and if one knows that Phosphorus is visible in the evening, then one knows that Hesperus is visible in the evening, and if one knows that Phosphorus is Phosphorus, then one knows that Hesperus is Phosphorus. These are counterintuitive, to say the least. It took the ancients a great deal of work to uncover the evidence needed to know that Hesperus is visible in the evening, even though they

knew all the time that Phosphorus is visible in the evening. So how can the naïve Russellian account for these intuitions? The following example illustrates how one might come to believe a proposition in different ways such that it affects justification.

Suppose that Susan sees Kasparov being introduced as a grandmaster when crowned the world chess champion. She acquires the belief that Kasparov is a grandmaster, her belief is justified, and she knows that Kasparov is a grandmaster. Later Susan sees Kasparov playing volleyball on the beach and hears his teammates call him “Garry.” She fails to recognize that Garry is Kasparov, and, accordingly, she forms two webs of information on Kasparov: one on Kasparov the chess player, and another on Garry the volleyball player. She has then grasped

3. ⟨Kasparov, being a grandmaster⟩

in a new and different way and does not recognize that (3) and

10. ⟨Garry, being a grandmaster⟩

represent the same proposition. Given the reasonable view that for one to believe a proposition, one simply has to stand in the appropriate relation to the proposition, and given that (3) and (10) are the same proposition, one cannot believe one without believing the other.

The situation is different with regard to justification. Here we need to take into account how the singular proposition is believed. Susan is obviously justified in believing (3) when she believes the proposition in such a way that it involves Kasparov the chess player. It seems equally obvious that Susan is not justified in believing (3), which is the same as (10), when she believes the proposition in such a way that it involves Garry the volleyball player. She has filed the information about Garry the volleyball player in her Garry web. Since she takes Garry and Kasparov to be two different people, her Garry web is not the same as her Kasparov web, and, since she takes them to be different, there is no sharing of information between the two webs. She has no reason to assume that the person she knows as Garry plays chess, and it will take some investigation to figure out that Garry not only plays chess, but that he is in fact a grandmaster of the game. The difference in her epistemic status with regard to the proposition can easily be brought out if we consider my asking Susan “Is *this person* a grandmaster?” pointing at Kasparov (a) at the beach and (b) at the ceremonies where he is crowned a champion. Susan would answer with a confident *yes* at the ceremonies, but not at the beach.

Note that the reason that Susan does seem justified in believing (3) when believing (3) in one way, and not justified in believing (3) when believing (3) in a different way does not lie in what name is used in the sentence that expresses the relevant proposition. The same problem can easily be raised using

only one name as Kripke's Paderewski example shows. Instead of depending on what name is used in the sentence expressing the relevant proposition, the reason for the difference in Susan's epistemic status is that she associates the names with different webs that she takes to be for different people, and so she elicits information from different and unconnected webs when accessing the relevant information. As a result, she believes the proposition in different ways, and so the difference in epistemic status depends on how she believes the proposition. So, *justification*, and hence *knowledge*, of a singular proposition is strongly tied to how one believes the relevant proposition. Once Susan discovers that Kasparov is Garry, she engages in web management. She still might keep two webs of information on Kasparov, one web of him as Kasparov and another web of him as Garry, but the webs are now connected in a way that allows for sharing of information between the two.

BAPTISM SITUATIONS

Ralph Kennedy has raised a problem for the direct reference theorist that depends on a name being introduced through baptism.⁵ Kennedy sets the problem up as follows:

Someone we'll call "Claudia" has just found a stick that looks in every way like a measuring stick except for lacking any numerals or other markings. The stick is in fact exactly one meter long. Claudia says to herself: "This is certainly not a yard stick; it is too long. Perhaps it is a meter stick. No, I'm sure it's not long enough for that." It would seem safe to say that Claudia . . . does not know that the length of the stick is exactly a meter.⁶

Given Kennedy's story, it seems clear that Claudia does not know that the stick is one meter long. But, as Kennedy argues, that can quickly change. Given some assumptions commonly accepted by most direct reference theorists, Claudia can change her epistemic situation by engaging in a baptism ritual. Claudia could say, "I think I will call the length of this stick, which is certainly less than a meter and more than a yard, a 'schmoo.'" Claudia now knows that the length of the stick is one schmoo. But since the length of the stick is exactly one meter, the names "schmoo" and "meter" have the same reference. Consequently, since names contribute their referent to the proposition expressed by sentences in which they occur, the sentence

11. Stick *S* is one schmoo long

and the sentence

12. Stick *S* is one meter long

express the same proposition. Since Claudia knows the proposition expressed by “stick *S* is one schmoo long,” we are tempted to claim that she also knows the proposition expressed by “stick *S* is one meter long,” that is, she knows that the length of the stick is one meter. But as Kennedy claims, given the setup of Claudia’s epistemic situation, it is simply absurd to now claim that she knows that the stick is one meter long.

Given that (11) and (12) express the same proposition and given that one believes a proposition by standing in the appropriate relation to it, we have to say that if Claudia believes the proposition expressed by (11), she believes the proposition expressed by (12). Claudia represents one schmoo as being the length of stick *S*. She does not represent one meter as being the length of stick *S*. Perhaps we can say that stick *S* is Claudia’s paradigm case for being one schmoo long, while stick *S* is not among her paradigm cases for being one meter long. Consequently, she takes a schmoo and a meter to be of different lengths, and so she believes the proposition expressed by (11) and (12) in different ways. Because she believes the proposition in different ways, she can be justified in believing it in one way while not justified in believing it in a different way.

The view that a person can be justified in believing a proposition when believing it in one way and not justified in believing it when believing it in a different way fits well with the established view that evidence and justification are intimately connected. Suppose that Max believes some proposition *P*, that *P* is true, and that Max has no evidence for believing that *P* is true. Given these conditions, Max clearly does not know that *P*. In order to turn his belief into knowledge, he needs evidence for *P*’s truth. How exactly the evidence enters the picture is a matter of some controversy, as some philosophers require that the belief be based on the evidence in order to be justified, while others have a weaker requirement and would allow for the belief being justified if it fits Max’s evidence, even though the belief is not based on it. However, on both accounts, the evidence needs to be in place for justification.

It is clear that the evidence Claudia needs to possess to be justified in believing that stick *S* is one schmoo, when she represents it as being one schmoo long, is different from the evidence she needs to be justified in believing that stick *S* is one meter, when she represents it as being one meter long. For the former, all she needs to do is to baptize the length of stick *S* “schmoo.” The baptism and her acquaintance with the object carry with them the justification. The baptism of stick *S* is of no help for Claudia when it comes to her belief that the stick is one meter long, as the baptism does not provide justification about the length of stick *S* being one meter long. For Claudia to be justified in believing that the stick is one meter, she needs an appropriate measuring device and a measurement. Since Claudia needs different kinds of evidence for the truth of her belief depending on how she believes the proposition, she can be justified in believing it in one way without being justified in believing it in a different way.

Kennedy's example has the virtue of showing convincingly that it is absurd to claim that Claudia knows that stick *S* is one meter long after engaging in the baptism ritual. Clearly Claudia does not know that the stick is one meter long, even though she knows that it is one schmoo long. I believe that the solution that I have offered is a plausible one, namely, that justification is tied to how a proposition is believed. Claudia can be justified in believing (11) given how she believes it while, at the same time, she is not justified in believing (11) when she grasps it in a different way that requires different evidence for its truth. And since knowledge requires justification, Claudia can know that stick *S* is one schmoo long while she does not know that stick *S* is one meter long.

IDENTITY STATEMENTS

Not surprisingly, identity statements are subject to the same treatment as the examples previously discussed.⁷ Suppose that years before seeing Kasparov being crowned the world chess champion, Susan toured the Soviet Union. On her travels, she happened to visit the Botvinnik Chess Academy where one of its star students, a young boy named Weinstein, made a strong impression on her. Upon seeing Kasparov crowned a world champion, Susan, proud of her mastery of identity statements, thinks to herself, "I am sure that Kasparov is Kasparov." She knows that

13. Kasparov is Kasparov.

Her thoughts then wander back to the Botvinnik Chess Academy, and she thinks to herself, "It is strange that I have never heard of young Weinstein again. He seemed to be exceptionally promising, and he certainly had the drive and confidence to go very far. This Kasparov fellow bears some resemblance to Weinstein, but there is no way that Kasparov is Weinstein. After all, they don't even have the same name." It seems clear that Susan does not know that

14. Kasparov is Weinstein.

Susan has significantly different representations of Kasparov and Weinstein, and she has no reason to assume that they are the same person. Accordingly, she has one web of information on each of them. Little does she know that young Weinstein took his mother's maiden name as he grew up and that he is none other than Kasparov, the world chess champion.

Given the details of the story, it is clear that Susan is justified in believing that Kasparov is Kasparov when she believes the proposition in such a way that it involves only the person she knows as the world champion. It is also clear that when she believes the proposition in such a way that it

involves the person she knows as the world champion *and* the person she knows from the Botvinnik Chess Academy, she is not justified in believing the proposition as she then believes it. It will clearly take some work on her behalf to figure out that the two are in fact one person.

As before, the evidence needed to justify the beliefs depends on how the proposition is believed. When Susan believes the proposition in such a way that it involves only one person, her understanding of identity statements suffices to justify her belief. No further investigation is needed. When she believes the proposition in such a way that she understands that two persons might be involved, she clearly needs to conduct further investigation to find out that the person she knows as Kasparov is in fact the same as the boy she knew as Weinstein. Her understanding of identity statements does not suffice to provide that information. How one believes a proposition is salient when it comes to epistemic appraisal, such as justification.

The account that I am providing of ways of believing propositions affecting their epistemic status goes against philosophical tradition, for traditional treatments of justification do not make ways of believing relevant for justification. This is understandable. Recent work on justification was done with Fregean propositions in mind—propositions that one cannot believe in different ways. Once one accepts Fregean propositions, then one either grasps a given proposition or one does not grasp it. One cannot grasp it in one way and not in another way. The proposition believed fully discloses the content of the relevant belief. It was only with the reemergence of singular propositions in the context of the direct reference theory that we have propositions that admit of ways of believing. It now appears that epistemic accounts of justification have not caught up with recent developments in the philosophy of language. In particular, philosophers have approached singular propositions in the same way as Fregean propositions when it comes to justification and assumed that either one is, or one isn't, justified in believing a given proposition, even though these propositions admit of ways of believing.

RELATIVE APRIORITY

Just as traditional accounts of justification do not make ways of believing relevant for justification, traditional accounts of justification do not make ways of believing relevant for a priori justification. The basic idea behind the traditional account of a priori justification is as follows:

TA: A proposition is a priori if it can be justified without empirical evidence.

The traditional account fits the customary understanding of Fregean propositions, where names are thought to contribute descriptive meanings to

propositions, very well. Since Fregean propositions cannot be believed in more than one way, they either can or cannot be justified without empirical evidence. This changes with the reemergence of singular propositions and ways of believing.

Consider Susan and her identity statements again. When she sees Kasparov crowned a world champion, she forms the belief that Kasparov is Kasparov. Given that she is working with her representation of Kasparov as being a chess champion and that she understands that she is working with a trivial identity statement, her belief is justified. Given how she believes the proposition, she does not need to conduct any empirical investigation in order to justify her belief, and so her belief is justified a priori.

Now that Susan knows that Kasparov is Kasparov, she wonders whether Kasparov is Weinstein, and she is inclined to think that Kasparov is not Weinstein. "I think that Kasparov is Weinstein," she thinks to herself. "But," she goes on, "I have no reason for doing so." Given how she now believes the proposition, no amount of a priori pondering will inform her that Kasparov and Weinstein are one and the same person. Instead it is clear that it will take some empirical investigation to justify her belief that Kasparov is Weinstein. While the traditional account of a priori justification assumed that there is only one epistemic access to a proposition, and so everyone who believes the proposition believes it in the same way, the same is not true of singular propositions, and that can affect their epistemic status.

What the examples show is that, depending on how it is believed, a singular proposition can be justified either a priori or *only* a posteriori. Instead of the traditional account of a priori justification, we need to adopt an account that acknowledges ways of believing.

Relative apriority: A singular proposition is a priori relative to a way of believing it if when so believed its truth can be justified without empirical evidence.

And the corresponding account for a posteriori justification is as follows:

Relative aposteriority: A singular proposition is a posteriori relative to a way of believing it if when so believed its truth cannot be justified without empirical evidence.

SALMON ON RELATIVE AND ABSOLUTE APRIORITY

Keith Donnellan has suggested that we should relativize apriority to sentences. He writes:

Given that it is true that Cicero is Tully (and whatever we need about what the relevant sentences express) "Cicero is Cicero" and "Cicero is

Tully” express the same proposition. And the *proposition* is necessarily true. But looking at the proposition through the lens of the *sentence* “Cicero is Cicero” the proposition can be seen *a priori* to be true, but through “Cicero is Tully” one may need an *a posteriori* investigation.⁸

Nathan Salmon has argued against Donnellan’s suggestion that “Cicero is Cicero” and “Cicero is Tully” might differ in epistemic status.

Where *S* ranges over true sentences, Salmon provides the following definition of sentence *S* being a priori.

SA: *S* is a priori (*simpliciter*) =_{df} *S* is [could be] a priori with respect to some way of taking a proposition.

A consequence of Salmon’s account is that “Kasparov is Weinstein,” as believed by Susan, is a priori because there is a way of taking the proposition

⟨identity, ⟨Kasparov, Weinstein⟩⟩

in such a way that it is a priori. On Salmon’s account, identity statements are analytic, uninformative, trivial, and a priori because any identity statement is nothing more than the logical truth that an object is itself. For example, “Cicero is Tully” is nothing more than the logical truth that Cicero is himself.⁹

Salmon’s account runs into difficulty with the following example. Let *S* be the sentence “Salmon is in Santa Barbara at 1:15 p.m. on August 12th, 2012.” Then consider the true proposition that I am entertaining, which is expressed by

15. Salmon is in Santa Barbara at 1:15 p.m. on August 12th, 2012.

The proposition expressed by (15) is the same as the proposition expressed by

16. I am here now

when entertained by Salmon in Santa Barbara at 1:15p.m. on August 12th, 2012.¹⁰ When the subject in the proposition expressed by (16), the one denoted by “I,” entertains the proposition, then her belief is true and justified a priori. Hence, (16), when entertained by the subject in the proposition, is a priori. Given SA it follows then that (15) (i.e., *S*), is a priori, that is, there is a way of taking the relevant proposition in such a way that it is a priori. But surely (15) cannot be a priori because it is impossible for me, not being Salmon, to know his whereabouts without an empirical investigation. It is even impossible for Salmon himself to know (15) a priori, as it will take empirical data for him to be justified in believing that he is in Santa Barbara.

In the spirit of the traditional account of a priori justification, Salmon claims that if a (sentence) proposition *can* be known a priori, then it is a priori. This is a reasonable claim to make if one does not accept singular propositions and instead accepts Fregean propositions. Fregean propositions, remember, do not admit of ways of believing, and so any two people who grasp a Fregean proposition believe it in the same way. If one of them has access to an a priori justification of the proposition, then so does the other. One cannot believe an a priori Fregean proposition in such a way that, given how one believes it, one can *only* justify it a posteriori. Since a Fregean proposition can only be grasped in one way, it either is or is not a priori.

One has to wonder why Salmon sides with the traditional account of a priori justification given that he is one of the proponents of singular propositions and ways of believing. The reason seems to be that he focuses on the semantic content of singular propositions in an attempt to establish the analyticity of identity statements. “Catsup is Ketchup,” he writes, is “unquestionably analytic,” and “tomatoes are tomatoes” (pronounces to-**mae**-toes and to-**mah**-toes, respectively) “however it is pronounced . . . has the logical form of a valid sentence.”¹¹ This reasoning is not very convincing because the very issue is whether identity statements, which arguably have the logical form of valid sentences, are unquestionably analytic and a priori.

Keep in mind that singular propositions have more than one epistemic access depending on how they are believed and that the road to their semantic content lies through how they are believed. Salmon’s tomato example involves a Santa Barbaran whose limited experience of tomatoes consists of seeing them sliced in salads in the U.S., and in the form of a sauce in England. The catsup example involves someone learning the names by ostension or by reading labels or tasting the condiment. My argument has focused on showing that even identity statements *could*, given the right epistemic access, *only* be justified a posteriori. That is very different from Salmon’s claim when he writes:

The fact that the sentence is *a priori* with respect to at least one way of taking its content is sufficient for the sentence to be *a priori* (*simpliciter*)—otherwise even “Tomatoes are tomatoes” and “Paderewski is Paderewski” should be counted *a posteriori*.¹²

Salmon is attempting a *reductio* by claiming that identity statements should be regarded as a posteriori if there is at least one way of taking their content in such a way that they can only be justified a posteriori. My conclusion is, of course, weaker than that, as it relativizes a priority and a posteriority to ways of believing; the proposition *itself* is neither a priori nor a posteriori.

Consider again the proposition expressed by (15) and (16), as it provides an excellent reason to prefer my relative account of apriority to Salmon’s absolute account. According to Salmon’s account, (15) is a priori because

(16) is justified a priori. But to say that (15), or what it expresses when entertained by me, is a priori, is highly implausible. It is not possible that I, not being Salmon, can have an a priori justification of Salmon being in Santa Barbara at any given time. My epistemic access to the proposition prevents me from having such justification. *Salmon's* epistemic access to the same proposition, via (16), shows that there is a way of believing the proposition so that it can be justified a priori. My epistemic access to the proposition shows that there is a way of believing the proposition so that, given how it is believed, it can *only* be justified a posteriori. Relativizing apriority accommodates this.

Salmon claims that finding a philosophically satisfactory solution to Frege's puzzle requires a recognition of identity statements being a priori simpliciter, as that allows us to say that, for example, "Kasparov is Kasparov" and "Kasparov is Weinstein" do not differ in epistemic status. As I have argued, Salmon's account faces problems of its own, leads to counterintuitive results, and does not mesh well with the special properties that singular propositions have. Once we accept singular propositions and ways of believing them, relativizing justification as to how a proposition is believed is a strong and viable alternative. The only thing that prevents us from embracing relative apriority is the strong philosophical tradition that has us accept absolute apriority. That tradition, I suggest, is out of step with recent developments in the philosophy of language.

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Notes

CHAPTER 2

1. See John Searle, *Intentionality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); Peter Strawson, "On Referring," *Mind* 59 (1950).
2. Gottlob Frege, "On Sense and Reference," in *Translations from the Philosophical Writings of Gottlob Frege*, edited by P. Geach and M. Black (Oxford: Blackwell, 1960), 56.
3. *Ibid.*, 57.
4. *Ibid.*, 58.
5. David Kaplan, "Demonstratives," in *Themes From Kaplan*, edited by J. Almog, H. Wettstein, and J. Perry (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 533.
6. Saul Kripke, *Naming and Necessity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980), 96.
7. *Ibid.*, 85, n 36.
8. *Ibid.*, 83–84.
9. *Ibid.*, 87.
10. Frederick W. Kroon, "The Problem of Jonah: How Not to Argue for the Causal Theory of Reference," *Philosophical Studies* 43 (1983); Francois Recanati, *Direct Reference: From Language to Thought* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993).
11. Robin Jeshion, "The Epistemological Argument against Descriptivism," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* (2002).
12. Kripke, *Naming and Necessity*, 84–85.

CHAPTER 3

1. Saul Kripke, *Naming and Necessity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980), 20.
2. Robert Stalnaker, *Inquiry* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1984).
3. David Kaplan, "Demonstratives," in *Themes From Kaplan*, edited by J. Almog, H. Wettstein, and J. Perry (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 161–162.
4. John McDowell, "On the Sense and Reference of a Proper Name," *Mind* 86 (1977). See pp. 172–174.
5. Gareth Evans, "Understanding Demonstratives," in *Meaning and Understanding*, edited by H. Parret and J. Bouveresse (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1981); *The Varieties of Reference* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), ch. 1.

6. John McDowell, "De Re Senses," in *Frege: Tradition and Influence*, edited by C. Wright (Oxford: Blackwell, 1984); "Singular Thought and the Extent of Inner Space," in *Subject, Thought and Context*, edited by P. Pettit and J. McDowell (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986).
7. Recanati characterizes the neo-Fregean view as being one where both the object referred to and its mode of presentation are contained in the proposition in Francois Recanati, *Direct Reference: From Language to Thought* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993); Schiffer introduces such propositions in Stephen Schiffer, "The Basis of Reference," *Erkenntnis* 1 (1978).
8. There is a rival notion of object-dependent thought in the writings of C. Peacocke, J. Perry, C. McGinn, and K. Bach. Bach characterizes the main idea of the notion nicely when he says that a thought determines a reference only with respect to a context, meaning that the thoughts themselves are context-independent and can, and should, be individuated narrowly. See Kent Bach, *Thought and Reference* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 12. A traditional interpretation of Frege has us individuate thoughts narrowly.
9. Evans, *The Varieties of Reference*, 38.
10. Gottlob Frege, "Begriffsschrift," in *Translations from the Philosophical Writings of Gottlob Frege*, edited by P. Geach and M. Black (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1960). See p. 11.
11. It is interesting that Frege thought that identity represented a special case, and so the distinction in *Begriffsschrift* was at best only localized (i.e., applied only to identity statements). For an interesting discussion on this see Peter Simon, "The Next Best Thing to Sense in *Begriffsschrift*," in *Frege: Sense and Reference One Hundred Years Later*, edited by J. Biro and P. Kotatko (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1995).
12. Gottlob Frege, "Seventeen Key Sentences on Logic," in *Posthumous Writings*, edited by H. Hermes, F. Kambartel, and F. Kaulback (Oxford: Blackwell, 1979), 174–175. There is some debate as to when Frege wrote "Seventeen Key Sentences on Logic." It is now usually dated at about 1876–1877, which fits well with the development of Frege's views as presented here. Dating the letter after the publication of "On Sense and Reference" as some want to do introduces serious conflicts into Frege's later views.
13. "Dialogue with Pünjer on Existence," in *Posthumous Writings*, edited by H. Hermes, F. Kambartel, and F. Kaulback (Oxford: Blackwell, 1979). See p. 60. Frege's correspondence with Pünjer is dated from before 1884.
14. It is quite possible that Frege had the resources in *Begriffsschrift* to deal with the cognitive puzzle. He stated there that identity statements related names, and so the judgment becomes a judgment about the signs, not their contents. But in the opening paragraph of "On Sense and Reference," he doesn't mention that he had introduced the mode of determination in *Begriffsschrift*, and so his argument against the *Begriffsschrift* account overlooks a key element of that account.
15. Gottlob Frege, "On Sense and Reference," in *Translations from the Philosophical Writings of Gottlob Frege*, edited by P. Geach and M. Black (Oxford: Blackwell, 1960), 57.
16. *Ibid.*, 60.
17. *Ibid.*, 58.
18. *Ibid.*
19. *Philosophical and Mathematical Correspondence* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 163.
20. "Letter to Jourdain," in *Meaning and Reference*, edited by A. W. Moore (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 44.
21. Evans, *The Varieties of Reference*, 22.

22. A version of this argument can be found in *ibid.*
23. David Bell presents Evans's view in the form of ten theses attributed to Frege, and his ensuing discussion addresses two of the arguments presented here. Bell provides textual evidence against the modes of presentation argument but fails to note that Evans has a powerful reply that needs to be addressed. Bell also addresses Evans's claim that if *a* doesn't exist, then "*a* is *F*" is meaningless. Here Bell again underestimates Evans's recourses, for in addition to textual evidence, Evans also mounts pretheoretical intuitions as to how we should sensibly read Frege. See David Bell, "How Russellian Was Frege?" *Mind* 99 (1990).
24. Gottlob Frege, "Compound Thoughts," in *Logical Investigations*, edited by P. T. Geach (Oxford: Blackwell, 1977), 56. Italics mine.
25. Evans, *The Varieties of Reference*, 23–24.
26. *Ibid.*, 29. The quotes come from H. Hermes, F. Kambartel, and F. Kaulback, eds., *Posthumous Writings* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1979), 130.
27. Evans, *The Varieties of Reference*, 30.
28. Frege, "Letter to Jourdain," 44.
29. Hermes, Kambartel, and Kaulback, *Posthumous Writings*, 130.
30. This assumes that the connection between a thought and (the possibility of) having a truth value is an external one (as opposed to an internal one). In fact, assuming that seems to give us the most coherent reading of Frege. It is important that I have not assumed from the outset that Frege accepts such a connection and that instead I have been led to the view that he does so, for only by doing so can we account for mock names having senses and playing roles in thoughts, as Frege repeatedly asserts that they do. This methodological point is important, for if one assumes the connection as being internal, then one is forced to conclude that a thought failing to have a truth value is not a real thought.
31. Further evidence comes from "On Sense and Reference," where Frege says that the sentence "Odysseus was set ashore at Ithaca while sound asleep" expresses the same thought regardless of whether "Odysseus" has reference or not. Given his view on compositionality, the sentence wouldn't have a sense if "Odysseus" lacked sense. See Frege, "On Sense and Reference," 62–63.
32. *Ibid.*, 63.
33. Hans Sluga has argued that Frege was not concerned with reference in his early works and only takes interest in the sense/reference distinction when confronted with the problem that, according to the *Begriffsschrift* account, axiom V was synthetic and not analytic. See Hans Sluga, *Gottlob Frege* (New York: Routledge, 1980).
34. My concern here is not with the legitimacy of the wide/narrow content distinction, which has been hotly debated and would go beyond the scope of this work. Instead, my concern is rather to show that the relevant intuitive insights that Frege had are lost on the Evans/McDowell reading.
35. McDowell tries to explain the similar behavior of subjects, only one of which has a mock belief, by introducing second-order beliefs. See McDowell, "On the Sense and Reference of a Proper Name." On that account, I have a second-order belief, namely I believe that I believe that there is an oasis, and Samantha has the same second-order belief; namely, she believes that she believes that there is an oasis. The difference is that my second-order belief is true, while Samantha's second-order belief is false, since there is no first-order belief that is the subject of her second-order belief. I have two concerns with this explanation. First, since there is no oasis, McDowell claims that we cannot have a belief about it, and so he introduces a second-order belief to account for the subject's behavior. But, the

second-order belief is, supposedly, about the first-order belief, which, by McDowell's own admission, doesn't exist. It thus appears that we have not explained much and that we have instead pushed the issue one step back, for McDowell now needs to explain how the second-order belief, about a non-existent first-order belief, can exist. A second, and a minor concern, is that McDowell published "On the Sense and Reference of a Proper Name" before he fully endorsed Evans's reading of Frege, and so it is not entirely clear whether his new understanding of Frege affected the relevant explanation.

36. It should, of course, be noted that the direct reference theory does not entail that there are singular propositions. Several direct reference theorists have argued that singular propositions saddle us with serious attitude problems and have done away with them while retaining direct reference. See, for example, Mark Richard, *Propositional Attitudes: An Essay on Thoughts and How We Ascribe Them* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990). Also, see Mark Crimmins, *Talk About Beliefs* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).
37. I exclude Mark Richard and Mark Crimmins from the class of contemporary Russellians. Both Richard and Crimmins build additional contents into propositions expressed by sentences such as (1).

CHAPTER 4

1. Donald Davidson, "On Saying That," in *Inquiries into Truth and Interpretation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984).
2. For discussion of the problem that the mode of presentation of an object varies from person to person, see Mark Richard, "Taking the Fregean Seriously," in *Philosophical Analysis*, edited by D. Austin (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1988). For an attempt to answer the objection, see Graeme Forbes, *Languages and Possibility* (Cambridge: Basil Blackwell, 1989). See also "The Indispensability of Sinn," *Philosophical Review* 99(1990).
3. This view is elaborated in Nathan Salmon, *Frege's Puzzle* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1986).
4. See respectively Scott Soames, *Beyond Rigidity: The Unfinished Semantic Agenda of Naming and Necessity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002); "Precis of *Beyond Rigidity*," *Philosophical Studies* 128 (2007).
5. The main proponents of the type of view that results from denying the principle of full articulation are Stephen Schiffer, Mark Crimmins, and John Perry. See Stephen Schiffer, "Naming and Knowing," in *Midwest Studies in Philosophy*, edited by P. A. French, T. E. Uehling, and H. K. Wettstein (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977); "The Basis of Reference," *Erkenntnis* 1(1978); "The 'Fido'-Fido Theory of Belief," in *Philosophical Perspectives*, edited by J. Tomberlin (Atascadero: Ridgeview, 1987); "Belief Ascriptions," *The Journal of Philosophy* 89 (1992). See also, Mark Crimmins and John Perry, "The Prince and the Phone Booth: Reporting Puzzling Beliefs," *The Journal of Philosophy* 86(1989); Mark Crimmins, *Talk About Beliefs* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).
6. Crimmins, *Talk About Beliefs*, 102.
7. I will pretend, for convenience's sake, that Hammurabi spoke English.
8. Mark Richard, *Propositional Attitudes: An Essay on Thoughts and How We Ascribe Them* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 137 and 182.
9. For discussions on problems that arise specifically in connection with restrictions, see Jennifer M. Saul, "Still an Attitude Problem," *Linguistics and*

- Philosophy* 16 (1993); Theodor Sider, "Three Problems for Richard's Theory of Belief Ascriptions," *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 25 (1995); Scott Soames, "Beyond Singular Propositions," *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 25 (1995).
10. An interesting feature of Richard's theory is that he keeps objectual quantification, while nevertheless assigning different truth values to the same belief report, and, at first, that might seem to undermine the idea that there are any "belief puzzles" once we accept his account. But what determines the different truth values in those cases is the restrictions that arise in various contexts and not the features of the RAM itself.
 11. For more on restrictions and correlations, see Richard, *Propositional Attitudes: An Essay on Thoughts and How We Ascribe Them*, 138–141. Also *ibid.*, 154–162.
 12. Saul Kripke, "A Puzzle about Belief," in *Meaning and Use*, edited by A. Margalit (Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1979).
 13. Richard, *Propositional Attitudes: An Essay on Thoughts and How We Ascribe Them*, 181–182.
 14. *Ibid.*, 186–187.
 15. Richard shows that the introduction of representations works nicely with the Paderewski example, but note that there we are dealing with *one* person, namely Peter and his beliefs, trying to explain away the apparent inconsistency in his beliefs. The apparent inconsistency in Peter's beliefs shows that he has two *different* representations of Paderewski. Similarly, if Peter and Paul both have representations of Paderewski, a persistent disagreement regarding Paderewski might indicate that they have different representations of him. But the issue I am dealing with is not whether or how Richard can detect a difference in representations, but whether he can account for *sameness* of belief, and it is evident that mere lack of disagreement or inconsistency is not sufficient for sameness of belief.
 16. Richard, *Propositional Attitudes: An Essay on Thoughts and How We Ascribe Them*, 183–186.
 17. *Ibid.*, 185.
 18. Jennifer Saul has discussed simple sentences in several articles, most notably in Jennifer Saul, "Substitution and Simple Sentences," *Analysis* 57 (1997). There she attempts to extend the Salmon/Soames pragmatic implicature view to simple sentences. She has recently expanded upon her account in *Simple Sentences, Substitution, and Intuitions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007). There she further develops a line explored in David Braun and Jennifer Saul, "Substitutions and Mistaken Evaluations," *Philosophical Studies* 111 (2002).

CHAPTER 5

1. Keith Donnellan, "The Contingent A Priori and Rigid Designators," in *Contemporary Perspectives in the Philosophy of Language*, edited by P.A. French, T.E. Uehling, and H.K. Wettstein (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1981).
2. The *de re/de dicto* distinction has been drawn in various ways. Sometimes it is drawn as a scope distinction, as in the case of Quine and Russell, and sometimes it is drawn as a syntactic distinction, as in the case of some Fregeans. I will not be concerned with these ways of drawing the distinction. Instead, I follow Donnellan's intuitive distinction drawn on the basis

- of the content of belief. Kripke explains that way of drawing the distinction with the following example: “. . . if we say, ‘Jones believes that the richest debutante in Dubuque will marry him,’ we may mean that Jones’s belief has a certain content (viz., that the richest debutante in Dubuque will marry him); or we may mean that he believes, of a girl who is (in fact) the richest in Dubuque, that she will marry him.” See Saul Kripke, “Speaker’s Reference and Semantic Reference,” in *Contemporary Perspectives in the Philosophy of Language*, edited by Peter A. French, Theodore E. Uehling, and Howard K. Wettstein (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1979), 9.
3. This is, of course, a minimal extension of Kripke’s disquotation principle, namely, “if a normal English speaker, on reflection, sincerely assents to ‘P’ then he believes that P.” See “A Puzzle About Belief,” in *Meaning and Use*, edited by A. Margalit (Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1979).
 4. Nathan Salmon, “The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly,” in *Descriptions and Beyond*, edited by M. Reimer and A. Bezuidenhout (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004), 247.
 5. I distinguish between two types of examples used when arguing for the contingent a priori and show that each type deserves different treatment in Heimir Geirsson, “The Contingent A Priori: Kripke’s Two Types of Examples,” *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 69 (1991).
Donnellan does not address typical examples of baptism where one is “face to face” with the object being baptized. His focus is exclusively on examples where one has not seen, heard, or touched the object being named but has, at most, a uniquely identifying description of its causal effects.
 6. Robin Jeshion, “Donnellan on Neptune,” *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* LXIII (2001). See p. 123.
 7. Donnellan, “The Contingent A Priori and Rigid Designators,” 55.
 8. The argument mirrors Jeshion’s formulation of Donnellan’s argument for the skeptical conclusion, based on DPR₂, stated below.
 9. Jeshion uses the Metzinger example when discussing Donnellan’s second argument.
 10. We could, if we wanted, have the two groups speak different languages so that we would have to translate between the groups, and thus more closely follow Donnellan’s principle. The result is the same as with the somewhat simplified single language example.
 11. The dissonance only appears to the informed onlooker, not to the subject herself.
 12. Donnellan, “The Contingent A Priori and Rigid Designators,” 55.
 13. Scott Soames and Nathan Salmon have championed a well-known view according to which if you know the former, you also know the latter. In the last chapter of this book, I argue that, while we cannot claim that if one knows one then one knows the other, the same does not hold for belief. Instead, one can be justified in believing one and not the other, given how one believes the proposition.
 14. This view is championed by Salmon in Nathan Salmon, *Frege’s Puzzle* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1986).
 15. Jeshion makes this point in Jeshion, “Donnellan on Neptune.”
 16. Donnellan, “The Contingent A Priori and Rigid Designators,” 54.
 17. Admittedly, Donnellan’s version of the sentence mentions the twenty-first century.
 18. Donnellan, “The Contingent A Priori and Rigid Designators.”
 19. *Ibid.*
 20. *Ibid.*
 21. *Ibid.*, 58.

22. In "Afterthoughts," Kaplan has weakened his stance on the issue from "Quantifying In," where he said, "I am unwilling to adopt any theory of proper names which permits me to perform a dubbing in absentia. . . ." David Kaplan, "Quantifying In," in *Reference and Modality*, edited by L. Linsky (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), 135. Donnellan is open to the possibility that Leverrier has reserved the name "Neptune" and that the name will be attached to an object when we are in a more appropriate and more direct contact with it, but assumes that we can introduce names in absentia of the object named. Also, see "Afterthoughts," in *Themes From Kaplan*, edited by J. Almog, J. Perry, and H. Wettstein (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).
23. The discussion on individualism does not help much on that front. The lesson to be learned from the discussion on individualism is that the semantic content of a name plays a role in determining one's content of thought. Two people might be in the same internal state of mind (i.e., they might be identical molecule for molecule), but because they are thinking of different objects, one about water and the other about twin water, their object of thought differs. Another way of putting this is that two people might believe different propositions and yet apprehend them in the same way. The discussion shows us that the semantic features of names play a role in determining which proposition we believe, so they play a role in determining the object of the belief, but they don't inform us about the epistemic information carried with names, that is, they don't inform us about how we represent the subject of the proposition. If anything, if the narrow content of two people can be identical in spite of them believing different propositions, then that might indicate that names do not carry with them epistemic information.
24. Kaplan, "Afterthoughts," 605.
25. See, for example, Salmon, *Frege's Puzzle*, 19.
26. Kaplan, "Afterthoughts," 606.
27. Gareth Evans, *The Varieties of Reference* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 74.
28. *Ibid.*, 75.
29. *Ibid.*, 65.
30. Kaplan, "Afterthoughts," 606.
31. For a discussion of the transmission of de re thoughts, see Kent Bach, "Thought and Object: De Re Representations and Relations," in *The Representation of Knowledge and Belief*, edited by M. Brand and R. M. Harnish (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1986); Anne L. Bezuidenhout, "The Communication of De Re Thoughts," *Nous* 31 (1997); Francois Recanati, *Direct Reference: From Language to Thought* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993).
32. Jeshion states these in Jeshion, "Donnellan on Neptune," 129.
33. Jeshion states that Accessibility of Content "boarders on being an analytic statement about linguistic understanding." See *ibid.*, 132.
34. Nathan Salmon, "How to Measure the Standard Metre," in *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* (1987). See footnote 10.
35. Jeshion, "Donnellan on Neptune," 130.
36. Since it is not clear how exactly Salmon intended his strong and weak understanding, I am introducing the terms general and specific semantic understanding. The terms correspond roughly, at least, with Salmon's terms.
37. The point is not particularly novel; after all, what John McDowell's and Kent Bach's different accounts of de re thoughts have in common is that a successful de re thought involves a certain empirical relation to the reference. But the road I have taken to reveal the importance of empirical relation to de re thought is significantly different from that of McDowell and Bach, and

the resulting view differs significantly from their views. See John McDowell, "De Re Senses," in *Frege: Tradition and Influence*, edited by C. Wright (Oxford: Blackwell, 1984); Kent Bach, *Thought and Reference* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994).

CHAPTER 6

1. Nathan Salmon, *Frege's Puzzle* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1986); "Illogical Belief," in *Philosophical Perspectives 3: Philosophy of Mind and Action*, edited by J. Tomberlin. (Atascadero: Ridgeview, 1989); Scott Soames, "Direct Reference, Propositional Attitudes, and Semantic Content," in *Propositions and Attitudes*, edited by N. Salmon and S. Soames (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988); "Substitutivity," in *On Being and Saying: Essays in Honor of Richard Cartwright*, edited by J. J. Thomson (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1987). Soames advances a view that is compatible with this in *Beyond Rigidity: The Unfinished Semantic Agenda of Naming and Necessity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).
2. This view is elaborated in Salmon, *Frege's Puzzle*.
3. I am of course assuming here that Karina is fully aware of what she believes and that she is an expert logician.
4. This, of course, is a variation of Kripke's puzzle about Pierre who apparently both believed and did not believe that London is pretty without detecting any inconsistency among his beliefs.
5. Jennifer Saul, "The Pragmatics of Attitude Ascriptions," *Philosophical Studies* 92(1998); David Braun, "Understanding Belief Reports," *The Philosophical Review* 107(1998); David Braun and Jennifer Saul, "Substitutions and Mistaken Evaluations," *Philosophical Studies* 111 (2002).
6. Braun, "Understanding Belief Reports," 574.
7. *Ibid.*, 578.
8. *Ibid.*, 577–578.
9. *Ibid.*, 578.
10. Braun and Saul, "Substitutions and Mistaken Evaluations." Saul continues to develop this line in Jennifer Saul, *Simple Sentences, Substitution, and Intuitions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).
11. See Heimir Geirsson, "Justification and Relative Apriority," *Ratio* 12 (1999); "Justification and Ways of Believing," *Disputatio* 12 (2002).
12. Braun and Saul, "Substitutions and Mistaken Evaluations." This is the explanation they give for what they call the two pools for information.
13. Saul, *Simple Sentences, Substitution, and Intuitions*, 128–130. The empirical evidence to which Saul resorts is from John Anderson and Reid Hastie. See John Anderson, "Memory for Information About Individuals," *Memory and Cognition* 4 (1977); John Anderson and Reid Hastie, "Individuation and Reference in Memory: Proper Names and Definite Descriptions," *Cognitive Psychology* 6 (1974).
14. See Saul, *Simple Sentences, Substitution, and Intuitions*.
15. *Ibid.*, 136.
16. *Ibid.*, 137.
17. *Ibid.*, 145.
18. *Ibid.*, 143.
19. One way of expressing my concern is to acknowledge that, even though there is a *logically valid* inference from (9) and the relevant identity statement to (10), the inference is *not* cogent, for we tend to assign different truth values to (9) and (10) due to the fact that their information value differs.

20. For a useful discussion on these issues, see Michael Tye, *The Imagery Debate*, A Bradford Book (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1991).
21. Michael Thau explores this alternative in Michael Thau, *Consciousness and Cognition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).
22. It certainly seems wrong, as Kent Bach writes, that “[f]or us [who realize that Bruce Wayne is Batman], a belief which could be characterized as a that-Bruce-Wayne-is-a-wimp belief could equally be characterized as a that-Batman-is-a-wimp belief.” Kent Bach, “Do Belief Reports Report Beliefs?” *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* 78 (1997): 229.
23. Brian Loar has also been a longtime advocate of the view that propositions do not accurately capture beliefs.
24. Bach, “Do Belief Reports Report Beliefs?” 221.
25. These would include, for example, the views of Salmon and Soames, Crimmins and Perry, Richard, and Schiffer. See Mark Crimmins, *Talk About Beliefs* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Mark Richard, *Propositional Attitudes: An Essay on Thoughts and How We Ascribe Them* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Stephen Schiffer, “The ‘Fido’-Fido Theory of Belief,” in *Philosophical Perspectives*, edited by J. Tomberlin (Atascadero: Ridgeview, 1987); “Belief Ascriptions,” *The Journal of Philosophy* 89 (1992).
26. Bach, “Do Belief Reports Report Beliefs?” 226.
27. Although we tend to focus on sentences as expressing propositions, it is possible to communicate the same proposition with and without the use of a name or an indexical. One might, for example, instead of using a name, point at a person, or even flash a picture to indicate who we are talking about. Furthermore, if one flashes a picture, then it makes a huge difference, when talking about Clark Kent, whether the picture shows him as the journalist or as the superhero, just as it makes a huge difference whether one uses “Clark Kent” or “Superman.”
28. Had I informed her of Superman saving the city, she would be justified in believing that Superman saved the city. I will argue in the last chapter that the justification for believing a singular proposition is crucially tied to *how* one believes it, and so, given how the proposition is presented, one cannot assume that when one is justified in believing a proposition is one way, one is thereby justified in believing the proposition *simpliciter*.

CHAPTER 7

1. Fred Adams and Robert Stecker, “Vacuous Singular Terms,” *Mind and Language* 9 (1994).
2. David Braun, “Empty Names,” *Nous* 27 (1993).
3. Nathan Salmon, “Nonexistence,” *Nous* 32 (1998).
4. Marga Reimer, “The Problem of Empty Names,” *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 79 (2001). David Braun has become the most ardent defender of what he calls the gappy proposition view. See David Braun, “Empty Names, Fictional Names, Mythical Names,” *Nous* 39 (2005), as well as “Empty Names.”
5. “Mor-Tax” is a name of a planet in the TV series *War of the Worlds*.
6. Adams and Stecker, “Vacuous Singular Terms”; Fred Adams, Gary Fuller, and Robert Stecker, “The Semantics of Fictional Names,” *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* 78 (1997); Fred Adams and Laura A. Dietrich, “What’s in a(n Empty) Name?” *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* 85 (2004).
7. Fred Adams and Laura A. Dietrich, “What’s in a(n Empty) Name?”

8. Nathan Salmon, *Frege's Puzzle* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1986).
9. See Peter van Inwagen, "Creatures of Fiction," *American Philosophical Quarterly* 14 (1977); Braun, "Empty Names, Fictional Names, Mythical Names"; Salmon, "Nonexistence."
10. See "Nonexistence," 96 and "Mythical Objects," in *Topics in Contemporary Philosophy* 1, edited by Joseph Keim Campbell, Michael O'Rourke, and David Shier (New York: Seven Bridges, 2002), 112–116.
11. In addition to van Inwagen, Salmon, and Braun, see Scott Soames, *Beyond Rigidity: The Unfinished Semantic Agenda of Naming and Necessity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002); Stefano Predelli, "'Holmes' and Holmes: A Millian Analysis of Names from Fiction," *Dialectica* 56 (2002); Amie L. Thomasson, *Fiction and Metaphysics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Stephen Schiffer, "Language-Created Language-Independent Entities," *Philosophical Topics* 24 (1996).
12. Soames, *Beyond Rigidity: The Unfinished Semantic Agenda of Naming and Necessity*; Salmon, "Nonexistence."
13. See Thompson and Braun: though Caplan argues that if we accept creatures of myth, then parallel arguments can be made for creatures of imagination, and so he conditionally accepts such creatures.
14. Salmon, "Mythical Objects," 151 n. 22.
15. For a somewhat different reading of this passage, see Ben Caplan, "Creatures of Fiction, Myth, and Imagination," *American Philosophical Quarterly* 41 (2004).
16. For a recent discussion on Salmon on empty names, see Seyed N. Mousavian, "Neo-Meinongian Neo-Russellians," *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* 91 (2010). There Mousavian argues that Salmon's account is implausible, as he allows for nonexistent object, assigns them properties, and quantifies over them.
17. Braun, "Empty Names, Fictional Names, Mythical Names," 610.
18. *Ibid.*, 611.
19. *Ibid.*, 612.
20. *Ibid.*, 615–616.
21. Keith Donnellan, "Reference and Definite Descriptions," *The Philosophical Review* 75 (1966).
22. The view to which I am alluding here is developed in Roman Ingarden, *The Literary Work of Art: An Investigation on the Borderlines of Ontology, Logic, and Theory of Literature*, Northwestern University Studies in Phenomenology & Existential Philosophy (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1973).
23. Braun, "Empty Names, Fictional Names, Mythical Names," 618.
24. See Fred Adams and Robert Stecker, "Vacuous Singular Terms," *Mind & Language* 9, no. 4 (1994).
25. *Ibid.*
26. For the latter, see John Phillips, "Two Theories of Fictional Discourse," *American Philosophical Quarterly* 37, no. 2 (2000). For the two former, see Caplan, "Creatures of Fiction, Myth, and Imagination"; Stuart Brock, "Fictionalism about Fictional Characters," *Nous* 36 (2002).
27. Saul Kripke, *Naming and Necessity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980). Kripke's suggestion is found in the introduction to the book, pp. 20–21. Note, though, that Kripke did not acknowledge incomplete propositions, nor was he sure at the time that propositions were viable.

CHAPTER 8

1. Nathan Salmon, *Frege's Puzzle* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1986). 81.
2. *Ibid.*, 83.

3. Scott Soames, *Beyond Rigidity: The Unfinished Semantic Agenda of Naming and Necessity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002). 236–37.
4. Perhaps we can find an exception to this in the neo-Fregeans who admit of non-linguistic, or *de re* beliefs of the kind Gareth Evans, Graeme Forbes, and John McDowell have advocated, as they might allow more than one epistemic access to a proposition. If they do I expect that my argument can be extended to include their position. The key to the argument, after all, is not the direct reference theory but rather that it allows us to have more than one epistemic access to a proposition.
5. Ralph Kennedy, “Salmon versus Kripke on the A Priori,” *Analysis* 47(1987).
6. *Ibid.*, 159.
7. To the best of my knowledge K-Y Wong is the only other philosopher to argue for relative apriority, and he has argued that Salmon should welcome a relative notion of apriority within his framework as presented in *Frege’s Puzzle*. K-Y Wong, “A Priority and Ways of Grasping a Proposition,” *Philosophical Studies* 62(1991). Salmon responded to Wong in Nathan Salmon, “How Not to Become a Millian Heir,” *Philosophical Studies* 62(1991).
8. Keith Donnellan, “Kripke and Putnam on Natural Kind Terms,” in *Knowledge and Mind*, ed. C. Ginet and S. Shoemaker (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 88n.
9. Nathan Salmon, “Relative and Absolute Apriority,” *Philosophical Studies* 69(1993): 85.
10. Salmon and Wong discuss “I am here now” in their exchange, but there the focus is on whether the proposition expressed by the sentence is or is not a logical truth. Salmon doubts it is a logical truth, and hence doubts that it is a priori. The example that seems to influence Salmon and that seems to have changed his mind (for in *Frege’s Puzzle* he thought that the sentence was a priori) is G. Vision’s example of the standard answering machine message, ‘I am not here now.’ But the discussion, as well as Salmon’s doubts, are misguided. The issue does not concern the supposed logical truth of ‘I am here now’ but rather its apriority. *Assertions in absentia*, like in the answering machine example, do not show that the proposition is not a priori, for the *I* in the proposition is presumably not entertaining the proposition at the time the machine plays the message.
11. Salmon, “Relative and Absolute Apriority,” 86.
12. *Ibid.*, 91.

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