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Sensitive Semantics: On the Clash Between the Naïve Theory and Intuition

by

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To Emine Hande Tuna, with love

Abstract

The Naïve Theory is one the dominant accounts amongst philosophers of language. This theory has much to offer, however it does not in all cases bode well with intuitions. Two puzzles are raised and investigated here. The first is a puzzle regarding certain simple sentences. The Naïve Theory does not recognize semantic differences amongst simple sentences which are cognitively very different. The second is a puzzle regarding attitude ascriptions. The truth-values the Naïve Theory assigns to an important subset of such ascriptions disagree with the pretheoretical intuitions of ordinary language users. The first and second chapters examine some of the ways that Naïve Theorists have attempted to resolve the puzzle and finds them insufficient. In the first chapter modifications to the Naïve Theory are proposed which aim to preserve the referentialist core of the theory while accommodating intuitions regarding cognitive significance. The second chapter discusses the extension of the Naïve Theory to attitude ascribing sentences, presents the truth-value discrepancy problem and evaluates the pragmatic and psychological-explanatory accounts that have been developed in response. The third chapter examines two standard contextualist accounts of attitude ascriptions that aim to bring referentialist semantics in line with the truth-value assignments of ordinary speakers. It is argued that, while standard versions of contextualism can respect truth-value intuitions to a large extent, these accounts make overly demanding claims about what it is that speakers represent with their reports. The fourth chapter explores a

more radical version of contextualism that has been recently developed by Stefano Predelli and John MacFarlane. The account developed there takes the truth-value of attitude ascriptions to be sensitive to the explanatory projects of those who ascribe them. The non-standard version of contextualism advanced takes the word choice in attitude ascriptions to make a semantic difference relative to the explanatory contexts to which the ascriptions are meant to contribute. Employing Kit Fine's relationist semantics, the semantic difference is cashed out in terms of coordination relations that hold between the ascriptions and the set of statements which comprise the contextually salient explanation.

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Introduction:

Discussions within the philosophy of language have been dominated to a large extent by a number of philosophical puzzles which arise when theorists attempt to provide a semantics for natural language. This thesis is concerned with two such puzzles, and the semantic approaches that give rise to them. One of these puzzles has to do with intuitions regarding the informativeness and cognitive significance of simple sentences containing proper names. The other has to do with intuitions pertaining to the truth-value of sentences which ascribe propositional attitudes to agents. The puzzles essentially arise because these sets of intuitions clash with the mandates of a semantic theory that many philosopher of language find otherwise adequate, and is currently the dominant view in the literature.

The theory in question is the Naïve Theory, sometimes also called Neo-Russellianism. This theory is the combination of three central theses: Millianism, Propositionalism, and the Binary-Relation semantics of 'believes'. Millianism is the view that proper names contribute nothing more than their referents to the semantic content of the sentences in which they occur. Propositionalism is the view that the semantic content of sentences is the singular propositions they express, where singular propositions are abstract sets of objects and properties. The Binary-Relation semantics of 'believes' is the view that the term 'believes' as it occurs in an ascription expresses a relation between the

believer and the singular proposition embedded in the ‘that’-clause of the ascription sentence.

This thesis is concerned with how the clash between intuitions and this theory ought to be resolved. The first chapter examines the problem of cognitive significance and some of the main strategies Naïve Theorists have employed to resolve it. The solutions fall under two main camps, ‘pragmatic’ and ‘psychological’. Both of these camps treat the ordinary speaker intuitions as mistaken and attempt to show that the intuitions do not concern the semantic properties of sentences. I present grounds for thinking that the solutions offered by these Naïve Theorists are not satisfactory, and argue that the Naïve Theory ought to be minimally revised by dropping Millianism in favor of some weaker referentialist theory of names.

The remaining chapters are dedicated to the puzzle of attitude ascribing sentences. As with semantic significance, Naïve Theorists have attempted to resolve this problem by means of similar pragmatic and psychological solutions. The second chapter examines some of these approaches and it is argued there that the intuitions are not explained away in a satisfactory way.

Chapter three examines two main contextualist alternatives to the Naïve Theory as applied to belief reports. One of these contextualist approaches attempts to preserve intuitive truth-value assignments by incorporating modes of presentation into the propositions expressed by belief reports. The other account

takes the verb ‘believes’ to be indexical, shifting in value depending on context. The accounts are shown to have their own specific difficulties: placing overly demanding constraints on what speakers represent and failing to specify what difference in content the indexical verb ‘believes’ tracks.

An alternative account is developed at length in the fourth chapter, where I employ some recent suggestions that have emerged in the literature on semantic evaluation to show that it is preferable to think of the Naïve Theory as a theory of content rather than a theory of truth. The account of attitude ascriptions presented there takes the truth-value of belief sentences to be sensitive to the explanatory demands of conversational contexts. Attitude reports are typically used for predictive explanatory purposes. Since the explanations and predictions are themselves linguistic, i.e. sets of sentences, the names employed in the ‘that’-clause of a belief report needs to match up with the names (and descriptions) employed in the other statements which jointly comprise the explanation. Substitution-failure is entailed by inference-preservation.

CHAPTER I - The Naïve Theory and the Puzzle of Cognitive Significance

I.1. Semantic Evaluation and the Naïve Theory

In this chapter I start with a brief exposition of the Naïve Theory of Meaning, and its central components, Millianism and Propositionalism. This theory presupposes (mostly without argument, although there are notable exceptions) a certain conception of semantics. After the exposition, I discuss what has been taken to be one of the main problems for this theory, and consider two groups of strategies that have been proposed for resolving the problem. Rather than laying the blame on the central aspects of Naïve theory itself, my aim is to show that it is the narrow conception of semantics that it presupposes that should be held accountable for its shortcomings. I will suggest that the shift from the problematic conception of semantics to a more reasonable one allows us to salvage the most appealing features of the Naïve theory while also avoiding the counterintuitive consequences that are typically ascribed to it. The problem with the naïve account we will be concerned with has been extensively discussed in the literature. It arises from the fact that naïve theories do not agree with language users' pre-theoretic intuitions regarding the meaning of certain constructions, an important subset of which are sentences of identity. The two groups of strategies can be divided as follows: One group denies the import of the pre-theoretic intuitions for the semantics of the relevant constructions and attempts to explain those intuitions away. The other group takes the intuitions to be non-negotiable

and attempts to accommodate them by modifying the naive semantics. The accounts examined here are not exhaustive of the possibilities for developing the semantics for simple sentences. A long tradition of Fregean and neo-Fregean approaches will simply be ignored. What unifies the accounts that are considered here is a shared commitment to referentialism. Both supporters and critics of the naïve theory, as we will see, share much in common. I turn now to a discussion of the Naïve Semantics.

The theory of sentence meaning we will be concerned with here is a referentialist theory, which claims that meaning is reference. On this theory sentences are proposition-encoding entities. Call this aspect of the theory Propositionalism. Propositions are structured entities made up of individuals, properties and relations, identifying conditions, etc. Though much of the literature on sentence meaning has been framed in terms of possible world semantics, with sentence meaning being understood as a set of possible worlds, the unstructured nature of sets of possible worlds ultimately makes the structured propositions account superior (see Soames, 1989 for some reasons).

Sentences can encode true propositions, namely ones that actually obtain in the context in which the sentence is uttered. They can encode false propositions, namely ones which do not obtain in the context in which the sentence is uttered. Finally, they can fail to encode propositions, or may encode only partial propositions, by being incomplete in some respect or other, most

often by employing referring terms which simply fail to have worldly semantic correlates. This last kind of case will no doubt seem prima facie problematic: How can a *referring* term fail to have a worldly referent? In the case of "Santa Claus", whatever may be its etymology, it is a term used to refer to a person with some incredible properties, although it is known that such a person does not exist. This chapter focuses on problems that arise for sentences whose component terms do refer. For these sentences the standard analysis proceeds as follows:

Sentences like (1)

(1) Soren Kierkegaard authored *Fear and Trembling*

encode propositions like (2)

(2) <Soren Kierkegaard, having authored *Fear and Trembling*>

This proposition is a two-element ordered set consisting of the individual himself, Kierkegaard, and the property of having authored that particular book. The proposition is singular in the sense that it contains a flesh-and-bone worldly individual as occupant of the subject position and to whom the property denoted by the predicate is being ascribed. The truth-value of the sentence is to be evaluated in a context of utterance, and will be true in that context if there the individual (Kierkegaard) possesses the property in question there. He might not, if for example we are considering a possible world where Kierkegaard died prior to completing the book in question or some other circumstances conspired to prevent

him from ever writing it or even becoming a philosopher.

Propositionalism does not by itself entail that the proposition encoded by (1) is (2). Propositionalism is ambivalent with regards to the constituents of the propositions which sentences express. That (1) semantically encodes the singular proposition (2) on the Naïve Theory is due to the fact that the Naïve Theory combines Propositionalism about the semantic content of sentences with a further view, known as Millianism, to the effect that names occurring in sentences contribute nothing over and above their referents to the propositions that those sentences encode.

This brief discussion, which is the standard way of talking among philosophers of language already requires a more precise account of semantic evaluation, since it is unclear exactly what the relation between a context and a possible world is. Here is a very brief sketch of the components of semantic evaluation: Sentences express propositions relative to a set of contextual parameters which fix the semantic values of (any) component indexical expressions and any other expressions whose semantic value is variable. Consider the following sentence uttered by someone to then recently defeated United States presidential candidate Hubert Humphrey on November 6, 1968:

(U) You lost the election.

For the utterance of (U) to express a proposition, the expression “you” needs to have its value fixed. With nothing to fix its value, the expression simply fails to

refer to anyone. Most theorists follow David Kaplan's *Demonstratives* in observing that to all indexical expressions, a basic list of which includes times, pronouns, etc, there is a stable feature which provides an instruction as to how to fix the content of the expression. (Kaplan, 1989, pg.505) This feature of indexical expressions is called their *character*. The reference-fixing character of the expression 'you' is the instruction: *'you' refers to the person addressed by the speaker making the utterance*. While the content of the second person singular pronoun varies with the context of utterance, its character is stable across contexts.

Fixing the values of indexicals and demonstratives can be understood as a stage in the process of semantic evaluation. It is an important step because only by fixing the values of the indexicals do we arrive at a complete proposition which can be understood as the semantic content which the Naïve Theory takes to be the meaning of sentences. However this is only one step in that process. Semantic evaluation further requires that a point of evaluation be provided (henceforth POE). POEs are typically taken to be possible worlds. They are the circumstances with regards to which the propositions provided by the preceding steps in the evaluation are evaluated for truth. As such, if our speaker on the date specified uttered (U) to Humphrey, the speaker would have uttered something true. If we are considering a possible world within which Nixon did not win, and Humphrey did, then that *same* proposition would be evaluated at a POE where it was false.

From this vantage point, we can understand Millianism as the claim that proper names are *characterless*. That is, they are referential devices just as indexicals and pronouns are, however their reference is not fixed by character.

I.1 The Puzzle of Cognitive Significance

We will consider two related worries that have been nagging away at this picture of semantics. One set of worries concerns the semantics of simple sentences involving proper names, such as (1); the other set of worries concerns the semantics of more complex sentences in which the simple sentences are embedded in the that-clauses of psychological attitude ascribing verbs such as "desires" and "believes". The focus of the rest of this chapter will be on simple sentences, and the focus of the next chapter will be on complex sentences involving belief-ascription. Here is an example of a simple sentence that is taken by many to be problematic for Millians:

(3) Soren Kierkegaard is Johannes Climacus.

If the Naïve Theory described above is accurate, then the semantic content of this sentence, when uttered in an appropriate context, is

(4) <Soren Kierkegaard, = , Soren Kierkegaard>

where the proper name is a stand-in for the actual individual. The trouble is that proposition (4) is also the semantic content of the trivial sentence

(5) Soren Kierkegaard is Soren Kierkegaard

As a consequence, it seems that the informative (3) and the trivial (5) *mean the same thing* (i.e. have the same semantic content). But that seems really counterintuitive. If correct, then the fact that (3) is informative and (5) is trivial has nothing to do with what these sentences mean! This will be the case for numerous other sentences which do not involve identity as well. Consider (6):

(6) Soren Kierkegaard is a better author than Johannes Climacus.

Substituting either of the names in (6) for the other produces a sentence which expresses the same proposition, yet seems to tell us something different.

Here the Naïve Theory proponents have decided to bite the bullet, and accept the unintuitive consequence that the informativeness of (3) over (5) is not due to a difference in meaning. This is entirely unsurprising since Millianism is resolutely committed to the negative thesis that there is nothing else to the semantic dimension of a proper name except its referent. While many naïve theorists bite this bullet, there is a general agreement that the naïve theorist owes an explanation as to why the intuitions to the contrary do not require accommodation. The usual strategy for doing so is to argue that the intuitions can be shown to be problematic by revealing that they are not semantic intuitions, that is to say that they are not motivated by semantic aspects of the problematic constructions. There are two main proposals for explaining away the intuitions: pragmatic approaches and psychological approaches. I will discuss these in turn,

but before doing so I want to point out how the problem of informativeness relates to the conception of semantics that proponents of the Naïve Theory take for granted.

I.3 Semantic Transparency

The informativeness problem discussed results from and attests to a general feature of the style of doing semantics that the Naïve Theory favors. According to the Naïve Theory, the meaning of a sentence uttered can be and often is entirely independent of the communicative intentions of speakers, including speakers' referential intentions. This view is what Salmon has in mind in his article "Two conceptions of semantics" when he says that according to his favoured 'expression-centered' conception of semantics,

> [w]hat we represent with the symbols we produce need not be the very same as what the symbols themselves represent. We are constrained by the symbols' system of representation - by their semantics - but we are not enslaved by it. Frequently, routinely in fact, what we represent by means of a symbol deviates from the symbol's semantics. (Salmon, CC&C, pg.345)

On this conception semantics is non-transparent, where transparency is understood as the notion that differences in meaning are accessible to the understanding. (3) and (5) are taken to mean different things by well-informed, competent language users even though they mean the same thing according to the Naïve Theory. A language user counts as being competent with (3) and (5), under

the Naïve Theory, if they know that “Kierkegaard” refers to Kierkegaard and “Climacus” refers to Climacus and understands the concept of identity. This knowledge does not guarantee knowledge of the coreference of the two expressions in (3), since it is no part of the semantic knowledge of a competent speaker that the individual referred to by “Kierkegaard” is the individual referred to by “Climacus”. However, since knowledge as to the referent of a name exhausts knowledge of its semantic properties on the Naïve Theory, it follows that knowledge of the semantics of the names (the only knowledge that seems to possibly make a difference) does not allow us to discern that (3) and (5) are meaning-wise identical.

We can state the situation as follows: On the Naïve conception of semantics knowledge of the semantic properties of the expressions making up a sentence does not guarantee knowledge of the semantic properties of the sentence itself. If the former knowledge guaranteed the latter then speakers would not mistakenly infer that (3) and (5) differ in their semantic properties.

I.4 Pragmatic Solution to the problem

One particular response to the problem of informativeness has been given by Nathan Salmon in his book *Frege’s puzzle*, where he claims the following:

> To be sure “a = b” *sounds* informative, whereas “a = a” does not. Indeed, an utterance of “a = b” genuinely imparts information that is more valuable than that imparted by an utterance of “a = a”. For example, it imparts the nontrivial linguistic

> information about the sentence "a = b" that it is true, and hence that the names *a* and *b* are co-referential. But that is pragmatically imparted information, and presumably not semantically encoded information. […] It is by no means clear that the sentence "a = b", stripped naked of its pragmatic importations and with only its properly semantic information content left, is any more informative in the relevant sense than "a = a". (Salmon, 1986, 78-79)

According to this view then, an utterance of "Soren Kierkegaard is Johannes Climacus" only pragmatically imparts the information that the two names co-refer, rather than semantically encoding that information. One problem with this response is that it is unclear where to draw the line between what counts as part of semantics and what counts as part of pragmatics. Naturally the ordinary person does not make such a distinction, but the literature on the semantics/pragmatics divide shows that theorists are also finding it difficult to pinpoint its exact location. Perhaps we can take Salmon to be saying that pragmatically imparted information is any information that is conveyed to hearers by the utterance of a sentence which is not semantically encoded in the sentence.

That the utterance of (3) pragmatically imparts the information that (3) is true is something inferable. There is a deeply ingrained convention/belief that people, when being sincere, assert what they take to be true. As such, an assertive utterance of (3) communicates that (3) is true. Yet this is a property that the utterance of (3) shares with every other assertive utterance of an indicative sentence ever made, including the assertive utterance of (5). Hence, this cannot be

what makes (3) *more* informative than (5). Salmon, of course, wants to say that it is the fact that utterances of (3) communicate the information that (3) is true which contributes to hearers' realization that the names "Soren Kierkegaard" and "Johannes Climacus" are co-referential. This is where the pragmatics of (3) and the pragmatics of (5) part ways for Salmon, and this is also what according to him makes (3) *seem* to contain more or different information than (5) even though it doesn't: The co reference of "Soren Kierkegaard" and "Johannes Climacus" is pragmatically imparted by uttering (3) and not by uttering (5).

There are four related worries here. First, it is implausible to claim, as Salmon does, that hearers reason from the fact that an utterance of a sentence like (3) has been made, and hence from the inferred belief that (3) is true, to the conclusion that the names in (3) are coreferential. We have been given no reason to suppose that people reason by means of such formal deductions. Second, it seems odd to say that an utterance of (5) carries information about co-referentiality of names. Yet, given that both (3) and (5) share the same syntactic form, it's natural to assume that they pragmatically convey the same *kind* of information. Third, this pragmatic account takes the relevant information regarding coreferentiality to be arrived at entirely without any contribution from the semantics. The meaning of identity sentences then is *never* a relevant feature in our communicative practices or in our understanding of the use of this important linguistic construction. The semantic content of these sentences is rendered entirely useless. While in some cases the literal meaning of a sentence

can be significant despite being trivial, no such thing occurs in the present case. Cases where the semantic content is trivial although significant are cases in which the very triviality of the content is appreciated by the hearer and in turn requires her to seek alternate non-trivial propositions which it might have been the intention of the speaker to communicate. However, on the naïve picture the hearer does not recognize the triviality involved in (3). Fourth, the account creates and consequently fails to explain a certain asymmetry among kinds of simple sentences involving names. When a name like "Kierkegaard" occurs in the identity sentence (3) something about Kierkegaard's name is supposedly communicated according to the pragmatic strategy proponent, while no such information is communicated by the utterance of a sentence like (3') bellow:

(3') Soren Kierkegaard is the same height as Johannes Climacus

The problem lies in the fact that (3') turns out to be content-wise as trivial as (3), and more intuitively informative than (5'):

(5') Soren Kierkegaard is the same height as Soren Kierkegaard

Yet the pair of sentences (3') and (5') cannot be afforded the same explanation as in the identity case. Upon hearing an utterance of (3') one does not take its truth in English to entail that the two names are coreferential. Yet if this was supposed to explain why speakers take (3) to be informative then what explains the fact that ordinary speakers take (3') to be informative and take (5') to be trivial?

In light of these sorts of worries, I submit that the informativeness of (3) is likely not arrived at by inference from the fact that such sentences are true in English. Rather, what makes them informative is the fact that they convey the information that an individual bearing a certain name is the same person as an individual bearing another name. Of course the information that an individual named "X" is the same person as an individual named "Y" does entail that "X" and "Y" are coreferential terms. But ordinary hearers do not need to make this inference in order to think that (3) is more informative than (5). The information that licenses the judgement of coreferentiality is already sufficient for explaining why ordinary hearers judge (3) to be more informative than (5)![1]

At this point it should be noted that the success or failure of this particular strategy on the part of the Naïve theorist for explaining away the intuitions depends on whether the information which licenses the inference about coreferentiality is pragmatically imparted or semantically encoded. This question cannot be answered by appealing to Millian intuitions about what information is semantically encoded in the sentence uttered since the very reliability and nature of such intuitions is itself in question. To answer the question we need to inquire into what hearers might be expected to grasp when a speaker makes an utterance of (3) and what they might be expected to grasp when a speaker makes an

[1] We will return to this particular issue in the final section of this chapter where alternative approaches are discussed. Two of the alternatives considered take the difference in meaning between (3) and (5) to be prior (in the process of comprehension) to the information of coreferentiality.

utterance of (5).

What piece of information then might an ordinary hearer retrieve from an utterance of (3) which might account for the relevant difference in informativeness between (3) and (5)? One suggestion is that part of the information conveyed by any utterance of (3) is that the person named “Soren Kierkegaard” is the person named “Johannes Climacus”. This proposition is true, although it is not a singular proposition. So Salmon might want to hold (a) that the sentence uttered semantically encodes the singular proposition (4), while also holding (b) that the utterance of the sentence also conveys the general proposition (7):

(7) The person named “Soren Kierkegaard” is the person named “Johannes Climacus”

This would certainly get Salmon out of the troubled waters if (7) is indeed a piece of information that is conveyed (along with other information perhaps) by uses of (3) *without* being semantically encoded in (3). *Mutatis mutandis*, when a speaker utters (5), the sentence uttered semantically encodes (4), while the utterance of (5) conveys the different general proposition (8):

(8) The person named “Soren Kierkegaard” is the person named “Soren Kierkegaard”

Now, on the face of it, this is exactly what Salmon wants: He wants the

information pragmatically imparted by (5) to be trivial and the information imparted by (3) to be non-trivial. Taking (7) to be a proposition conveyed by (3) and taking (8) to be a proposition conveyed by (5) delivers these results. Perhaps it is these general propositions that are pragmatically imparted by, although not semantically encoded in, utterances of sentences like the ones we have considered.

Of course, the suggestion raised in the previous paragraph is only one possible means of achieving the intended results. Its virtue lies chiefly in the fact that at least one component of the utterance, namely the pragmatically imparted general proposition, will be informative for a speaker-hearer pair even when the hearer does not have any notion as to whom the names uttered pick out. If Salmon is right that ordinary speakers are utterly confused about what is semantically encoded in and what is pragmatically imparted by any uttered statement, it will be all the same to ordinary conversational participants whether the information they care about is pragmatically imparted or semantically encoded.

Unfortunately there are strong reasons for thinking that the pragmatic strategy thus modified cannot work. The central reason is that, as Kent Bach puts it, “when you use a name to refer, generally the property of bearing that name does not enter into what you are trying to convey”. (Bach, 2002, pg. 86) This is hard to deny since it is grounded in the phenomenology of language use. When a speaker utters (1) she is trying to convey to the audience a fact about the very

individual, Kierkegaard, and the fact she is trying to convey is not that that is his name but rather that he authored a certain book. Does the situation change when instead of (1) we consider an identity sentence like (3)? The special case of identity sentences may fall outside of the above generalization made by Bach. This might be the reason John Perry claims that identity sentences are exceptions to the referentialist semantics, and argues that the official content (i.e. the singular proposition) does not suffice in providing a satisfactory account of their semantics. (Perry, 2001) Perry claims that we have to appeal to a different notion of content to achieve a satisfactory semantics for these exceptional sentences. Identity sentences tell us only trivial or contradictory things about how things stand in the world but they tell us relevant and informative things about language, or how language connects with worldly entities. As such a referentialist semantics is not suitable for the purpose of capturing what is being said with this class of sentences. Perry's suggestion is to treat referential content not as the only content there is but rather as the default content, thereby allowing other kinds of content to enter into the "subject matter" of utterances in the case of identity statements.

The situation cannot be left off at this point however. Even if what was said above is correct and identity sentences are exceptional in the way mentioned we need to consider those sentences which do not involve identity, yet intuitively pose the same informativeness problem. Consider (9):

(9) Kierkegaard was a contemporary of Johannes Climacus.

In this case the modified pragmatic strategy assigns the trivial singular proposition (10) as the semantic content of (9):

(10) <Kierkegaard, *being a contemporary of*, Johannes Climacus>

The position also assigns a specific informative proposition to (9), namely (11):

(11) <the bearer of "Kierkegaard", *being a contemporary of*, the bearer of "Johannes Climacus">

The trouble is that, even if Perry is right and (3) is an exception to referentialist semantics, (9) is not likewise exceptional. Yet (11) is not, as per Bach's generalization, something that speakers generally intend to convey with (9), since in using such sentences speakers do not aim to point out that Kierkegaard is so-called, but merely that that individual is a contemporary of another.

In the above modified Naïve theory account, we attempted to relieve the transparency worry by suggesting that, even though the proposition semantically encoded by a sentence may differ significantly from the what the speaker intends to communicate and what hearers can be expected to recover, we can plausibly argue that each utterance of a particular sentence is associated tightly with a proposition that is not the semantic content of the sentence yet which is closely connected to the communicative intentions of speakers and hearers. Naïve theorists who employ this general strategy have been called Millian Descriptivists. (Caplan, 2007) The version of Millian Descriptivism that we have considered is of

the non-substantive variety. The pragmatically communicated propositions considered above contain only nominal descriptions, such as “bearer of ___”, not descriptions that provide substantial information about referents, for example “the greatest Danish philosopher” or “the person who came up with the Peano axioms”. Let’s consider how pragmatic replies which contain substantial descriptions fare in response to the informativeness objection.

I.5 Substantial Millian Descriptivism

Historically, pragmatic responses to the informativeness problem have attempted to explain away intuitions regarding the informativeness of identity sentences by appealing to differences in the descriptive information utterances of such sentences can be used to impart. The problem with the general propositions involving non-substantial descriptions is that they do not seem to be reasonable candidates for information that speakers normally intend to communicate. Such a problem is not faced when we take the relevant descriptions to be substantial. I turn now to discuss a version of Substantial Millian Descriptivism (henceforth SSMD for Soames’s Substantial Millian Descritivism) devised by Scott Soames in his *Beyond Rigidity*. (Soames, 2002)

According to SSMD, the semantic content of a simple sentence involving a proper name is just the singular propositional content that we have discussed. Soames begins by outlining two distinct conceptions one may take on the meaning of an expression. On the first conception, the meaning of an expression

"is that which it contributes to the semantic content of sentences containing it." (Soames, 2002, pg.55) It is in this sense of the term 'meaning' that the meaning of a proper name is simply its referent. On another conception, "the meaning of an expression is information grasp of which explains speaker's ability to understand it, and to be able to use it competently." (Soames, 2002, pg.56) This second conception of meaning would only raise problems for the view that the meaning of a proper name is its referent if there is substantial difference among the competence conditions for distinct names. Soames denies this and claims that the competence conditions for names are so minimal that it does not threaten Millianism. (Soames, 2002, pg.56)

The pragmatic solution Soames offers claims that the intuitions pertaining to informativeness or cognitive significance do not track differences in the semantic content of sentences, but rather track differences in the information that is communicated (asserted, conveyed, imparted) by uses of those sentences in different contexts. A single utterance of a sentence can (and often does) communicate a number of propositions. The proposition semantically expressed by an utterance of the sentence is the proposition that is asserted in all contexts of use. Semantic content then is context invariant assertoric content. (Soames, 2002, pg.60)

Applied to our example involving identity, the proposal suggests that the intuitions language users have concerning the difference between (3) and (5) are

tied to the propositions that are gotten across from speaker to audience in a given context. What information is non-semantically communicated depends on the kind of information shared by conversational participants and the interests of those participants. Consider how (1) might be used in a context to assert information that goes beyond its semantic content. Assume that A and B are having a conversation of about their favorite authors and the great works they have authored. In uttering (1) A asserts the proposition that Kierkegaard authored "Fear and Trembling". However, given the topic of conversation, the utterance of (1) carries more information than simply that singular proposition. The descriptively enriched proposition (12) below is also assumed to be part of what the speaker conveys or even asserts:

(12) My favorite author, Soren Kierkegaard, authored "Fear and Trembling".

Assertively uttering (1) commits the speaker in the context of utterance to (12) as well.

Turning to the sentences that are problematic for Millianism, consider again sentence (3). According to Soames the content of (3) is (4), yet "since in this case the proposition is trivial, it is never what prompts one to assertively utter [it]." (Soames, 2002, pg.66) Here is a context that illustrates the kind of descriptive proposition one might be taken to assert: Assume that A and B are having a conversation about great philosophers and how they used different pennames to avoid being persecuted for their eccentric views. In this context it

seems that an utterance of (3) can be taken to assert or convey the following propositions:

(13a) The great Danish philosopher Soren Kierkegaard was the infamous author Johannes Climacus.

(13b) The great Danish philosopher Soren Kierkegaard used the penname "Johannes Climacus"

An utterance of (5) will convey a different set of propositions alongside the semantically expressed (4). It may convey, for example:

(14a) The great Danish philosopher Soren Kierkegaard was the great Danish philosopher Soren Kierkegaard.

There is no difficulty in explaining why language users take (3) to be more informative than (5), since (13a) does differ from (14a) and ordinary language users do not distinguish between (3) and (13a) on the one hand and (5) and (14a) on the other.

Soames thinks that part of the motivation for rejecting the Naïve Theory stems from three unfounded assumptions:

(a) That the proposition semantically expressed by the utterance of a sentence is independently computed by hearers in the process of comprehension.

(b) That the proposition semantically expressed exhausts what the speaker

asserts in the context.

(c) That the proposition semantically expressed is to be privileged as psychologically relevant. (Soames, 2002, pg.87)

According to him all of these assumptions are faulty: the proposition that is semantically expressed is not always the only proposition the speaker expresses, nor are hearers required to compute that proposition independently of what else is being asserted, nor is that proposition always psychologically relevant. The above treatment of informative sentences like (3) shows precisely how (c) might fail.

Soames's response to the problem of informativeness is problematic. First, even though the proposition expressed by (3) *is* trivial, this cannot be taken to bear on considerations of what might prompt someone to assertively utter (3), since the whole problem is that even competent speakers and hearers do not take it to be trivial. Soames thinks that such speakers and hearers conflate what is semantically expressed with what is merely asserted, conveyed or otherwise imparted. It seems however that nothing precludes a speaker from intending to say of a certain individual, Kierkegaard, that he is the same as the individual, Climacus. This is a problem with Soames's explanation as to why language users take something other than the semantic content of identity sentences like (3) to be the content of utterances of (3).

Second, as Salmon notes in *Frege's Puzzle*, language users can be trained to recognize and to distinguish what is semantically expressed from what is

pragmatically conveyed yet still think that (3) and (4) do not mean the same.

Third, while Soames's explanation of intuitions regarding informativeness may work in information-rich contexts such as the ones discussed above, it is unclear that they would work equally in information-poor contexts where there is no descriptive information that one might enrich singular propositions with.

Fourth, there is an argument put forth by David Braun which aims to show that a purely pragmatic reply that relies solely on the difference between pragmatic and semantic information cannot plausibly work in certain cases. I offer the following reconstruction of Braun's argument, which occurs on pages 69-72 of his article "Cognitive Significance, Attitude Ascriptions, and Ways Of Believing Propositions" (Braun, 2002):

Consider the following identity statements:

(15) Hesperus is identical with Hesperus.

(16) Hesperus is identical with Phosphorus.

(17) The brightest heavenly body in the evening sky is identical with the brightest heavenly body in the evening sky.

(18) The brightest heavenly body in the evening sky is identical with the brightest heavenly body in the morning sky.

As per Soames's suggestion imagine a context in which (17) and (18) express

propositions that are pragmatically conveyed by (15) and (16) respectively. Here is an argument which defeats the pragmatic explanation Soames offers for such sentences:

(P1) A competent user of the names involved, John, can believe that (15) is true and (16) false.

(P2) According to SSDM we can explain how John can take (16) to be true while (15) false by adverting to his failing to distinguish (15) from (17) and (16) from (18).

(P3) John can believe (15) true and (16) false because he believes the proposition expressed by (18) to be false.

(P4) In the very same context described John can also come to believe the singular propositions (i) that Venus is the brightest heavenly body in the evening sky and (ii) that Venus is the brightest heavenly body in the morning sky. (John can do so by pointing to Venus in the morning and thinking that the object he is seeing is the brightest heavenly body in the morning sky, and pointing to Venus in the evening and thinking that the object he is seeing is the brightest heavenly body in the evening sky.)

(P5) From believing that Venus is the brightest heavenly body in the evening sky and believing that Venus is the brightest heavenly body in the morning sky, John can infer that the brightest heavenly body in the morning sky is the brightest

heavenly body in the evening sky.

(P6) So John can believe in this very context that the proposition expressed by (18) is true.

(P7) Given (P3), the descriptive proposition which John must reject according to SSDM in order for us to explain why John takes (16) to be false turns out to be a proposition that John can have good reason to accept.

(P8) As such, the intended explanation fails in certain contexts.

Admittedly, step (5) here requires that John takes the object that he is attending to in the morning to be the object that he is attending to in the evening, which is implausible. However this is very much part of the point that Braun is trying to get across with the argument: In order to explain how speakers can take (3) and (5) or (15) and (16) to differ in their semantic properties, an explanation must appeal to something other than confusion as to what is semantically expressed and what is pragmatically conveyed. It must appeal to differences in the ways in which language users believe the propositions which sentences semantically express. I turn now to Braun's own proposed solution to problem of informativeness.

I. 6 Psychological Explanation Solution

David Braun in his paper "Understanding Belief Reports", and Salmon in numerous places, each respond to the informativeness objection by claiming that

ordinary folks' intuitions with regard to whether (3) and (5) contain the same information are unreliable. (Braun, 1998, Salmon, 1986; 1991) Unlike Salmon's and Soames's attempt above to account for this by appealing to the semantics/pragmatics distinction, Braun does not take the faulty intuitions to be due to a failure on the part of ordinary people to distinguish properly between semantics and pragmatics. Rather, his claim is that the faulty intuitions are due to what happens when people internalize tokens of those uttered sentences. When someone hears or reads (3) that person comes to token a mental sentence. When that person hears or reads (5) she comes to token a different mental sentence. Consider (8) and (9) to be the relevant thought-sentences corresponding to (3) and (5) respectively:

(8) #Soren Kierkegaard is Johannes Climacus#

(9) #Soren Kierkegaard is Soren Kierkegaard#

According to Braun, these mental sentences are composed of formally distinct mental terms or mental representations. Being formally distinct, the #Soren Kierkegaard# tokens and the #Johannes Climacus# tokens can play different roles in one's cognitive economy, meaning that (8) and (9) can have different inferential histories, and hence the thinker may associate different pieces of information with each and infer different things from each. Even though the thoughts have the same singular proposition as worldly referent, they will not be *taken* to be the same thought by their possessors because each thought has its own

peculiar history and causal force. Paralleling the negative Millian thesis that there is nothing more to the semantic content of a proper name than its referent, we countenance at the level of thought the thesis that there is nothing more to the representational content of a mental representation than the object that it is a representation of. Since the ordinary person fails to individuate thoughts by their representational contents, we have a straightforward explanation as to why they might think that the sentences which they internalize themselves differ in informativeness, even though they *may* not.

It is important to note the precise form that Braun's response to the problem of cognitive significance takes. Braun's account is intended to defeat a specific kind of argument one might construct from the premise that speakers have intuitions regarding the cognitive significance of sentences which are contrary to the dictates of the Naïve Theory to the conclusion that the Naïve Theory is false. Here is the argument as stated by Braun on page 67 of his 2002 paper:

Consider again sentences (15) and (16) employed in Braun's argument against Soames above:

(15) Hesperus is identical with Hesperus.

(16) Hesperus is identical with Phosphorus.

Argument: *A Problem with Cognitive Significance for NR*

a. There is a rational agent who understands (15) and (16), and believes that (15) is true and (16) is false.

b. If a rational agent understands (15) and (16), and believes that (15) is true and (16) is false, then he believes the proposition expressed by (15) and the negation of the proposition expressed by (16).

c. Therefore, there is a rational agent who believes the proposition expressed by (15) and the negation of the proposition expressed by (16).

d. If NR is true, then (15) expresses the same proposition as (16).

e. Therefore, if NR is true, then there is a rational agent who believes the proposition expressed by (15) and the negation of that very same proposition.

f. No rational agent believes a proposition and its negation.

g. Therefore, NR is not true.

Braun's account as outlined above has the resources to defeat this argument by rejecting (f). A rational agent *can* believe a proposition and its negation because they can represent them by means of distinct mental sentences and fail to realize that those mental sentences have the same content. They may, for instance, think that the mental state they are in when entertaining (15) is supported by evidence while the mental state they are in when entertaining (16) is not. There are a

myriad other ways in which the agent may conclude on the basis of the cognitive difference among those mental sentences that (15) and (16) themselves can differ in truth-value. Note that this version of the argument concerns speaker intuitions that are directed at the *truth-value* of the relevant identity sentences. One can agree with Braun that speaker intuitions regarding the truth-value of sentences are askew while holding that intuitions regarding semantic difference are on track.

The objections to the pragmatic accounts outlined above do not apply to Braun's. Nevertheless, it is not obvious that Braun's explanatory strategy offers a more effective defense of the Naïve Theory (as distinctly more suitable than alternatives) than Salmon's or Soames's, although it is certainly advantageous insofar as it does not rely centrally on a distinction between pragmatics and semantics that is itself unclear. The crux of Braun's account lies in the idea that people mistake cognitive differences among mental representations for semantic differences among sentences. But, according to him, cognitive difference does not entail semantic difference and in fact he takes examples like (3) and (5) to illustrate that the entailment fails. Since for Braun the argument relying on informativeness against the Naïve Theory turns on cognitive differences, the problem posed by that argument is a non-starter.

While the psychological explanation Braun advances is clearly one plausible response to the problem of why speakers take certain sentences to mean different things when they express the same proposition according to the Naïve

Theory, it is to some extent a band-aid solution. The informativeness problem properly understood is not simply a problem regarding why in each case that someone considers statements like (3) and (5) they take them to be different in truth-value. As a response to the problem seen in that light, Braun's account provides a satisfactory solution. Seen in a different light, the problem is connected to the issue of transparency and what may plausibly be taken to fall under the task of semantics. Just because we can offer a psychological explanation of how it is that language users come to posit semantic differences where the Naïve Theory does not recognize them does not relinquish all explanatory demands. One question that is worth investigating is the following: Can minimal modifications be made to the Naïve Theory which do not take away from its theoretical virtues, while simultaneously supporting the intuitions of speakers regarding informativeness and semantic difference more generally? It may, after all, be the case both that Braun's psychological explanation as to why speakers have the semantic intuitions they do is correct and that this is entirely consistent with the possibility that speakers really are attuned to semantic differences which the Naïve Theory misses.

Just from the fact that language users' intuitions result from cognitive difference we cannot immediately arrive at the conclusion that those intuitions are mistaken or irrelevant. While cognitive difference may not be identified with or entail semantic difference, it is still an open possibility that intuitions regarding cognitive difference track semantic difference by latching on to some aspect of

sentences which may properly speaking be deemed semantic. In the next section I discuss a number of accounts which can be understood as explorations of this logical space between cognitive difference and semantic difference. These accounts are recent variations on the Naïve Theory each of which is committed to propositionalism and referentialism, yet gives up on the Millian component. This option would not be available on Soames's Pragmatic explanation account since speakers's intuitions on that account are not triggered by the sentences themselves but rather by the complex set of information available to them in speech situations. Soames's pragmatic explanation then purports to show explicitly that intuitions regarding informativeness and semantic difference are off-track because they concern something that is not related to the semantic properties of the relevant sentences. Soames's account however does have significant problems and cannot as a result be taken as a definitive refutation of the idea that speaker's intuitions are relevant to semantics.

I.7 Alternatives To the Naïve Theory

I.7.a Recanati's Indexical Account of Names

In his 1993 book, *Direct Reference: From Language To Thought*, François Recanati puts forward an account on which proper names are treated as indexical expressions. On this account, names contribute their referents to the propositions expressed by utterances of the sentences in which they occur, just as they do on the Millian picture. Unlike Millianism however, Recanati's account takes proper

names to have a character much like other indexical expressions. The meaning of a proper name then has two components. One of these components is a feature REF, the other is its character. Recanati takes REF to be the distinctive feature of referential expressions when these expressions are type-individuated. While tokens of certain expressions which are not type-referential may be used referentially (as is the case with referential uses of definite descriptions *a la* Donnellan) it is part of the semantic function of type referential expressions that they refer. Here is how Recanati sums up type referentiality and REF's place in it:

> (TR) A term is (type-)referential if and only if its linguistic meaning includes a feature, call it 'REF', by virtue of which it indicates that the truth-condition (or, more generally, satisfaction-condition) of the utterance where it occurs is singular. (Recanati, 1993, pg. 17)

Proper names, on the present account, are type-referential. So far there is little for the Naïve Theorist to challenge in the account. The substantial difference emerges as a result of how Recanati thinks that the referent of a proper name is given. Naïve Theorists take the referents of proper names to belong to them *as part of their semantics*. It is often said by such theorists that names function semantically like constants, rather than variables, and as Salmon puts the point "[t]he semantics for a given language fixes the reference of its individual constants." (Salmon, 2007, pg. 11) Recanati disagrees, arguing that the relations which assign referents to names, namely, "name-conventions are part of the context [in which a name is employed] not part of the language." (Recanati, 1993, pg. 143) The indexical

view of names is summarized concisely by Recanati as follows:

> A proper name NN indicates not only that there is an entity x such that an utterance S(NN) is true iff <x> satisfies S( ), it also indicates – simply by virtue of the fact that it is a proper name – that x is the bearer of the name NN, i.e. that there is a social convention associating x with the name NN." (Recanati, 1993, pg. 139)

The character of any proper name then is a rule which indicates that the reference of the proper name is the object which bears the name. Which object a name refers to depends on which social name-bearer convention is salient in the context of utterance. What does this difference between Recanati's account of names and Millianims amount to?

On the Millian picture the reference for any proper name is fixed by the semantics for the language. As such, Millians have to adopt a homonymy account for names with multiple bearers. When I utter the sentence "Aristotle is a great philosopher", I may be making a statement about the last great ancient Greek philosopher, or a statement about a teacher in my department, or about someone else who bears the name. For the Millian, which sentence I utter depends on whose name I am using. Here we might consider that which name is being used can be decided by finding out which person in the world has the property of making the sentence uttered true or false depending on whether they have the property which is being predicated of the bearer of the name in the sentence. On brief reflection it will be observed that this will not work since the method it suggests for finding the correct bearer of the name makes explicit reference to the

uttered sentence, which is exactly what we were trying to discover in the first place.

Consider another situation however. A teacher looks through the class roster at the beginning of a class and says “Mr. Stinley is in my class”. Assume that there was an administrative mistake. Here the name is not a name referring to a particular person in the public language, nor in anyone’s idiolect. There is no reference for “Mr. Stinley”, but there is a very reasonable sense in which the teacher’s statement does mean *something*. Perhaps a Millian will say that the proposition expressed by the sentence uttered by the teacher is a gappy proposition, having an empty place where the bearer of the name should be. As such, the proposition semantically expressed is not a complete proposition, but the statement cannot be taken to be entirely meaningless either. This solution by itself does not accord very well with ordinary intuition. The proposition that the teacher intends to communicate is a complete one, and a hearer will extract a complete proposition from what the teacher said.

There seems to be a significant problem for Millianism here and the problem is tied to the homonymy account of names. Intuitively we wish to say that the statement “Mr. Stinley is in my class” *could be true*. What would make it true is if someone named “Mr. Stinley” were enrolled in the course. That is to say, if the name had a bearer. Yet, since “Mr. Stinley” is semantically empty on the Millian account, and names are individuated by their referents on the homonymy

theory, there is no sense in which *that statement* could have been true. This is because there is no sense in which *that name* could have had a (different) referent. The Millian at this point can only reply that, while the statement being considered could not have been true, another statement formally/syntactically identical to it could have been true. It appears however that this reply on the Millian's behalf is odd: It seems much more plausible to think that while considering the counterfactual we are considering what the speaker said, not something that merely sounded like it.

Compare this with hearing in a crowded room an utterance of the sentence "Bob is happy". Hearing this sentence does not cause me to entertain thoughts about any particular Bob, because I have no idea which Bob is referred to. For dramatic effect assume that I met ten people named "Bob" at the party. At best when we utter a sentence like the one just mentioned to someone we hope that the hearer either (a) already knows who the individual referred to is and thereby comes to predicate the property of that individual, or (b) the person will learn and use the name in conversation and in their inferential processes deferentially, namely they will think of the name as being the name of whoever *I'm* thinking of.

The homonymy theory also cannot explain very easily reports on what others say. Suppose after hearing the statement about Bob at the party I turn to a friend and say "someone just said that Bob is happy." In doing so I am not reporting the statement the person actually uttered according to the homonymy

theory, since I do not know which name the person used. In fact it is unclear that I am even making a complete report.

Given these problems which arise for the homonymy theory which Millianism requires, Recanati's Indexical View of names recommends itself as a well-motivated replacement that is also referentialist. The semantic information that is taken to belong to a name aside from its reference, namely its character, is seemingly information that any speaker must possess simply in order to know that NN is a name. The account provides a candidate for semantic information that language users track when they discern differences in informativeness or cognitive significance.

I.7.b Inverse Pragmatic Solution and the Multiple Propositions Account

Another suggestion that might be made involves amending the initial pragmatic position (involving communicated general propositions) which we started off with. That view had a seemingly insuperable problem. The objection to it amounted to this: The nominal pragmatic strategy is odd because when a speaker utters (3) the speaker is best understood as communicating something about the bearer of the name, i.e. Kierkegaard. That is, it does not seem that in uttering the identity sentence (3) the speaker is doing something different than what the speaker does when employing the name in uttering (1). How can the position be modified so that this problem does not emerge?

Consider a possible modification to the Nominal Pragmatic Account. The

modified theory is constructed by completely reversing what the Naïve Theory takes to be the semantic content with what it takes to be the pragmatic content of a statement. Versions of this strategy applied to pragmatic Millian accounts which employ substantial propositions has been discussed in by Ben Caplan in several papers, (Caplan, 2006; 2007) Let's call the alternative the Inverse Pragmatic Solution (IPS for short). Caplan calls the substantial description version of IPS Object Fregeanism.

IPS then takes the general propositions (6) and (7) above to be the semantic contents or meanings of (3) and (5) respectively, and takes (4) to be a proposition that is *communicated* by successful utterances of (3) and (5), though not semantically contained in (3) and (5). On this view of the matter, the singular proposition (4), namely that that very person is that very person, is what is communicated by utterances of (3). Someone will grasp what the speaker intends to say with (3) by grasping (4). However, the hearer will grasp (4) by understanding that Soren Kierkegaard is the bearer of the name "Soren Kierkegaard" and understanding that Johannes Climacus is the bearer of the name "Johannes Climacus", i.e. by grasping the semantic content of (6) and (7).

Similarly, we have a notion of semantic content or meaning which makes semantic competence of sentences containing names possible even in those cases where the referents of the names are unknown. One does not require an acquaintance with Shakespeare in order to understand sentences about

Shakespeare, and IPS has a straightforward story of how this happens: by grasping the meaning of the name the hearer grasps that what is said is said of the bearer of that name. If the hearer does not know the bearer of the name the hearer will fail to grasp the singular proposition the speaker intended to convey, however they will know something important, namely that the speaker said something about the bearer of the name “Shakespeare”.

IPS is a radically different account from the Naïve Theory. I will not discuss here its viability as a competitor. I do think however that it provides a possible avenue for theorists to investigate since it makes use of resources that a Naïve Theory capable of replying to issues raised by intuitions requires anyway. It also suggests another possible account which I will call here the Multiple Propositions Account (MPA). The idea essentially is to claim that both the singular proposition and the general nominal description proposition are semantically expressed by a sentence like (3). The Millian intuitions regarding rigidity, the truth-value of simple sentences, or the phenomenology of what is said are intuitions directed at the singular propositions semantically expressed by utterances of sentences. The intuitions regarding cognitive significance and informativeness are intuitions directed at the general propositions which are also semantically expressed by utterances of those sentences.

Despite issues regarding the viability of IPS then, it is in any case unclear why the general proposition should not be properly considered as part of the

semantic content of a sentence, rather than part of the communicated content alone. Making the general proposition part of the semantics would avoid the kinds of worry that have been raised.

I.7.c Semantic Relationism

As we have seen the Naïve Theory can appeal to a number of resources outside semantics in order to respond to the problem of informativeness. In recent years a number of alternative accounts have been developed with the aim of supplementing naive semantics in order to respond directly to the problem of meaning rather than by appealing to external pragmatic or psychological explanations. One of these accounts is developed by Kit Fine in his 2007 monograph *Semantic Relationism*. In that book, Fine offers a semantic solution to the problem that has been the concern of this chapter. Fine argues that there must be a semantic difference between sentences (3) and (5) otherwise we cannot account for the cognitive difference between those sentences. As we have seen the Naïve Millians have resisted this move by considering the source of the cognitive difference to be nonsemantic. Fine's argument for the postulation of a semantic difference on the basis of the cognitive difference would be much strengthened if the pragmatic and psychological explanations are found wanting in the ways described above. It is however important to consider his alternative semantic account in order to examine whether it can meet the requirements for being a proper solution to the problem.

Fines' account agrees both with Propositionalism and partially with Millianism, with the following caveat: Fine does not accept the idea that there is nothing more to the meaning of a name other than its referent. In essence then he accepts the positive Millian claim and rejects the negative Millian claim. What more is there to the semantics of a proper name besides its reference? His answer is that the more consists in the semantic relations that hold amongst co-referential names within the same sentence. Two distinct semantic relationships can hold amongst occurrences of co-referring terms, namely they can be coordinated or uncoordinated. Or alternatively: they can represent their objects *as the same* or they can represent their objects *as being the same*. The pair of names occurring in (3) represent their objects as being the same, while the pairs of names in (5) represent their objects as the same. Before getting into a bit of detail as to how the notion of coordination can help, there is a simple test that Fine offers for telling whether two names are coordinated or not within a discourse: Two occurrences of proper names are coordinated if "no one who understands the discourse [in which they occur] can sensibly raise the question" of whether they refer to the same thing. (Fine, pg.40) Any two names for which it is true that no one can fail to know that they refer to the same object are said to be *strictly* coreferential. By contradistinction, any two names for which this requirement does not hold, are not strictly coreferential. Two names are coordinated if they are strictly coreferential.

How ought we to think of this difference between (3) and (5)? Fine offers the following explication which I quote at length:

> In saying that "Cicero = Cicero" expresses the positively coordinated proposition that c = c, what I am saying is that it is a semantic requirement that the sentence signifies an identity proposition whose subject and object positions are both occupied by the object c while, in saying that "Cicero = Tully" expresses the uncoordinated proposition that c = c, I am merely saying that it is a semantic requirement that it signifies an identity proposition whose subject position is occupied by c and whose object position is occupied by c. Under classical consequence, the contents of the two requirements are equivalent. But under manifest consequence they are not and the requirements are, therefore, capable of reflecting a genuine difference in meaning. (Fine, 2007, pg.59)

Two notions from this passage need to be explained, the notion of a semantic requirement and the notion of manifest as opposed to logical consequence. Within Fine's approach to semantics, he makes an important distinction between semantic facts and semantic requirements. According to him, the way to defend referentialism against the informativeness problem is by considering semantics to be a body of information that is internalized by speakers of a language, and so by assuming a subjectivist understanding of semantics. This approach is motivated by what Fine sees as the need for a narrow conception of semantics which could be (a) referential while (b) precluding the possibility that every logical consequence of a semantic fact is itself a semantic fact, a principle he refers to as Closure. The problem with Closure, as he sees it, is that whenever two names refer to one and the same object Closure renders it a semantic fact that those names corefer. Yet, presumably, the informativeness objection is precisely due to this consequence, since if it is a semantic fact that "Kierkegaard' and "Climacus"

refer to the same individual, Closure entails that it is a semantic fact that they corefer.

The consequence of this is that the above distinction between strict co reference and mere coreference disappears, and so does the distinction between two names being coordinated and their being uncoordinated. The point of all this of course is that Closure must be blocked, and this is achieved in Fine's account by taking the subjectivist route and claiming that classical consequence is not the operant kind of consequence that governs semantics. Since semantics is a body of information that is internalized by speakers, the proper kind of consequence relation that holds amongst semantic facts is *Manifest* consequence, which is a consequence relation for which Closure fails. Manifest consequence is defined as follows: "Let us say that a given proposition q is a *manifest* consequence of other propositions p1, p2, p3, … if it is a classical consequence of them and if, in addition, it would be manifest to any ideal cognizer who knew the propositions p1, p2, p3, … that q was indeed a consequence of those propositions." (Fine, pg.48) No ideal cognizer merely cognizant of the fact that "Kierkegaard" refers to a certain individual and the fact that "Climacus" refers to a certain individual could know on that basis alone that the names refer to the same object; this is precisely the predicament of the ancients with regards to Hesperus and Phosphorus, and of Lois with regards to Superman and Clark Kent. For these people the names do not strictly corefer. The above account then explains the difference between (3) and (5) in terms of a semantic relation that holds in the one

case and does not in the other: In the case of (3) the names strictly corefer. We have then here a semantic solution to the problem of informativeness.

One obvious benefit of the approach Fine offers is that it is not specific to identity sentences. It also works in the case of other sentences which Millians problematically take to be meaning-wise identical such as:

(19) Hesperus is following the same orbit as Phosphorus

(20) Hesperus is following the same orbit as Hesperus.

An account that resolves these problems and identity problems in the same way is stronger than one which does not because the problems are intuitively the same (i.e. have the same source).

This last claim may be contended, if an analysis of identity sentences can be offered which locates a different source for intuitions regarding of such sentence. I turn now to a proposed analysis of identity sentences which purports to do just that.

I.7.d Hermeneutic Fictionalism

In recent years a number of philosophers have turned to fictionalism in order to resolve outstanding problems in philosophy of language, such as the one that has been the concern of this chapter. (Crimmins, 1998; Kroon, 2001; Woodbridge & Armour-Garb, 2010). While fictionalist solutions differ from one

another sometimes quite substantially, they all fall under the general category of what Jason Stanley (2001) has called “Hermeneutic Fictionalism”. Stanley offers the following description of the hermeneutic approach: According to this approach, “normal use of the problematic discourse involves a pretense. According to the pretense, and only according to the pretense, there exist the objects to which the discourse would commit its users, were no pretense involved.” (Stanley, pg.36) The problematic discourse might be discourse involving identity, or it may be discourse about non-existing entities, or discourse involving propositional attitude ascriptions. In this section I will sketch one fictionalist analysis of identity sentences which has been proposed by Mark Crimmins.

According to the Crimmins account, certain kinds of discourse, of which identity talk is one, involve semantic pretense. More specifically, whenever we make an identity statement, we are pretending-apart an object *as if it were really two*. Take the previous identity statement:

(16) Hesperus is identical with Phosphorus

What it seems to be claiming is that one thing (Hesperus) is related to something else (Phosphorus). Identity is a relation that can only hold of one thing and itself, yet when we make such statements we pretend that there are two things and that they bear the relation to one another. According to Crimmins we pretend that there are two objects (the ones that are alleged to be related) and within this

pretense there is a pretend-relation, which he calls the promiscuous identity relation, which *can* hold of two things rather than just one thing and itself. A statement like (16) is really true (i.e. true outside any pretense) if it is true within the pretense: if the objects that are related by the promiscuous identity relation really are pretended-apart aspects of one and the same object. Crimmins puts this in terms of the pretense-objects, which for him are given by modes-of-presentation (or perhaps Braun's mental representations) of the objects of our thought. He says of any given identity sentence that "for it to be fictionally true is for it (really) to be the case that the object denoted by the Hesperus-mode is the very object denoted by the Phosphorus-mode" (Crimmins, pg.36)

Although it is not Crimmins's aim, the fictionalist analysis he offers of identity sentences can be hijacked and employed as a way that the Naïve theory might explain the intuitions pertaining to such sentences without appealing to pragmatics.

The account is cumbersome because it requires the postulation of a distinct identity relation within the pretense. However there is a sense in which it is true to the phenomenology of identity sentence use: It does feel as though we are relating two distinct things by means of statements like (16). The fictionalist analysis of identity sentences does not seem however to carry over in a straightforward manner to sentences which intuitively differ in cognitive significance or informativeness yet do not involve identity.

The aim of this chapter has been to investigate the problem posed by certain simple sentences to the Naïve Theory and examine different ways in which the problem can be handled while holding on to the core of that theory. In the next chapter attention is turned to another problem which has been raised for the Naïve Theory when that theory is extended to cover sentences involving propositional attitude ascriptions.

CHAPTER II – The Naïve Theory and the Puzzle of Attitude Ascriptions

II.1 Extending the Naïve Theory to the Attitudes

The combination of Millianism and Propositionalism that partially constitutes the Naïve theory just discussed is rarely challenged nowadays, and has come to be the received view as regards the meaning of simple sentences of the kind discussed. While many theorists have not found that aspect of the Naïve Theory problematic, many take objection to the proposal that the Naïve Theory can be extended, in a straightforward way, to cover complex sentences involving propositional attitude verbs. I think it is safe to say at this point that there are two main contending positions on the treatment of propositional attitude ascriptions. One of these is the Naïve Theory itself properly extended, and the other is some form or other of Contextualism.

Call the Naïve Theory extended to cover propositional attitudes NTPA. NTPA is formed from the combination of NT with the further clause that propositional attitude verbs (like 'believes' and 'desires') express binary relations between believers and propositions. Let us consider an example:

(S1) Thomas believes that Soren Kierkegaard is Johannes Climacus

According to NTPA then, the semantic content of (S1) is the following singular proposition:

(P1) <Thomas, *believes*, <Soren Kierkegaard, = , Johannes Climacus>>

The ‘that’-clause in (S1) is treated as a singular term, whose semantic content is the nested proposition <Soren Kierkegaard, = , Johannes Climacus>. (S1) will be true, when uttered in a context, *iff* in that context Thomas is belief-related to the proposition that is the semantic content encoded by the ‘that’-clause. Not surprisingly then, (S1) is semantically identical to

(S2) Thomas believes that Soren Kierkegaard is Soren Kierkegaard.

II.2 The Puzzle of Attitude Ascriptions

What makes acceptance of NTPA more problematic than acceptance of NT? One answer is that in the case of ordinary sentences like (S3) and (S4),

(S3) Soren Kierkegaard is Johannes Climacus.

(S4) Soren Kierkegaard is Soren Kierkegaard.

bracketing worries regarding informativeness, the truth-value assignments of ordinary speakers agree in all cases with the truth-value assignments made by NT when those speakers are keyed in to the fact that Kierkegaard wrote under the alias “Johannes Climacus”. If, as a matter of fact, Soren Kierkegaard is Johannes Climacus, then (S3) and (S4) will always be true together according to both ordinary speakers and NT. This is not the case with the extension of NT to propositional attitude ascriptions. Most ordinary speakers claim that sentences (S1) and (S2) can differ in truth value and so they see no reason to suppose that someone who thinks Soren Kierkegaard is Soren Kierkegaard must also believe

that Soren Kierkegaard is Johannes Climacus. NTPA obviously cannot allow such truth-value discrepancies, since no aspect of the theory licenses the discrepancies. While the NT theorist can claim that ordinary speakers' notion of information diverges from the theoretical notion of *semantic* information, it cannot be argued that ordinary speakers' notion of truth-value is different from its theoretical analogue. The issue of informativeness and cognitive significance then applies equally to propositional attitude reports too, the special problem being the truth-value assignment discrepancies. Of course, it will be readily apparent that ordinary speakers might think that the truth-values of (S2) and (S1) can diverge simply because they take (S3) to be informative while they take (S4) to be trivial. This is part of the NT proponent's motivation for accepting NTPA. However, the matter is not so simply put aside. As Salmon admits, the intuitions that (S1) can be false while (S2) is true are "strong and universal". (Salmon, 1990, pg.16) This is not to say that NTPA is less adequate than NT, but only that the NTPA proponent needs to offer a reply that does not rely solely on the distinction between ordinary speakers' notion of information and the notion of semantic information that NT takes as relevant. Salmon in fact claims that such intuitions regarding the truth values of statements like (S1) and (S2) can hold even in linguistic communities where Millianism is *assumed to be true* by the members of the linguistic community. Ordinary speakers then are working with a particular understanding of what is involved in believing, desiring, etc, and this understanding motivates their views regarding the truth-values of attitude

ascribing sentences. This is a sufficient reason for thinking that intuitions regarding the truth-values of belief reports hinge crucially on issues specific to attitude ascriptions, and thereby that an analysis of the belief relation needs to factor into any plausible account aimed at explaining away ordinary speakers' intuitions regarding the truth-value of belief reports.

II.3 How NTPA Works

Let us begin by inquiring into the analysis of the belief-relation that proponents of NTPA have put forth. According to these theorists, as mentioned, the term 'believes' expresses a binary relation that holds between a believer and the object of his/her belief, a proposition. However, the analysis of the belief relation proceeds as follows: The binary belief relation is "the existential generalization of a ternary relation, BEL, among believers, propositions, and some third type of entity." (Salmon, 1990, pg. 16) Let us see how this works by focusing on belief reports which do not have the extra complexity of involving beliefs concerning identity. Consider then the following belief report:

(S5) Thomas believes that Johannes Climacus wrote *Fear and Trembling*.

which semantically encodes the singular proposition

(P2) <Thomas, *believing*, <Johannes Climacus, *writing*, *Fear and Trembling*>>

According to Salmon then, the believing relation holding between Thomas and the singular proposition is the existential generalization of the following relation:

(P3) <Thomas, *BEL*, <Johannes Climacus, *writing*, Fear and Trembling>, m>

The third relata, m, specifies the way in which Thomas thinks of the object of belief. So m is understood as a way of thinking, or a mode of presentation, or a sentential guise under which the believer would assent to the proposition. What exactly these suggestions come to will be discussed shortly.

It is crucial to note that the relation of believing in (P2), being an existential generalization of (P3), does not itself make reference to any *particular* mode of presentation. It is also crucial to note that, since (P2) is arrived at through existential generalization from (P3), there *must* be some specific way in which Thomas thinks of the proposition in question. It is because there is such a mode of presentation that (P2) and thereby (S5) can be said to be true. So (P3) is a truth-maker for (S5): Thomas is belief-related to the singular proposition *because* Thomas is BEL-related to that proposition in some suitable way, or by means of some suitable mode of presentation of that proposition. (S5) will be true *iff* there is at least one available mode of presentation m under which Thomas believes what (S5) says he does.

NTPA proponents have been less than clear in specifying exactly what these third relata are that figure in their analyses of the belief-relation. Calling them modes of presentation does not help very much either, since this does not even tell us whether these modes of presentation are linguistic or psychological in

nature.[2] Nevertheless, they ought to be understood as psychological in nature, since they are also described by Salmon and others as ways of thinking about propositions. Their definition or specification in the writings of the NT theorists is almost entirely functionalist.[3] Salmon claims that "modes of presentation are such that, if a fully rational believer adopts conflicting attitudes (such as belief and disbelief, or belief and suspension of judgment) towards propositions p and q, then the believer must take p and q in different ways … even if p and q are the same proposition." (Salmon, 1990, pg. 16) No substantive claim is being made as to what it is that fills the functional role described. What then are the identity conditions on being a mode of presentation? For Salmon, modes of presentation are specified by a function *f* which singles out some English sentence which the believer would assent to if it were presented to him, and whose semantic content is the proposition the believer believes. *Mutatis mutandis* for other propositional attitudes that the agent holds. (S1) and (S2) are always true or false together because, as long as the believer has at least one way of thinking or mode of presenting the proposition under which he believes it, this suffices to render (P3) true. The truth of (P3) then guarantees the truth of any sentence which expresses that proposition.

Other authors (Braun, 1998) offer a slightly more fleshed out, although

[2] See Recanati (1993), chapter 4, for elaboration on this distinction.

[3] See Schiffer (1992), for some possible candidates as to what modes of presentation may be.

still functionalist, description of modes of presentation: For someone to believe a proposition in a certain way is for that person to have a token of a mental sentence in their belief box, and for this mental sentence to have the proposition in question as its representational content. A mental sentence S being in one's belief box here means that S has a place in the believer's cognitive economy such that it can be employed in further reasoning, practical or otherwise, and is so connected with other states that it can cause the believer to assent to or express a natural language utterance of a sentence which has as semantic content the very proposition that is the representational content of S. This way of understanding modes of presentation or ways of believing is tied to the hypothesis of the Language of Thought (LOT, for short). Mental sentences, on that hypothesis are structured mental representations, and these mental representations have propositions as their objects of representation in virtue of nomic correlations that exist between the instantiation of those propositions and the tokening of the corresponding mental representations. As before, a believer can believe some proposition by having a token of some sentence in his/her belief box whose representational content is that proposition, regardless of which type of mental sentence it is that actually gets tokened.

The view that there is a distinction between what is believed (the propositional content) and how it is believed (the mode of presentation) allows the NTPA proponent to explain how it is possible for two distinct belief reports,

(S5) Thomas believes that Johannes Climacus wrote *Fear and Trembling*.

(S6) Thomas believes that Soren Kierkegaard wrote *Fear and Trembling*.

to be understood as *saying the same thing*: By marking a clear distinction between the *how* of belief and the *what* of belief, it is open to NTPA's proponent to claim that (S5) and (S6) say the same thing in the sense that their 'that'-clauses refer to one and the same proposition. This being achieved, the proponent of the theory can claim that the task of a semantics for propositional attitude ascriptions is restricted to specifying what (propositions) people believe, not to specifying how those people believe what they do. The further issue of *how* the proposition expressed by a 'that'-clause is believed is only psychologically or pragmatically, not semantically relevant on this picture.

Aside from its simplicity and capacity to respond coherently to such arguments, NTPA is also motivated by some intuitions of a more theoretical nature. NTPA coupled with the picture of the metaphysics of belief discussed above allows for the possibility of respecting a principle that many theorists find respectable, known as the principle of "Semantic Innocence".[4] Here's a statement of the principle:

> **Semantic Innocence (SI)**: "The utterances of the embedded sentences in belief reports express just the propositions they would if not embedded, and these

[4] See Graham Oppy for a dissenting opinion on this score. (Oppy, 1992)

> propositions are contents of the ascribed beliefs." (Crimmins and Perry, 1989, p. 686)

According to **SI**, a semantic theory should not treat sentences embedded in 'that'-clauses any differently than it treats them when they occur outside of such embeddings. This principle seems quite natural. It makes it reasonable, *ceteris paribus*, to prefer referential theories to Fregean ones, that is, to theories which attempt to salvage ordinary folks' intuitions regarding truth-value assignments by incorporating modes of presentation into the semantic contents of 'that'-clauses. Clearly such versions of Fregeanism depart from semantic innocence, and NTPA takes this departure to be unmotivated, relying as it does on a pretheoretic notion of meaning that is insensitive to the semantics/pragmatics distinction. Of course, one might still have good grounds for insisting that NTPA is inadequate if the binary treatment of the belief-relation is unmotivated. However, appealing to the notion that the binary belief relation is a generalization of the BEL relation seems to partially alleviate such worries.

Also working in the NTPA's favour is evidence that there are cases when the name used in a belief-report is not a name possessed by the believer, and yet the belief-report seems to be unproblematically true. Here is one example: Bob is an avid fan of Mark Twain's novels and makes it a point to share this with his friends. Bob is unaware that 'Mark Twain' is the pen-name of Samuel Clemens, nor has he ever heard the name 'Samuel Clemens'. I think the following belief-report made by one of Bob's friends is unproblematic:

(S7) Bob believes that Samuel Clemens is a great writer.

Such a report is not unusual especially if Bob's friends have a knack for calling authors by their names rather than their pennames. Our intuitions regarding the truth of (S7) will however be affected if we are told that Bob is also acquainted with Samuel Clemens, under that very name, and fails to realize that the person he is acquainted with is the author. Let's say Samuel Clemens is his neighbour. The report becomes problematic because 'Samuel Clemens' seems no longer to be functioning *merely as a label* for an individual in the report, *regardless of how Bob thinks of that individual*. In the modified scenario Bob might be said to falsely think that the author Twain lives in Sacramento, though it seems much more implausible to say that he falsely thinks that Clemens lives in Sacramento. Bob's cognitive states towards the individual are inferentially insulated from one another. Where does Bob believe that Twain/Clemens lives? He believes that he lives in Sacramento and, independently, believes that he lives next door.

With respect to this modified case, as with the other cases we've been considering, ordinary folks have a tendency to be sensitive to contextual factors when evaluating reports, and this leads to the truth-value discrepancy problem for NTPA. In order to come to grips with the folk conception of belief reports, and so with what the folk treat as contextually relevant factors, it is crucial to understand precisely how the original case involving Bob's possession of one name for Twain differs from the modified case involving Bob's possession of two names.

We should first note that in moving from the original case to the modified case nothing whatsoever was changed about the speaker, nor the utterance of (S8). What has changed are certain facts about the world, and in particular facts pertaining to Bob's cognition. Yet *prima facie* these are not facts which have any bearing on Bob's original state of believing that Clemens/Twain is a great author, given the inferential insulation. We can imagine that the modifications do not affect either the qualitative aspect of Bob's belief-state (its phenomenology) nor the content-bearing properties of that state. Rather, Bob's doxastic repertoire has been expanded so that he now also believes, quite independently, that he has a neighbour whose name is "Samuel Clemens".

The relevant difference in moving from the first scenario to the second seems to be that we have moved from a scenario in which the way Bob thinks of Twain is irrelevant for the purpose of conversation to a scenario in which it is relevant. The reason the name employed makes a difference in the second scenario is that there is no longer just one set of relevant cognitive facts about Bob and his relation to the individual, Clemens. Since the object of all of Bob's belief-states is one and the same, that object can no longer serve the purpose of distinguishing which of Bob's states are under discussion when statements like (S7) or (S8) bellow are uttered.

(S8) Bob believes that Mark Twain is a great writer.

Many theorists mark a distinction between two different readings of a

belief report, under the labels *de dicto* and *de re*. On the *de dicto* reading, the belief report claims that the mental sentence #I am talking to Superman# is in Lois's belief-box. On this reading, the way in which Lois believes what she does must correspond to how it is stated in the 'that'-clause, i.e. she must endorse the way it is stated. On the *de re* interpretation, there is no endorsement constraint. When the *de re* reading is salient, it is said that Lois believes *of Superman* that he is nearby. This suggests that the distinction is between a relational (de re) and a non-relational (de dicto) reading.

Recanati has challenged this conception, arguing that it does not apply to the kinds of reports we have been considering. (Recanati, 2000) His dissent can be very simply stated as follows: Singular terms occurring in such reports are *always* exportable. He explains:

"From:

John believes that t is F

We can always go to

John believes of t that it is F

And, through existential generalization, to

$(\exists x)(B_J(F)x)$." (Recanati, 2000, pg.262)

This works for all belief reports containing singular terms unless, contrary to Semantic Innocence, we take the singular term occurring in 'that'-clauses itself to

refer to something other than the object that bears the name. This follows from what Recanati takes to be the criterion of singularity:

(SIN) A belief (or a statement) is singular iff:

There is an x such that the belief (or the statement) is true iff …x… (Recanati, 2000, pg.256)

Recanati concludes that *only relational (de re)* readings are available for belief reports whose 'that'-clauses contain singular terms.

Is there no application for the de re / de dicto distinction to the reports about Lois and Bob? Recanati thinks there is. While the distinction understood as just discussed cannot be appealed to, he claims that there is a distinction between transparent and opaque readings of the reports. On the opaque reading, the name employed in the 'that'-clause is "ascribed to the believer". (Recanati, 200, pg.266) On the transparent reading, no such added ascription is made.

Importantly, Recanati emphasizes that the transparent-opaque distinction is orthogonal to the relational-non-relational distinction. A report like (S8), on an opaque reading, still relates the believer to the individual their belief is about. However, on the opaque reading, more is being reported than this relation to a singular proposition since the report *also* tells us that Bob is thinking of Clemens *as Clemens*. (Recanati, 2000, pg.267) As such, a belief report's being relational does not entail its being transparent.

NTPA proponents agree with Recanati that belief reports like the above are exclusively relational, however they deny that the transparent-opaque distinction is a semantic distinction. Only transparent readings are available from a semantic point of view, on the NTPA picture. In the same way that distinctions of informativeness or cognitive significance are treated as pragmatically or psychological relevant, yet without semantic import, so too with opaque readings of reports.

Let's return to the folk and the specificities of their conception of belief. Consider the predicament of Lois Lane who mistakenly believes that her co-worker Clark Kent is a different person from the local superhero named "Superman" with whom she is in love. Assume that Lois and Clark are sitting together, talking, in a coffee shop. It seems that it would be perfectly true to say that Lois believes that she is talking to Clark, yet counterintuitive to say that Lois believes she is talking to Superman. Despite the fact that people are aware that Clark and Superman are one and the same person, this has no effect on their evaluations, which provides strong grounds for thinking that language users take 'believes' to refer to the BEL relation. On this conception, Lois believes that she's talking to him in one way, but fails to believe that she's talking to him in another way.

Is there anything more that can be said about the truth-value discrepancy? One concern might be that, under NTPA, it becomes impossible

even to state negative cognitive facts about someone in Lois's situation. To see this more clearly, consider that NTPA is committed to the truth of the following trio:

a. There is a way in which Lois believes that Superman is Clark Kent.

b. There is a way in which Lois doesn't believe that Superman is Clark Kent.

c. Lois believes that Superman is Clark Kent.

This reveals a bias, on the NTPA picture, towards taking positive BEL-propositions to entail positive believes-propositions, and denying that negative BEL-propositions might equally entail negative believes-propositions. Call this phenomenon Bias Against Negation (henceforth BAN). BAN is a logical consequence of the view that beliefs are existential generalization of BELiefs because (a) is a truth-maker for (c) on that view.

Ordinary language users reject BAN even, as Salmon mentions, if they are committed Millians. In fact the folk consistently infer from (b) to (d):

d. Lois doesn't believe that Superman is Clark Kent.

I submit that the reason the inference from (a) to (d) is compelling (and not just on the folk conception) is that, in the context being discussed, (b) is decisively more relevant than (a). It is decisively more relevant because (a) makes such a weak and unusual claim about Lois that it would hardly be either assumed or made

explicit in conversation. Doesn't this mean that the truth-value discrepancy problem is due to a conflation of semantics with pragmatics?

Say Lois has just recently discovered Superman's secret identity and our speaker knows of her discovery. When we hear the sentence again we feel a great weight lifted off our shoulders: She really believes (fully and without complications) that she's talking to Superman. There is no longer any intuitive pull to deny the truth of the assertion. Prior to our hearing of her discovery, an assessment of the sentence (a) requires (at least) an inference from the fact that Clark Kent is Superman and the fact that the way in which Lois grasps this fact is irrelevant to (a) to the conclusion that (a) can be true. This is not required after learning of her discovery.

The worry that has been at the heart of the last few paragraphs can be put succinctly as follows: What is counterintuitive about NTPA is that its truth-value assignments for belief reports involve a certain level of arbitrariness. Cases involving a difference in names, as with (1) and (2), do not turn out to be essential to this problem. The same problem arises when considering Kripke's Paderewski cases. (Kripke, 1976) Modifying the original example, let's say Peter is an extremely finicky critic. Peter goes to piano recitals on different days and comes to believe of the same individual that he is musically talented under one way of thinking of him, when he sees him play Mozart and comes to believe that he is musically hopeless when seeing him play Schubert on another day, without

realizing he has witnessed the same performer. Peter's friend Paul who had joined Peter to the recitals later tells an acquaintance:

(S9) Peter believes that Paderewski is a talented musician.

This statement is true according to NTPA. From knowing about the occurrences at the Mozart recital, (S9) seems to capture something accurate about Paderewski. However, from knowing about the occurrences at the at both the Mozart and Schubert recital, (S9) seems to be a poor candidate for capturing something accurate about Paderewski. The existential generalization account has the effect that it accords truth to a sentence about Peter's cognition on the basis of one insulated cognitive fact among others, some of which (the negative BEL-proposition, for example) counter its accuracy. This problem generalizes to the Lois case and the modified Bob case, among many others.

II.4 Explaining the Intuitions

NTPA theorists have been explaining away people's intuitions regarding the truth-values of belief reports in two main ways, which correspond to the two ways of explaining ordinary folk's intuitions regarding informativeness. The first way is by appeal to pragmatics, the second is by appeal to psychology.

II.4.a Salmon's Pragmatic Account

Salmon attempts to respond to the truth-value discrepancy problem by showing that while sentences such as (S10) and (S11) below cannot be true

together, ordinary speakers' intuitions can be explained as directed at propositions which these sentence pragmatically convey.

(S10) Lois believes that Superman can fly.

(S11) Lois disbelieves that Clark Kent can fly.

According to Salmon, there are two distinct ways of understanding "disbelieves" as it occurs in (S11). It may mean that Lois *does not believe* the proposition, or it may mean that she *withholds belief from* the proposition. For Lois to withhold belief from the proposition just means that there is some specific mode of presentation *m* under which Lois does not believe the proposition. For Lois not to believe the proposition means that that there is *no mode of presentation* whatsoever under which she believes the proposition. (Salmon, 1991, page.17)

Under the former interpretation, (S11) is plainly false according to Salmon; under the latter (S11) is true. As such, (S11) either fails to count as a premise in the argument because it is false, or it counts but fails to render (S10) and (S11) as ascribing incompatible attitudes to Lois, so the rationality principle has no application in the case at hand: Believing and withholding belief are compatible attitudes if Lois employs suitably different modes of presentation of Clark/Superman. However, although (S11) can be interpreted as meaning that Lois withholds belief, (S11) literally says that she does not believe, so (S11) is simply false. This is a pragmatic solution to the argument because it appeals to the

distinction between not believing and withholding belief in order to claim that in uttering (S11) a speaker literally says something false, while conveying something true, namely the following implicature:

(S12) Lois withholds belief from the proposition that Clark Kent can fly.

This rendition of the Salmon implicature is Jennifer Saul's. (Saul, 1998, pg.386) Saul claims (rightly, to my knowledge) that Salmon does not offer any detailed account of what is pragmatically communicated by a speaker in uttering (S10) and (S11), so I will simply discuss Saul's more detailed proposal. The point of the pragmatic strategy is to argue that (S11) is literally false, even though the speaker's utterance of (S11) conveys the true (S12) which is an implicature of it. It is the truth of this implicature that leads ordinary folk to think that (S11) itself is true when it is not.

The pragmatic strategy has its own problems however. The most obvious problem is that it does not seem very likely that understanding the truth-conditions of (S11) requires hearers to grasp (S12). Ordinary folk most likely do not make the distinction between not believing and withholding belief which is required for the pragmatic explanation. Saul thinks that this problem can be overcome if we replace (S12) with

(S13) Lois does not believe that Clark Kent can fly under a guise similar to 'Clark Kent can fly'. (Saul, 1998, pg. 386)

Presumably by (S13) Saul means that Lois does not believe of Clark Kent that he can fly while thinking of him under a Clark Kent-ish guise. This is essentially an opaque reading of (S11), in Recanati's sense. This proposition is true because the relevant guise which a speaker who utters (S11) elicits is not the guise under which Lois believes that Kent can fly. For Saul the expression 'similar to' needs to be construed as having a contextually varying content. What counts as similar in one set of contexts need not count as similar in another set. (Saul, 1998, pg.389) What is the expression sensitive to? It is sensitive to what the speaker takes to be an appropriate guise for the purpose of his or her utterance. Saul's account of the pragmatics is speaker-oriented, that is it aims to be faithful to the communicative intentions of the speaker.

It is unclear however that Saul's proposal is much of an improvement over Salmon's with regard to the problem mentioned. On her picture ordinary folk do not need to distinguish not believing from withholding belief, but they nevertheless still need to think about the guises which speakers elicit, and similarity relations between guises. This does not seem to be less implausible than the original proposal. She acknowledges this in the penultimate footnote to her paper, yet she claims that no simpler approach to getting the intuitive truth-values of the belief-reports can manage the task. No other approach meets the desiderata required for explaining ordinary folk intuitions about belief-reports: "Unless the implicated proposition has truth conditions which seem, intuitively, to be those of the belief report, our intuitions about that belief report are not explained." (Saul,

1998, pg.383)

Pragmatic approaches attempt to capture what speakers intend to communicate to their hearers. They do so by marking a split between the propositions semantically encoded by the sentences speakers utter and the richer propositions that are communicated by speakers to hearers. We have just examined one way in which the distinction between semantic and pragmatic information might be thought to allow us to remedy the problem of truth-value discrepancies.

There are of course other ways in which one might appeal to the semantics-pragmatic distinction to explain intuitions. In his (2002), for example, Soames argues that multiple descriptive propositions, varying in descriptive information are communicated by speakers uttering (S10) and (S11). By uttering (S10) a speaker might, for example, assert or convey in one context the propositions expressed by the following sentences, only the first of which is the singular proposition semantically expressed:

(S10) Lois believes that Superman can fly.

(S10a) Lois believes that Superman, the person she is in love with, can fly.

(S10b) Lois believes that Superman, the local superhero, can fly.

Likewise, by uttering (S11) as speaker might assert or convey in one context the propositions expressed by the following sentences, only the first of which is

semantically expressed:

(S14) Lois believes that Clark Kent can fly.

(S14a) Lois believes that Clark Kent, the timid reporter, can fly.

(S14b) Lois believes that Superman, her co-worker, can fly.

Intuitions over the truth of (S14) are affected by whether the hearer of the utterance of (S14) thinks that these propositions obtain, in particular whether they think such propositions obtain when the descriptions in (S14a) and (S14b) are read opaquely as ones Lois endorses. Similar consideration apply to (S10). These propositions, unlike the candidates considered above from Saul, do not make reference to guises, so do not incur the problems that such reference raised.

As Braun (2002) has argued however, hearers can take such propositions in different ways or represent them by means of distinct modes of presentation and still arrive at the conclusion that (S10) is true as well as its negation. It doesn't seem that speakers need to be aware of the kinds of enriched descriptive propositions that utterances of (S10) and (S14) convey in order for us to explain their truth-evaluations. (Braun, 2002, pg.79) So the appeal to descriptive propositions does not seem necessary for an explanation of the relevant truth-value intuitions. Nor, Braun claims, is the appeal to such descriptive propositions sufficient. (Braun, 2002, pg.76) A hearer of the utterances of (S10) and (S14) may be confused and have two distinct modes of presentation of Lois.

The hearer might associate the descriptive information conveyed by those utterances with what they take to be distinct individuals. That is they may take the descriptive information conveyed by (S11) to convey descriptive information regarding Lois when they think of her under one mode of presentation m1, and they may take the descriptive information conveyed by (S10) to convey descriptive information regarding Lois when they think of her under the suitably different mode of presentation m2. In such a situation the hearer may well take (S10) and (S14) not to differ in truth value, even though they take the descriptive information in (S10a), (S10b), (S14a) and (S14b) to be part of the content of (S10) and (S14).

The failure of necessity and sufficiency counts strongly against pragmatic explanation approaches, like Soames's. Braun claims that the pragmatic explanation proponent may choose to modify the account so that the hearer is required to believe the partially descriptive propositions *in the right way*. However, there is no reason, according to Braun, to prefer such an amended account to one that explains intuitions simply in terms of differences among hearers pertaining to how they represent the referents of the names as they occur in the propositions *semantically expressed* by sentences like (S10) and (S14). Let's turn now to Braun's own account which aims to do just that.

II.4.b The psychological approach:

Braun (1998, 2002, 2006) sets up his explanatory strategy in response to precisely

the same argument discussed in chapter one concerning cognitive significance:

Argument: *A Problem with Resistance to Substitution in Belief Reports for NR*

a. There is a rational agent who understands (10) and (14), and believes that (10) is true and (14) is false.

b. If a rational agent understands (10) and (14), and believes that (10) is true and (14) is false, then he believes the proposition expressed by (10) and the negation of the proposition expressed by (14).

c. Therefore, there is a rational agent who believes the proposition expressed by (10) and the negation of the proposition expressed by (14).

d. If NR is true, then (10) expresses the same proposition as (14).

e. Therefore, if NR is true, then there is a rational agent who believes the proposition expressed by (10) and the negation of that very same proposition.

f. No rational agent believes a proposition and its negation.

g. Therefore, NR is not true. (Braun, 2002, pg.73-74)

Braun takes this argument to capture the essence of the problem of truth-value discrepancy, and according to him the argument can be defused without appealing to pragmatics. We can do so, by rejecting (f) and providing an explanation of how

it might be that a person can believe both the propositions expressed by (S10) and the negation of (S14) while still being rational.

A person can believe the propositions expressed by (S10) and the negation of (S14). One way this can happen is that our protagonist, call him Tom, hears (S10) and the negation of (S14) uttered by someone whom Tom trusts. On that basis Tom can come to have the following two mental sentences in his belief-box:

(MS1) #Lois believes that Superman can fly#

(MS2) #Lois does not believe that Clark Kent can fly#

These sentences are formally distinguishable internal mirror images of (S10) and the negation of (S14). Since, as discussed in chapter 1, such sentences contain distinct mental terms for Superman/Clark, Tom can believe that both of these sentences are true without recognizing that they ascribe to Lois incompatible attitudes towards one and the same proposition. (Braun, 2002, pg.74) Similar consideration apply if, instead of hearing them from a source he takes to be dependable, Tom forms those beliefs on the basis of hearing Lois tell him sincerely that that's what she thinks.

This explanation of how Tom might come to believe the propositions expressed by (S11) and the negation of (S14) makes a good case against premise (f) of Braun's argument above. However, it may be thought that the argument doesn't generalize. Consider for example a modification of the example whereby

everything else remains as is, yet Tom also (independently) knows that Superman is Clark Kent. In such a case, Tom would have the following mental sentence in his belief box:

(MS3) #Clark Kent is Superman#

But, it might be thought, having (MS3), (MS2) & (MS1) in his belief box would make Tom *irrational*, so NTPA is false after all.

Braun considers this type of scenario and replies to it in his article, "Illogical, but Rational". (Braun, 2006) There, Braun claims that it is illogical for Tom to hold this belief trio under NTPA, since those mental sentences jointly entail a contradiction. If Tom believes (MS3) then he should be able to infer that Lois cannot both believe and disbelieve that Superman/Clark can fly as (MS1) and (MS2) say.

It would only be irrational for Tom to hold those beliefs if he had grounds for accepting NTPA. As Braun suggests, Tom may be under the spell of a Fregean or Neo-Fregean theory of attitude ascriptions that does not take the names in (S10) and (S14) to refer to their customary referents. While such theories are false according to NTPA, they can provide rational grounds for believing (MS1), (MS2) and (MS3). (Braun, 2006) All people who believe that this trio of sentences can all be true are similarly illogical. While it is problematic to claim that that all ordinary language users (and many philosophers of language) are irrational, it is apparently not problematic that all of these people are being

illogical. The semantic requirements for understanding language are not transparent.

Unlike the case with pragmatic accounts, where the folk are at least taken to be consistent as the level of communication, because at that level they express BEL-propositions rather than belief-propositions, or in the case of negative reports they express a relation that differs from outright not-believing, on Brauns's psychological approach the folk are outright inconsistent in all the relevant ways. So, whereas on the pragmatic account the folk say inconsistent things in the process of communicating consistent things, on Braun's account there is nothing except inconsistency. This is true both with regard to attitude ascriptions and simple sentences. For Braun, when someone says "Superman is Clark Kent" or "Climacus is Kierkegaard", the information they convey is entirely trivial as we have seen in chapter 1.

It is also not clear that the psychological account offers a more plausible way to come to grips with the problems discussed earlier by reference to the Peter and Paderewski case. The problem has to do with the fact that BEL-iefs are insulated while belief-ascriptions are direct at agents themselves as unities rather than specific cognitive states taken in isolation. Consider, for example, that Lois has an appointment with Superman that she's looking forward to. She waits for him in a coffee shop while Clark Kent is keeping her company. He's running late. Knowing this we can make the following ascription:

(S15) Lois believes that Superman is running late.

In the circumstances ordinary language users also feel they can make the following ascription:

(S16) Lois doesn't believe that Clark Kent is running late.

While NTPA claims that (S16) is false, ordinary language users take it to be supported by the obvious fact that Lois is talking to Kent. Their intuitions regarding the situation can be explained away using the model that Braun provides. However (S16) clearly captures something about what's going on with Lois. The problem can be re-described in terms of desire rather than belief as well:

(S17) Lois wants Superman to be there.

(S18) Lois doesn't want Clark Kent to be there.

The sentences literally accord to the following propositions, if we abstract from the location and time parameters:

(P4) <Lois, wanting, <Superman/Kent, being-there>>

(P5) ~ <Lois, wanting, <Superman/Kent, being-there>>

The NTPA defender would object here that we cannot truly say that Lois does not want Clark Kent to be there, because she also wants *him* to be there. Their

opponent has as much reason to object: Can we say that Lois wants Superman to be there even though she strongly does not want him there in another way? The NTPA proponent can reply that (thought of under a certain guise) she wants him there. But then we can reply that this is not what (S18) actually claims. (S18) *literally just expresses* (P5), and (P5) does not separate guises at all. A stalemate is reached, at least in terms of having a satisfying explanation of intuitions.

As we have seen, NTPA is at odds with ordinary folk-intuitions regarding the truth-values of belief reports. Despite the appeal of the various ingenious ways NTPA theorists have advanced to explain away those intuitions, and despite the fact that NTPA does not seem to be a theory which is internally inconsistent, many theorists find the idea that ordinary people could be so systematically wrong in their assessments of belief reports a serious drawback of the semantic theory. The modes of presentation will be relevant on an alternate picture, a picture where we intend to capture something other than Lois's relation to a singular proposition, a picture on which belief-reports generally report states of agents that are more specific than their relations to such singular propositions. This will be at the center of next two chapters' discussion. The motivation for NTPA (in the face of the incredible amount of counter-intuitions) is that those elements which (allegedly) are responsible for the specificities of belief-reporting are not part of the surface structure of belief-reporting sentences like the ones we've been considering. However, the issue hinges I would argue on how terms like 'believes' and 'desires' actually work, since these are folk-psychological notions.

CHAPTER III – Standard Contextualisms

Last chapter we examined the NTPA account, problems that have been raised against it, and the standard approaches developed to resolving those problems. Those approaches, employing pragmatic and psychological strategies, attempt to explain away the problematic intuitions of ordinary language users in different ways. Pragmatic approaches do so by claiming that, in making reports, speakers communicate information that is not semantically encoded in the reports themselves. This extra-semantic information is mistaken for semantic information and, as a result, intrudes in the process of semantic evaluation. Psychological approaches do so by claiming that the mistaken intuitions are a result of non-semantic psychological aspects of how our minds process information intruding into the process of semantic evaluation: We interpret that-clauses partially on the basis of the inferential history of the mental representations we employ to represent the linguistic items they contain.

Pragmatic approaches claim that speakers communicate true propositions. Psychological approaches claim that no true propositions are communicated by speakers in the troubling cases we have been considering. This is a very significant difference between the approaches, and there are others. For instance, on the pragmatic approach speakers' and hearers' communicative intentions are satisfied at some level of the communicative exchange. On the psychological approach the hearer internalizes the false sentences which the

speaker utters; yet, unless speaker and hearer share the same conception of the subject they are discussing, it's entirely mysterious how and if people ever understand what others wish to communicate by saying the things they do.

This chapter will focus on a different set of approaches to the problems of substitution and truth-value discrepancies. These approaches are all contextualist, bringing extra-semantic features of the context of utterance to bear on the semantic evaluation of belief-reports. The first section will discuss contextualism. In the second and third sections two of the main contextualist contenders are discussed and evaluated. In the fourth section an alternative contextualist approach is developed and it is argued that the approach is more reasonable than the other versions of contextualism. Grounds are offered for preferring a contextualist treatment of belief-reports to a minimalist (non-contextualist) treatment.

III.1 Contextualism vs. Minimalism

The terms Contextualism and Minimalism refer to positions regarding the proper delineation of semantics and pragmatics. In fact these terms refer to families of such positions. Minimalist positions have in common the claim that very few linguistic expressions (indexicals and demonstratives chiefly) require contextual interpretation. Contextualist positions claim that more contextual interpretation is required than the minimalist allows. It's difficult to state much more clearly how these positions differ without misconstruing one or the other

camps in the process. As Korta and Perry note, Contextualists feel that they are in the minority, while Minimalists feel that the exact opposite is the case. (Korta and Perry, 2007)

The origin of the minimalist conception of semantics is surely the attempts by Frege, Russell and others to formalize the semantics of various logical languages. Within these artificial formal languages, every expression is assigned a definite meaning. The minimalist programme attempts to treat natural language in the same way. The background motivation is a systematicity principle which can be stated as follows:

(SYS) If a systematic semantics for natural language is to be possible, this requires restricting the dependence of semantics on pragmatics as much as possible.

The idea here is that lesser reliance on pragmatics entails greater systematicity. If semantic evaluation of a sentence required for example attending to differences in the communicative intentions of speakers, then prima facie one could not capture the meaning of semantic expressions, unless one could capture the variation in intentions. But communicative intentions are not systematic, so semantics would itself turn out to be unsystematic. The variety of Minimalist positions reflects differing opinions as to how much of a departure from pragmatics *is possible*.

Contextualism comes in two main varieties, moderate and radical. Moderate contextualists argue that there is more context-dependence than

minimalism allows for, yet the context dependence is itself systematic. While the minimalist holds that there is a small Basic Set of context-dependent expressions, including such obvious candidates as “here”, “now”, “I”, “you”, “that”, the moderate contextualist argues the list ought to be expanded to include other categories as well, for example, gradal adjectives or epistemic terms, “knows” or “believes”, etc. Contextualists about “knows” claim that the meaning of the term varies with such contextual factors as stakes, and that the truth-conditions of knowledge-ascriptions should be sensitive to such contextual variations. Contextualists about “believes” claim that pragmatic processing needs to precede semantic evaluation because the term itself is sensitive to features either of the believer’s or the ascriber’s context. According to the minimalist, (1) there is a slippery slope leading from the moderate to the radical variety of contextualism, and (2) radical contextualism is incoherent. (Cappelen & Lepore, 2005)

Radical Contextualists hold that the (SYS) entailment supports the conclusion that systematic semantics is impossible. For these theorists there are no minimal extensions of the Basic Set of expressions which are context-dependent; contextual interpretation is required for most expressions on this view, even if we have to give up on the possibility of a systematic theory of meaning.

How does all of this bear on the Naïve Theory? The Naïve Theory presupposes the systematicity of semantics. As it was noted back in chapter one,

Salmon, one of the chief representatives of the naïve theory, argues for a conception of semantics that renders meaning non-transparent, thereby allowing ordinary speakers' understanding of expressions to diverge systematically (sometimes wildly) from what expressions actually mean. This allows the naïve theory proponent to claim that ordinary speaker's intuitions are not relevant to semantic evaluation. This conception of semantics can be construed as a version of minimalism: Semantic evaluation is not responsive to contextual features such as communicative intentions.

Extensions of the Naïve theory to cover propositional attitudes also take attitude reports to be insensitive to contextual differences, chalking up differences in cognitive import to pragmatic or psychological features that have no bearing on semantic evaluation.

I turn now to considering two of the main contextualist accounts that have been developed to handle the problem of truth-value discrepancy. Both of these accounts fit in the moderate contextualism category, proposing minimal extensions of Naive semantics.

III.2 Richard's Translationalism

In his 1990 book, *Propositional Attitudes*, Mark Richard put forward a contextualist account of the semantics of attitude ascriptions. This account is best articulated by appealing to the boxological picture of the mind discussed last chapter. According to the account, sentences such as (0) and (1) can differ in

truth-value, and whether they do depends on whether they are adequate translations of the believer's thoughts.

(0) Bob believes that Mark Twain is a good author.

(1) Bob believes that Sam Clemens is a good author.

Belief ascriptions such as these are about the psychological states of believers. The 'that'-clauses of both (0) and (1) specify the same Russellian proposition, just as on NTPA, however they also do more: The words making up the 'that'-clauses *also* translate mental sentences in the believer's belief-box. For a belief-report to be true, the believer must believe the content of the 'that'-clause and must believe it by tokening a mental sentence of which the 'that'-clause is an accurate translation.

In different contexts there are different constraints on what counts as an accurate translation. How are these constraints determined? According to Richard, the constraints "…are keyed to individuals, and arise (in part) as a result of our interests in and attention to the ways in which believers represent individuals in thought and express thoughts in public." (Richard, 1995, pg.126) The constraints in place in a given context C determine which translations are in play in the context. A few details of how this works are in order.

(a) For any context, there is a translation manual, *f*, which is the set of functions from expressions and their semantic contents to believers' mental representations

and their semantic contents.

(b) ‘Believes’ is an indexical expression whose value in a context is a relation B(u, f, p) holding between a believer, u, a translation manual, f, and a RAM p.

(c) RAMs (Russellian Annotated Matrices) are pairings of structured mental representations and their structured Russellian propositional contents.

(d) A belief report will be true in a context C iff the ‘that’-clause semantically encodes a singular Rusellian proposition which corresponds to one of the things the believer believes, and the translation manual that maps pairings of that-clauses and their contents onto pairings of mental sentences and their contents conforms to the restrictions that are in play in the context.

(Richard, 1993, pg.124-126)

Consider the example sentences above. Say that (0) is uttered in a context C.

We can state the ‘that’-clause in terms of the following RAM:

RAM1: << ‘Mark Twain’, Mark Twain>, <‘is a good author’, *being a good author*>>

This RAM is a pairing of the constituents of the ‘that’-clause of (0) and their Russellian contents. The belief report (0) requires that RAM1 translates one of Bob’s thoughts, which can be described as RAM2:

RAM2: <<#Mark Twain#, Mark Twain>, <#is a good author#, *being a good author*>> (Note #'s are used to signal that the quoted expressions are mental representations)

If RAM1 does translate RAM2 in C, and furthermore there are no restrictions in C prohibiting RAM1 from counting as an adequate translation of RAM2, then the belief report is true as uttered in C, and false otherwise. In some different context C1, the belief-report might be false because it may be the case that in C1 there are restrictions which preclude the translation of Bob's thought by means of the expressions which make up the report's 'that'-clause.

What is the form that restrictions on translation take in a given context? Assume that Jim utters (0) in a context C1. In that context Jim is talking to someone about Bob's favourite authors, and the utterance of (0) is supposed to reveal what Bob thinks of one such author. Assume also that in C1 the speakers are aware that Bob doesn't know that "Mark Twain" is the penname of his next door neighbor, Sam Clemens, whom he finds an insufferable bore. In such a scenario, the following restriction on the use of names is commonsensical:

Bob: #Mark Twain# → 'Mark Twain'

This abbreviated restriction says that for Bob, 'Mark Twain' counts as an accurate representation of his #Mark Twain#-thoughts. This is so because Bob's relevant author-thoughts are represented by means of #Mark Twain#. (1) is false in C1, because for Bob 'Samuel Clemens' does not count as an accurate translation of

his #Mark Twain#-thoughts.

These truth-values are just what we should expect ordinary folks to assign, and so it seems that Richard's semantics for propositional attitudes manages to handle the problem of truth-value discrepancy. Furthermore, the account preserves the principle of Semantic Innocence, since 'that'-clauses express singular propositions, although they also do *more* since the choice of words in the complement clause can affect the value of the indexical verb 'believes', and thereby impact the truth-value of the report.

The translationalist account is fairly adequate in accounting for intuitions in numerous situations that we have been considering in chapter two. The account follows NTPA in taking the semantic content of belief ascriptions to be singular propositions, the main difference being that more goes into the truth-evaluation of ascriptions than just that proposition, namely the contextual restrictions. Nonetheless, Russellians have argued that Richard's account is fundamentally flawed. I turn to some of the problems.

III.3 Troubles with Richard's Translationalism

One of the main problems with the account has been labeled the Problem of Conflicting Restrictions. The problem arises in contexts where the agent to whom beliefs are being ascribed is thought of in different ways by the speaker making the ascription. Here's an example discussed by Michael Nelson:

> Suppose that Lois believes that Clark Kent is not Superman and believes that Superman realizes some things about Mark Twain that Clark does not. Suppose that she utters the following sentences.
>
> (2a) Clark Kent believes that Mark Twain wrote Huck Finn
>
> (2b) Superman believes that Mark Twain wrote Huck Finn
>
> Suppose Lois intends her uses of "Mark Twain" to represent "Samuel Clemens"-beliefs when she utters a belief sentence with "Clark Kent" in subject position and intends her uses of "Mark Twain" to represents "Mark Twain"-beliefs when she utters a belief sentence with "Superman" in subject position. Such intentions generate the following restrictions.
>
> (R1a) Clark Kent: "Mark Twain" → {"Samuel Clemens"}
>
> (R1b) Superman: "Mark Twain"→ {"Mark Twain"}
>
> (Nelson 2002, pg.112)

In such contexts, the intentions of the speaker (Lois in this case) place conflicting restrictions on the correlation functions (the translation manuals). The demands created by the resulting restrictions cannot be met by any translation manual: A use of "Mark Twain" is limited by the restrictions to representing only "Mark Twain"-thoughts *and* only "Samuel Clemens"-thoughts.

Nelson suggests that the only way to resolve the problem is by taking the translation functions to be specified not only by reference to the agent, but a pairing of the agent and the mode-of-presentation under which the agent is

thought. Respectively, R1a and R1b should be replaced with

(R1a') <Clark Kent, mild-mannered-reporter mode of presentation>: "Mark Twain" → {"Samuel Clemens"}

(R1b') <Superman, man-of-steel mode of presentation>: "Mark Twain" → {"Mark Twain"}

(Nelson, 2002, pg.115)

By specifying the mode of presentation component, we can thereby distinguish the correlation functions so that no conflict arises. Recall that the initial problem was that within a single context we had restrictions (R1a) and (R1b) in place, and these restrictions could not be jointly satisfied. The source of the problem was that conflicting restrictions can always emerge when, due to confusion, the speaker's intentions place distinct restrictions on what beliefs can properly be ascribed to one and the same individual. When we modify restrictions in the way that Nelson suggests, the problem is resolved. (R1a') and (R1b') are no longer conflicting restrictions because they are no longer restrictions on what beliefs can be ascribed to an *individual*. Rather, they are restrictions on what beliefs can be ascribed to an individual under a specific mode of presentation. As such, which restriction affects Lois's belief-report depends on the mode of presentation under which Lois is thinking of Superman. Since Lois uses the name "Superman" to express thoughts involving Superman-modes-of-presentation, and uses "Clark Kent" to express thoughts involving Clark Kent-modes-of-presentation, this offers a neat

way of blocking restrictions from conflicting.

The trouble here is that statements about what Superman believes and statements about what Clark Kent believes may diverge in their truth-conditions, as uttered by Lois, even though they contain identical "that"-clauses. As a result, arguments such as this one turn out to be invalid:

(2b) Superman believes that Mark Twain wrote Huck Finn

(2) Superman is Clark Kent

Therefore ----------

(2a) Clark Kent believes that Mark Twain wrote Huck Finn

This argument is intuitively valid. In point of fact its validity appears non-negotiable. How can the conclusion fail to follow from those premises? Yet (2a) is false in the context in which Lois utters it and restriction (R1a') is in place, while (2b) and (2) are true. (Nelson, 2002, pg.116)

This is a terrible consequence according to many. The restrictions in play in the context we have been considering ((R1a' & R1b')) are such that (2b) comes out true, and (2a) comes out false. However it just seems that there is no alternative, aside from Nelson's, for resolving the problem of conflicting restrictions. The problem will arise on any contextualist account where the representational powers of a 'that'-clause change depending on the intentions of

speakers, since in cases where speakers are confused about the identities of the agent to whom they ascribe beliefs, conflicting restrictions will emerge.

Accepting Nelson's modification of the account as a means of resolving the problem of conflicting restrictions makes the resulting account implausible for a different reason. This is because incorporating modes of presentation into the restrictions has the effect of rendering the subject position in belief ascriptions (2a) and (2b) non-referential. Referentiality requires that the names occurring in subject position in those sentences be intersubstitutable *salva veritate*, but clearly this requirement does not hold in the case on the amended Richardian account. Surely no adequate contextualist candidate can have such a consequence.

Nelson takes the problem of conflicting restrictions to be irresolvable (at least insofar as one attempts to resolve it by modifying belief-report semantics). At first blush however, the problem does not seem as damaging as all that. A natural reply Richard could make is this: While there are cases in which translationalism fails to deliver truth-values which accord with folk intuitions, these are very rare and ought not to undermine the account. A theory that delivers intuitively correct truth-conditions in *most* cases is preferable to one that doesn't.

While this may be one possible reply Richard could give, it is not a very satisfactory one, unless grounds are provided for thinking not only that the cases are rare, but also that they are somehow defective. In all contexts involving conflicting restrictions speakers report beliefs with the same content, yet they

mistakenly take the beliefs to have different contents. Yet in the argument from (2b) and (2) to (2a), both (2a) and (2b) are statements about Superman/Clark and what he believes. Yet should restrictions on Lois's belief reports affect an argument that is clearly not one Lois is in a position to make? Nelson's reasoning I think is as follows: An argument is valid if the conclusion is true in all contexts in which the premises are true, irrespective of who is uttering the premises. So far, so good. Nelson's claim is that in the context we are concerned with, and employing Richard's semantics, the premises come out true while the conclusion false, so the argument turns out to be invalid. But the situation is not so straightforward.

The argument above employs two premises which are not uttered by the speaker (Lois) in the context, namely (2) and (2a). Lois does not utter (2) because she is unaware that it's true, and she does not utter (2a) because the that-clause of (2a) is precisely what she thinks Kent does not know and Superman does. This is fine since Nelson is not claiming that the above argument is one that any speaker actually *would* utter, but rather that the argument should be valid irrespective of context. The less straightforward matter is whether (2a') and (2b') are non-indexical. On Richard's semantics 'believes' *is* an indexical verb, sensitive to the restrictions placed by speakers' intentions on belief-reporting utterances.

The problem here seems not to be one of failure to respect validity but rather one of how we might explain away the strong validity-intuition. In a sense

this amounts to using the favored strategy of NTPA proponents against the validity intuition. The argument *appears* prima facie valid because language users fail to properly distinguish indexical terms from non-indexical terms. The semantic content of an indexical expression varies with context. If validity were insensitive to this difference, then it should be insensitive across the board, but clearly this is not the case. Consider the following expressions all of which depend on some contextual factor:

a. Being to the left (right) of

b. Being over the weight limit (depending on the airport baggage policy)

c. Being too tired (depending on the activity planned)

If some object A has the property of being over the weight limit in one airport this does not entitle us to claim that A has that property in another airport. Consider an argument that is analogous to the one above:

(3b) This bag is over the weight limit at Pearson Airport

(3) This bag is the same bag I'm taking to Schipol

(3a) The bag I'm taking to Schipol is over the weight limit at Schipol Airport

There are two ways out of conceding the point to Nelson, both employing fairly similar strategies:

a) We can claim that the argument from (2b) and (2) to (2a) *is invalid*. Nelson and Richard both think the argument is valid, but they're mistaken about that. (Richard, 1995) The argument is invalid for the same reasons that led Richard to develop his contextualist semantics: The truth-value of a belief report depends on the speaker's intentions, not solely on the relation between a believer and a singular proposition. The best bet for a proponent of this response is to make a distinction between *de re* and *de dicto* attributions and argue that, while the argument is *de dicto* invalid, it is *de re* valid. As such, the argument *would be* valid if we were to abstract away from the restrictions in play in any context of utterance. The argument can then be said to be *de dicto* invalid and *de re* valid, thereby allowing us to explain why the argument *seems* to be valid. Here is a restatement of the argument, where the attributions are *de dicto*:

(2a-dd) Superman believes, by means of a mental sentence which can be translated as "Mark Twain wrote Huck Finn", that Mark Twain wrote *Huck Finn*

(2) Superman is Clark Kent

(2b-dd) Clark Kent believes, by means of a mental sentence which can be translated as "Samuel Clemens wrote Huck Finn", that Mark Twain wrote *Huck Finn*

No logical connection exists between the first premise and the conclusion when the argument is stated in this way. Yet clearly Lois does intend something like (2a-dd) when she utters (2a). Why? As we can recall from Nelson's description of

the context, according to Lois, “Superman realizes some things about Mark Twain that Clark does not”. This is the very thing that distinguishes what Superman realizes about Twain from what Clark does, according to Lois: Superman realizes that “Mark Twain” is the name of the author of *Huck Finn*, and employs *that name* in thinking about the author of the book. Clark Kent, *ex hypothesi* does not. Richard’s translationist semantics is supposed to be sensitive to these very issues, taking speakers’ fine grained distinctions regarding how agents believe what they do to affect what is being reported.

More needs to be said however about the distinction posited between *de dicto* and *de re* ascriptions. One natural way to think of the distinction is as follows: A belief-ascribing utterance is *de re* if it is insensitive to any contextually specified restrictions. A belief-ascribing utterance is *de dicto* if it is not *de re*. Clearly, Nelson’s challenge to Richard’s account requires that there are no *de dicto* attributions in this sense of the expression. Yet it seems as though the challenge is question-begging, assuming as it does that belief reports within a given context *must* have the same truth-value, irrespective of speaker intentions.

b) There is another option. We can claim that in the context under consideration utterances of (2a) and (2b) express distinct relations holding between an agent and a proposition. The restrictions in play affect not only the truth-value of the reports (which might seem ad hoc), but also affect the relation the verb picks out. The relation Lois ascribes with (2b) is not the relation she ascribes with (2a), so we

should not expect the argument to be valid on independent grounds because the two statements ascribe distinct relations. To push this line of response further we need to specify in some detail the identity conditions on being a belief relation. I will reserve this task for the final section where an alternate account is developed.

Both of the solutions just discussed are fairly similar. Yet they might be thought to miss the point of Nelson's challenge. The point is that the validity of the inference from (2b) to (2a) is so intuitively strong that no contextualist considerations can outweigh it. My contention is that the intuition that the validity of the argument trumps the contextualist treatment of belief-reports rests on a mistake. It rests on the idea that Superman and Kent, being the same person, can only be understood to have one way of thinking of Mark Twain. While it might very well be the case that Superman/Kent does have only one way of thinking of Mark Twain, this would only require us to claim that Lois is making a factual error, not that she is being inconsistent. The purported validity of the argument discussed above does not entail that Lois is contradicting herself or that she would be inconsistent were she to utter (2b) and the negation of (2a) in one and the same context.

Nelson thinks that all contextualist accounts that attempt to resolve the problem of puzzling pairs at the semantic level, not just Richard's, are doomed to failure. Their failure is due to the fact that all such accounts will inevitably render certain valid arguments invalid. He isolates the following three components as

both essential to all contextualist solutions *and* responsible for the infractions against intuitively valid arguments like the one above.

> (A) The sentence embedded in the complement clause of a belief sentence is offered as properly representing how the agent believes what she does in such a way as to explain our intuitions regarding puzzling pairs and apparent substitution failure.
>
> (B) The intentions, beliefs and purposes of the participants of the communicative exchange determine the representational powers of a complement clause.
>
> (C) A single complement clause might have a given representational power with respect to one agent and different representational power with respect to another agent, even within a single communicative setting. (Nelson 2002, pg.117)

These three features of contextualist accounts together with the evident possibility that speakers may be confused about the identity of the agents to whom they ascribe beliefs entail the problematic consequence. In essence the response that I have considered so far is that the intuitively valid entailments which are threatened by contextualist semantics are themselves only valid when we abstract from relevant features of communicative settings. Yet the inadequacy of such abstractions are precisely what motivates contextualist solutions in the first place, so the criticism seems to be unfounded. I turn now to consider another contextualist approach to the semantics of belief reports.

III.4 Crimmins and the Responsibility Approach

Mark Crimmins has developed an alternative contextualist account,

aimed like Richard's at accommodating ordinary language users' intuitions regarding the truth values of belief reports. Also like Richard, Crimmins accepts the Naïve Theory and the principle of Semantic Innocence discussed in the previous chapter. The lesson that Crimmins wants to emphasize is that a certain amount of pragmatic processing is required in order to understand in the first place *what is said* with a belief report. The pragmatic processing involved is supposed to reveal how the agent is claimed to believe the proposition she is alleged to believe. Furthermore, how an agent believes a proposition is a matter of the notions and ideas the agent employs in thinking about it.

Belief reporting then, for Crimmins, works as follows:

> "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 presenting certain constituents of the proposition." (Crimmins, pg.152)

A singular belief report "A believes that s" has the following (largely unarticulated) form:

$\exists\tau$ [Believes(A, t, p_s, τ) & $\exists m_1$, … $\exists m_k$ ($P_1(m_1)$ & … & $P_k(m_k)$ & Responsible (m_{i1}, τ, r1) & … & Responsible (m_{in}, τ, r_n))] (Crimmins, 1992, pg.157)

To explicate, what the report says is that person A has a belief whose content is a singular proposition p, and A believes this proposition in accordance with a

thought map τ. A thought map is a structured set of representations whose elements (the notions and ideas that constitute it) are each responsible for introducing into the singular proposition believed the individuals or properties that make up that proposition. In the above formal presentation, "r" refers to the individual role a notion or idea plays in the introduction of a constituent into the singular proposition believed, and "m" refers to the representation that plays that role. "P" is a predicate expressing some unique property by means of which some representation r is identified or described. When a belief report specifies some particular representation r_i as fulfilling a certain role, the property P by means of which the representation is identified is simply the property of being identical to r_i. For Crimmins most representations that are involved in belief reports are identified by means of this reflexive property.

Let's apply this framework to examine how it handles the kinds of examples we have been considering. Consider two statements, such as

(4) Lois believes that Clark Kent is nearby.

(5) Lois believes that Superman is nearby.

These sentences can differ in truth value as they occur in some context c, because the truth of an utterance of (4) or (5) depends in part on whether the contextually relevant notion in play in the conversational setting really is the notion that plays the relevant role in Lois's cognitive economy. The relevant notions in play in the case of (4) may be different from the relevant notions in play in the case of (5).

How so? Simply put, it works like this: In some context Lois's #Superman# notion might be salient, perhaps because in the context the conversational participants are discussing Lois's love interests, or are explaining why Lois is not panicked in the presence of imminent danger. Uttering (5) in such a context we are talking about Lois's #Superman# notion. What contexts supply then are the properties which describe or specify the notions that play the relevant roles in the believer's cognition. However if I say that Lois believes that S is near, how does *her* S notion get into the act? Her #Clark Kent# notion would not be salient in the context described. Here's why: The inferential role of Lois's #Clark Kent#-concept is distinct from the inferential role of her #Superman#-concept. Regardless of whether or not prior inferential connections are taken to be constitutive of her alleged present belief that Superman is nearby, we must assume that to ascribe to Lois the belief that he is nearby is to ascribe to her a mental state that is appropriately connected to other of her states, such as the state of thinking that Superman would prevent harm from coming to her, etc. Only a state of which #Superman# is a constituent bears the appropriate connections to Lois's other relevant beliefs and desires.

How does Nelson's challenge affect the current account? Consider the context we had discussed where Lois ascribes different beliefs to Superman regarding Mark Twain. On the present account there are no restrictions on what terms translate what Russellian Annotated Matrices, so the problem of conflicting restrictions does not arise. There is however a related problem. Depending on

which of Superman's notions are in play in the context, (2b) may be true while (2a) is false, so the validity intuitions are equally applicable here. Within a single conversational context, the conversation may make different modes of presentation salient at different points. The participants in the conversation may, as before, be confused about Superman's identity, and as a result they may think that Superman and Clark Kent have different ways of thinking of Mark Twain. As such, someone might say that Superman believes that Twain wrote Huck Finn, but that Clark Kent certainly does not believe this.

It is important to note that belief reports on the Crimmins picture are about believers' specific mental representations, and as such negative belief reports (A doesn't believe that p) do not claim that there are no ways in which the believer believes p.) Rather, all they claim is that (for whatever notion of the object of belief that is salient) that notion is not responsible for contributing an object to the singular proposition expressed by the that-clause of the relevant report.

With all of this in place we can easily see how the problem of validity intuitions arises. The semantic evaluation of (2b) is independent of the semantic evaluation of (2a), so one may come out true in a context while the other false. This consequence is blocked on NTPA accounts, where the negative report (2a) is always false when the positive report (2b) is true. There is nothing to block this consequence on the Crimmins account and so Nelson's problem affects this account just as it does Richard's.

Unlike Richard however, Crimmins has a ready reply to Nelson, because he argues that speakers never (or at least almost never) ascribe beliefs in a *de re* way. *De dicto* ascriptions are the norm. As we saw at the end of the last section, the validity of such arguments crucially depends on how the reports are construed. If Crimmins is right that *de re* reports are rare if they exist at all, then Nelson's objection loses much of its force. I will briefly discuss and evaluate here Crimmins' reasons for rejecting the *de re* as well as a defense of the *de re* offered by Marga Reimer.

According to Crimmins, a *de dicto* report expresses a relation between an agent and a singular proposition, and says that the proposition is believed by the agent "via a belief involving a certain notion (such that [the agent] would express that notion using the same name used by the speaker)." (Crimmins, pg.170) By contrast we might think that a *de re* report is simply one that does not specify any particular notion involved in the agent's believing the singular proposition. If we do take this construal of the *de re* seriously, and no other construal seems to present itself, then according to Crimmins *de re* reports turn out to be very rare. In fact Crimmins tells us that he cannot come up with *any* examples. (Crimmins, pg.173) The closest he can come to an example is the following, in which the pronoun refers to a man that is being demonstrated:

(X) John believes that he is tall.

We are asked to assume that Anne tells this to Crimmins and Crimmins has no

idea how John might be thinking about the individual in question. This example is as good as it gets in trying to formulate a report that leaves the agent's notion unspecified.

Crimmins argues that even this report should be understood as being notionally specific, and hence not *de re* in the sense under consideration. While Crimmins does not know how John is thinking of the person, by uttering (X) Anne is displaying that she possesses information about how John thinks. As such, upon being told (X) Crimmins is told something about a specific notion of John's, even though all that Crimmins knows about John's notion is that it is the notion "Anne has in mind". (Crimmins, pg.174) The idea here is that, in making reports people generally are talking about someone's specific notions. This feature of ordinary reports is a background assumption, which Anne exploits with her report, and the assumption raises to contextual salience whatever specific notion of John's Anne has in mind.

Marga Reimer challenges this treatment of the example. She thinks that the example is a case of *de re* reporting par excellence, and her strategy is to undermine the interpretation Crimmins offers. Reimer claims that "[so] far as I can see, the *only* reason a speaker could possibly have for exploiting such assumptions is that, by doing so, she would be able to convey information - conversationally *relevant* information - not (easily) conveyable without the assistance of such assumptions." (Reimer, pg.451) But there is no reason for Anne

to think that information as to how John thinks of the person is at all relevant to Crimmins, so there is no reason to suppose that Anne is exploiting the assumption.

One of the reasons Crimmins thinks that his interpretation ought to be favored is due to considerations as to how conversations involving reports like (X) might be continued. Suppose, says Crimmins, that he asks Anne "Does John believe he is a good volleyball player?" It should be readily obvious here (according to Crimmins) that Crimmins would be asking about whether John believes that the person (under the specific notion Anne had tacitly referred to previously) is a good volleyball player. Reimer agrees that this might be the case sometimes, but certainly not as a rule. In fact, if Anne knows that John thinks the person is tall under one mode of presentation and thinks the person is a good volleyball player under a different mode of presentation, then we would judge that she cannot truthfully reply to the question by denying that John believes he is a good volleyball player. This goes to show, according to Reimer, that Anne's initial report did not convey information about some specific notion of John's. Had it conveyed such information, we would judge that Anne's negative response is correct, but clearly the intuition is that her negative response to the question Crimmins posed is incorrect. (Reimer, pg. 456)

So far so good. Reimer thinks that there are other reasons for accepting that *de re* reports are common. In fact she claims this is evident when we consider

situations where a speaker S is confused about the identity of a person P, yet nevertheless they ascribe to someone else, B, a belief about P. Reimer considers one such case in detail but assumes that the case generalizes. Pete is an athlete in John's volleyball team, while Pat, his identical twin is a student in John's class. John believes Pete is a good athlete and believes Pat is not athletic. Enter Anne. Anne knows what John thinks of Pat, since she knows Pat was his student, but is unaware that Pat has an identical twin. Pointing to Pete and mistaking him for Pat, Anne says

(Y) John believes he is not athletic.

intending to state a truth, or says (Z), intending to state a lie

(Z) John believes that he is a good athlete.

Reimer argues that (Y) is false and (Z) is true, yet "notionally specific readings are not available" in this example, because John has no notion of Pete "formed while the latter was the former's student" (Reimer, pg.458) Here then is a case where a *de re* reading is all that is available and proponents of *de re* reports are perfectly capable of explaining the intuitive truth-value distribution: (Y) says something false because under the only notion he has of him, John believes that Pete is athletic. Likewise, (Z) is true for the same reason. However the relevant notion in each case is not one raised to salience by Anne's utterance since Anne is unaware of it.

The important lesson Reimer wants to draw from her critique of Crimmins is that reports made by speakers who are confused about the subject of a 'that'-clause require a *de re* reading because that is the only reading available. We need to be careful however. It is crucial to note the importance of the fact that John has only one way of thinking of Pete. Because of this, John is either related to the singular proposition expressed by the 'that'-clause or he is not. This may give the false impression that belief reports are generally sensitive only to whether the agent is appropriately related to the singular proposition.

These considerations regarding *de re* ascriptions have the following consequence: It appears that a contextualist approach that relies on the assumption that speakers raise to salience some specific notion of the believer whose beliefs are being reported cannot be squared with the very existence of purely de re reports. If as Crimmins says "belief reports are *about* the believer's notions" then *de re* readings should not be available. Returning to the confusion case presented by Reimer, Crimmins has to claim that Anne's belief reports are about some specific notion of John's. But that's precisely what they cannot be about. Unless of course Anne is talking about John's *Pat*-notion, and *that notion* is responsible for introducing the referent, Pete, into the singular proposition. Yet this option clearly is something to be avoided. Why? Because the responsibility function becomes entirely useless if a notion that is in no way connected to an individual can be responsible for introducing that individual into the singular proposition encoded in the report. This would mean that notions are entirely irrelevant to

determining the proposition believed.

Suppose then that we change the example a bit. Let's imagine that Anne does in fact recognize that it is Pete she's pointing to as she utters (Y). In that case, would Anne be raising to salience John's Pete-notion, as Crimmins thinks? It doesn't seem so, after all the only thing that we have changed about the situation is something entirely private to Anne: her intentions. It is easy to see how this entails that speakers' belief reports do not as a rule single out believers' notions: The confusion itself is not what forces *de re* readings, since nothing relevant distinguishes confusion cases from cases that do not involve confusion.

III.5 Crimmins vs. Richard on the *de re*

Reimer's critique of Crimmins hinges on cases of confusion, and it might be thought that such cases are defective in some relevant way, in which case they would not undermine the general theory Crimmins advances. However, as we can recall from last chapter's discussion of NTPA, there are fairly ordinary circumstances when it is irrelevant to the conversational participants which name they use in a 'that'-clause. Bob, to return to our previous example, has only one mode of presentation of Mark Twain. Yet it does not seem inappropriate in any way for Bob's friends to say

Bob believes that Sam Clemens is a good writer

even though Bob doesn't possess *that name* in his vocabulary. The account that

Richard advances seems to have an advantage (as compared to that of Crimmins) when such cases are considered. On Richard's account we can simply say that the restrictions in play in the conversational context are very relaxed. Take the following restriction as example:

Bob: #Mark Twain# → 'Mark Twain' *or* 'Sam Clemens'

While, on Crimmins' account, we *can* say that the speaker raises to salience *Bob's* notion of Clemens/Twain, this is counterintuitive. Why? Because the speakers are indifferent to the way in which Bob represents Twain/Clemens, and furthermore by phrasing the report as above the name "Sam Clemens" should, one would think, raise to salience the normal notion #Sam Clemens# rather than Bob's notion.

What differentiates the accounts then is that, for Crimmins, belief-reports are about believers' notions rather than individuals, whereas this is not the case for Richard. On Richard's account, while it is true that the names in a belief-report's 'that'-clause need to conform to restrictions in play in a context of utterance, this does not entail that the reports themselves are *about* the believer's notions. All that it does entail is that separate beliefs can be reported using 'that'-clauses that differ only with respect to their constituent co-referential proper names. Despite this, as we noted in discussing Nelson's challenge, even on Richard's account we need to make reference to modes of presentation in order to handle cases where the person making an attitude ascription has distinct ways of

thinking of the agent to whom they ascribe attitudes. In these latter cases we need to introduce modes of presentation into the contextual restrictions.

III.6 An Alternative Contextualism

It seems very natural to say that there is a distinction between Lois believing that Clark Kent, her co-worker, is nearby and her believing that Superman, her beloved hero, is nearby. Probably no one has ever denied this. Contextualists and non-contextualists are divided on the question as to how such an intuition can be captured when the relevant reports of Lois's beliefs are identical but for the occurrence of distinct names, as in (4) and (5).

(4) Lois believes Superman is nearby.

(5) Lois believes Clark Kent is nearby.

The contextualist strategies surveyed so far provide a means of differentiating such reports only by tacitly appealing to the ways in which the believer thinks of the objects of their belief. They claim that there is a constraint on the semantic interpretation of such reports, a constraint according to which the 'that'-clauses need to be adequate representations or translations of the believer's thoughts. In contradistinction, NTPA proponents claim that this is a pragmatic or psychological constraint, not a constraint on the semantics of the reports, and so ought to be the subject matter for a theory of communication rather than a theory of meaning.

In this section I will attempt to provide an alternate contextualist treatment of belief reports. This account will differ from those described above primarily in that it does not make recourse to specific notions on the part of the believer, *a la* Crimmins, nor does it tie the truth-value of a report to how accurately it translates some particular thought the believer has, *a la* Richard. The goal, rather, will be to argue for a dual semantics that takes propositional content to be just one aspect of a report's semantic properties. I will argue that the problematic intuitions that befall NTPA concern the non-propositional semantic content of a belief-report. I begin by offering a candidate for what non-propositional content might be.

III.7 Semantic Licensing

Consider a famous example of John Searle's. (Searle, 1979) A speaker utters the following statement:

(6) Bob cut the grass.

Searle asks us to consider that this statement is made in a context in which what Bob actually did is to cut each blade of grass vertically down the middle. Now, literally speaking, Bob did exactly what (6) says he did, so it seems that (6) must literally be true. However it is important to note that (6) cannot enter into the type of inferences in which people are normally interested, for example:

(i1) If Bob cut the grass, the lawn will be beautiful for the party.

(i2) I hate cleaning the garden when the grass has not been cut. I'm glad Bob cut

it.

What can be said of the tension between our incentive to say that (6) is true in the context and the failure of inferences like (i1)? Depending on other features of the context in which (6) is uttered, it seems that the utterance acquires a different representational capacity. For example, while in a normal context cutting the grass means cutting the blades of grass horizontally we can imagine a conversational context in which (6) is a perfectly acceptable report of Bob's action.

Consider also attitude reports that contain (6):

(L) Gladys would love to hear that Bob cut the grass.

(H) Gladys would hate to hear that Bob cut the grass.

The truth of these predictions turns on the way in which Bob cuts the grass. Yet we do not want to say that (6) is ambiguous between several readings, only one of which is that he cut the grass horizontally. Nor, as Predelli claims, is it reasonable to include the cutting method as an unarticulated constituent that is part of the logical form of sentences like (6). (Predelli, pg.346) We have to say, it seems, that Bob cut the grass, but not in a way that allows (6) to be unproblematically asserted in a context. A statement like (6) has to be licensed in a context like the one presented by prior conversational moves.

So far, nothing that has been said is meant to entail that the problem surrounding (6) is one of meaning. However there is good reason to think here

that underpinning the infelicity of the act of reporting on the situation by uttering (6) is something quite robust. As a matter of convention, one utters “X cut the grass” in order to communicate that X cut the grass horizontally. It is not merely implied or implicated that X cut the grass horizontally. Similar considerations apply to the milk example.

Statements that are themselves non-specific in some regard nevertheless sometimes only express a subset of the propositions that can be gotten by compositionally fitting together the semantic contents of the constituent expressions. For any sentence like (6) there are innumerable propositions that it is consistent with. What delineates the subset is that all the members meet some definite specification, again by convention. Imagine for instance the following conversation:

A - “Is there any milk left in the fridge?”

B - “Yep, there is some left.”

A - “Ummm…No there isn’t”

B - “Look again on the bottom shelf, far left corner. There is a drop”

A- “That’s not what I meant; I obviously meant whether there is sufficient milk left to drink in the milk carton”

This is a very strange conversation. A much more typical conversation is the

following:

A - “Is there any milk left in the fridge?”

B - “Nope, there isn’t any.”

To argue that B’s statement is false is strange, at least if we are interested in *intuitive* truth-conditions. Since B’s statement *is* literally false, it must be that the truth-conditions in question are not the truth-conditions of the proposition that is the literal semantic content.

A claim that language should be analyzed this way seems to require some kind of revision, and not only of our linguistic conventions. There are many examples of cases where the truth or falsity of a statement does not depend solely on the proposition arrived at through compositionally piecing together the referents of component expressions. Here are some obvious cases. Assume (7) is uttered during a camping trip:

(7) I put all the beer on ice.

(8) I spoke to everyone and could not get a straight answer as to where the lake is.

While it might be replied to the person uttering (8) that they failed to talk to some knowledgeable people in the vicinity, it cannot be said that (8) is false because there is a goat herder in the Himalayas whom the speaker did not consult on the matter.

In his “Semantics in Context”, Jason Stanley argues that “the responsibility of the semanticist is … to show that speaker intuitions about the truth-conditions of an utterance are due to semantics.” (Stanley, 251) However, Stanley argues that this does not burden the semanticist with the task of generating “within the semantics all information that a competent speaker and member of a culture may derive from a communicative act”. (Ibid) Here is an example Stanley considers, meant to illustrate his point. Consider the following conversation:

John: I must wash my hands: I’ve eaten.

Bill: No you didn’t; you were spoon-fed. (Stanley, pg.253)

Stanley claims that the oddity of Bill’s utterance reveals that the intuitive truth-conditions of John’s utterance of “I’ve eaten” are not influenced by the assumption that he ate using his hands. The truth conditions are determined solely by the combination of the semantic values of the expressions and the compositionality constraints imposed by syntax. Likewise, Stanley will object, it cannot be demanded that we should distinguish (at the level of semantics) vertical grass-cutting from horizontal, as the alleged oddity of the following conversational continuations of (6) shows:

A: Bill cut the grass.

B: No he didn’t. He just cut some blades vertically.

Being spoon-fed and cutting grass blades vertically are unusual ways of eating and cutting the grass, but according to Stanley this should not dispose us to think that their being unusual renders the statements false.

While I agree with Stanley's idea that truth-value intuitions should be explained by reference to semantic properties of utterances, I disagree that the conclusion we should draw is the one he favors. Both the milk case and the grass cutting case reveal, counter to his claims, that B's responses *are appropriate*. If a neighbor requests that you cut the tree branches that intrude on their property, making small calculated incisions into those branches would hardly be satisfactory. Nor are instructions to move one's car from where it is parked followed if one moves the vehicle one millimeter in any direction. Consider then that, instead of cutting each blade of grass vertically down the middle, Bob made incredibly minute horizontal incisions into the individual blades of grass. Stanley's approach commits him to the claim that (6) is true even in this case. We know what all of these statements mean, and I want to suggest that part of knowing what they mean involves knowing *what it would take* to render them true *in normal circumstances*. The semantic contents of the expressions making up a sentence together with compositionality do not suffice to deliver intuitive truth-conditions.

What is the significance of this for belief-reporting? In the case of reporting Lois's beliefs, the context narrows down the set of propositions that a

belief report can express to those that are relevant. Here is a scenario which illustrates the trouble with not delimiting the proposition expressed: Lois is standing in a line-up in a coffee shop and does not realize that the man standing right in front of her is Clark/Superman. Nevertheless, Lois *does* have a mental representation in her belief box with the propositional content *Superman is nearby*. How so? Because she has a token of the mental sentence #that man is nearby# in her belief-box, and #that man# refers to Superman. However to report on her situation by saying "Lois believes that Superman is nearby" is problematic, since presumably such a belief report entails various other things about Lois, such as a recognition that her beloved hero is nearby, that she is well protected, etc. The similarity with the milk example is instructive: "Lois believes that there is milk in the fridge" is not a statement whose truth is ordinarily dependent on the possibility of a small milk puddle being located somewhere on a surface inside the fridge. Similarly, nor does Lois count as believing that Superman is nearby simply because she believes that a particular person whom she does not recognize is nearby, even if that person happens to be Superman. When we make such belief-ascriptions it seems that we really are doing something different than merely picking out a relation between Lois and a singular proposition.

In both the coffee-shop case and the milk case, the circumstances that need to be in play in order for the reports to be considered true are more specific than what can be constructed by a compositional arrangement of the semantic contents of the 'that'-clauses. Ascriptions to Lois of "Superman"-beliefs are constrained by

what we take Lois's overall mental state to be at a point in time, not extensionally. Were this not the case, we would face the problem of saying that Lois believes that Superman is nearby yet does not believe that she is safe, that her beloved hero is nearby, etc. However all of those things are assumed to be relevant to determining whether she really does believe that Superman is nearby.

As such, aside from the propositional content of a belief-report, the truth or falsity of the report is also dependent on extra-propositional features of the circumstances. One candidate for extra-propositional semantic properties is the relation between the asserted sentence and stereotypical statements which are assumed to be licensed were the belief-report to be true. "Lois believes there is milk in the fridge" licenses "Lois believes that there is a suitable amount of milk in a container inside the fridge." "Lois believes that Superman is nearby" licenses "Lois believes her beloved hero is nearby." Were we to feel that such other statements are not licensed we would not feel that the report in question is true.

The picture of belief-reporting that emerges from reflecting on the situation is as follows: When we report someone's belief we do so under the presumption that the person believes what they do in a normal way. This is essentially what Crimmins does when he claims that belief reports are about the believer's *normal* notions. Crimmins however introduces the normal notions of the believer *into* the proposition expressed by the report. The current proposal is less intrusive. "S believes P" is true, where P is a singular proposition, if (1) S

believes P (via some mental sentence or other which has the singular content of P as its referent) and (2) "S believes that P" is inferentially promiscuous in the context of utterance. This provides a diagnosis for the coffee shop example: In that context, while (1) was met, (2) was not.

One prima facie obstacle to this view is the kind of *de re* ascription discussed above in the case of Bob and Clemens/Twain. There do seem to be cases like this, so what can be said about them? It is important to note that in describing that case it was specified that Bob has only one way of thinking of Twain. Were Bob confused about Twain like Lois about Superman, the friends would then likely say things which either license false statements or result in general confusion as to Bob's thoughts and actions.

In contradistinction to the contextualist positions described above, this position avoids reference to believers' mental representations. The constraints on the truth-evaluation of belief reports come from whether they cohere with what we already know about the context. Knowing that Lois believes the superhero and her co-worker to be different people is one of the relevant facts about the context. According to NTPA, our choice of using 'Superman' or 'Clark Kent' in 'that'-clauses is entirely arbitrary (on a semantic level, although it may be relevant psychologically or for the purpose of communication). Here it depends on the way in which the facts of the context are stated. We know that Lois feels safer when she is around the superhero than when she is around the co-worker. So one of the

names gets associated with certain of her mental states, the other with other of her mental states. This however does not resolve the arbitrariness issue entirely, it simply makes it systematic. Whatever name gets attached to the person who makes Lois feel safe, whom Lois is in love with, etc, is in some sense arbitrary since it cannot be imposed on a speaker which name they ought to use in discussing the objects of Lois's beliefs. Yet this name needs to be distinguished from the name we employ to refer to Lois's co-worker beliefs, as without doing so we fail to properly characterize her beliefs. Why? Say we settle on using "Clark Kent" when reporting those of Lois's beliefs which are interconnected with work-related thoughts, then employing this same name when reporting Lois's belief-states which are interconnected with her love-related thoughts mischaracterizes objective facts about Lois's cognitive economy. The fact that one particular name is *normally* used in setting up contexts to refer to the person Lois is in love with may only commit us on pragmatic grounds to using that name. The important problem with freely substituting proper names within belief-reports is tied to our need to adequately distinguish aspects of Lois's cognitive economy so that we do not license ascriptions that do not fit her cognitive situation, as in the coffee shop example. The extra-propositional semantic properties of utterances can be understood as riding on the pragmatic motivation for employing certain terms rather than others in communicative exchanges. These properties are properly understood as semantic however (rather than pragmatic) because they concern relations between certain sentences in a context and other (possible)

sentences in that context. Here we can think of Fine's semantic relationism, and how two sentences within a discourse are coordinated or not depending on whether an ideal cognizer might know that those sentences are about the same thing. From knowing that "if Lois believes Superman is nearby then she feels safe" is true, and knowing that "Lois believes that Superman is nearby" is true, we can infer "Lois feels safe". It is on the basis of an understanding of the meaning of the prior two sentences that we are licensed in concluding that she feels safe, and thereby that the third sentence is true. Understanding the meaning of "Lois believes that Superman is nearby" then is constrained both by an understanding of the proposition that it expresses, namely that the very guy "Superman" refers to is nearby, and also by understanding that the sentence has a certain inferential license with respect to other sentences in the language.

In summary, the Richard/Crimmins versions of contextualism about belief reports get at something that is very important: How we phrase belief reports needs to be sensitive to how believers represent states of affairs. The burden of this section has been to seek a way of accommodating that sensitivity while at the same time avoiding the further requirement that the semantics of a sentence in a context depends on specifying the believer's way of thinking of the objects of her belief. One reason for seeking an account that does not centrally rely on the contextual specification of Modes of Presentation is partially due to the fact that it was a crucial part of our criticism of Pragmatic explanations in chapter 2 that they appeal to Modes of Presentation while it does not seem that we talk about modes

of presentation when we ascribe beliefs. This criticism would ultimately turn back on us if we were to adopt a version of contextualism which takes Modes of Presentation to be what we talk about, as in Crimmins's account. An alternative way of refusing to admit that the singular proposition a 'that'-clause expresses is sufficient to capture what we say about a believer when we make belief-ascriptions has been offered by Kent Bach. (Bach, 2002) He does so by denying that 'that'-clauses specify what the believer believes. Rather, Bach contends, belief-reports only *describe* what the believer believes.

Our alternative contextualist position follows Bach part of the way. Belief reports specify something, they do express a relation between the believer and some worldly proposition. Yet belief reports do not (considered in isolation) specify the kind of state that our ordinary concept of belief tracks. The folk psychological conception of belief is not a conception of a relation between a person and a proposition. An accurate semantics for belief-reports requires that we flesh out the ordinary conception of belief so that we may understand which aspects of the semantics will be relevant to the truth-evaluation of belief-reports. This will be part of the task for the final chapter.

CHAPTER IV – Non-Standard Contextualisms

In this chapter I will use the reflections from previous chapters as suggesting desiderata toward constructing a semantic theory for propositional attitudes. This requires reconceptualizing semantics to accommodate both ordinary speakers' intuitions and the referentialist core of NTPA. To this end I will borrow from recent work by Stefano Predelli and John MacFarlane, both of whom have pointed out ways in which referentialism and contextualism might be brought together in a systematic way. In the first section I will briefly recapitulate the central problems regarding simple sentences and propositional attitudes and suggest how these problems might be connected. In the second section I discuss the role of attitude reports in folk explanations and suggest that ordinary speakers individuate beliefs by narrow rather than solely by wide contents, and draw out the consequences of this for NTPA. In the third section I set out the desiderata for a theory of the attitudes and examine the prospects for how the desiderata might be met in light of Predelli and MacFarlane's suggested revision of semantic evaluation. The fourth section provides a summary of the account that we arrive at in light of the previous sections.

Let's begin by recapitulating the various strands that have been thematically entangled in what has come before. This first section will attempt to abstract away from the specificities in order to gain some perspective on relations between those strands.

IV.1 Where we are

On the one hand there is an important question as to the relation between the problem raised for simple sentences such as the ones we examined in the first chapter and the problem raised for propositional attitude sentences such as the ones considered in chapters two and three. The central problem with regard to simple sentences is the problem of informativeness. If the semantic content of a simple sentence is exhausted by the singular proposition it expresses, intuitive distinctions among sentences fail to have a semantic correlate. This problem can be addressed by positing either pragmatic or psychological differences. The problems with pragmatic accounts are (1) it does not seem to be the case that the kind of information that can account for differences in informativeness is part of the communicative intentions of speakers, and (2) that information seems to be straightforwardly requisite for minimal semantic competence with the simple sentences we have considered, so we have no motivation for considering it to be non-semantic. The psychological solution proposed by David Braun does not succumb to problem (1) for the pragmatic solution, yet nevertheless does not seem to respond to problem (2).

The problem with propositional attitude reports, it has been my effort to stress, also has essentially to do with the informativeness of sentences although this is not immediately evident. The problem of truth-value discrepancy raised in chapter two is that ordinary speakers often ascribe truth-values to certain attitude

ascribing sentences which disagree with the truth-values that are mandated by NTPA. Here once again the two main proposals for explaining the discrepancy are the pragmatic and psychological accounts. Both accounts claim that ordinary speakers are mistaken in their truth-value ascriptions. For the pragmatic explanation proponent, speakers evaluate the troubling sentences in light of pragmatically implied/implicated propositions rather than semantically encoded propositions and arrive at the theoretically incorrect truth values in this way. For the psychological explanation proponent speakers and hearers mistake differences in the inferential role of the states they enter when entertaining certain belief sentences for semantic differences in the contents of those belief sentences themselves.

According to these theorists ordinary speakers are systematically inconsistent in uttering the belief sentences they do and in evaluating belief sentences: ordinary persons just do not understand what belief-reports report and hence how they are properly used. Actually the situation is worse given the diagnosis of the psychological explanation proponent than it is given the diagnosis of the pragmatic explanation proponent:. For the latter at the very least the folk are at least consistent at the pragmatic level, since language users converge on the extra-semantic content of belief-reporting which is pragmatically communicated. For the former the folk are entirely inconsistent in their use of language and, as we have noted Sider and Braun saying, belief-sentence use needs to be revised for consistency to be recovered.

The two problems (informativeness and discrepancy) are not entirely independent. One suggestion we might make for how the two problems are related goes as follows: The reason speakers assign the truth-values they do to belief-reports (in those cases where intuition clashes with NTPA) is because the ordinary conception of belief is not the conception which the binary relation account provides. Rather, ordinary speakers function with a more narrow notion of belief, one which is attuned to the practical explanatory and predictive purposes that belief reporting serves. The suggestion is that, underlying the truth value discrepancy problem for attitude reports, is an issue regarding the informativeness of belief-sentences. Speakers take certain belief sentences (e.g. "Lois believes that Superman is nearby") to be informative in a given context rather than other sentences which are extensionally equivalent (e.g. "Lois believes that Clark Kent is nearby"). As such they seemingly take belief sentences to pick out psychological states which are individuated by something more than their singular propositional contents, which would render belief reports explanatorily inert and would blur the line on which reports are informative and which ones are not. The distinction between belief-states individuated by their singular propositional contents and belief states which are individuated by something more has been widely discussed in the philosophy of mind under the gloss of the wide versus narrow content distinction. The next section will examine that distinction and attempt to draw morals about the import for a semantics of attitude sentences that might arise if "believes" is understood as tracking narrow rather than

wide-content states.

The upshot of this line of thinking is that ordinary speakers may in fact be mistaken, but they might not be mistaken about the *semantics* (or pragmatics) of belief-sentences. They may be mistaken rather because their very conception of belief (states individuated by narrow contents) is itself inconsistent, even though they are consistent in their semantic behavior with respect to that problematic belief-notion. Precisely what notion of belief is operative in ordinary uses of belief-reports is a question that requires us to examine how ordinary speakers employ attitude ascriptions when they aim to explain behavior. I hope to show that when the notion of 'narrow content' is given a plausible interpretation folk ascriptions turn out to be inconsistent with NTPA only under the standard interpretation of NTPA as a theory of truth conditions.

IV.2 Belief Individuation

Above I mentioned that ordinary speakers may be understood, when ascribing beliefs, to be ascribing states which are individuated by their narrow, as opposed to wide content. The wide content of a state like a belief is the proposition which that state is about. Lois's belief that Superman is nearby is about Superman and the property of being nearby. So the wide content of that belief-state is the singular proposition <Superman, *being nearby*>. The narrow content is harder to specify. It will be best to arrive at a notion of it *via negativa*. To do so I will introduce a problem that has been taken by many to require a

distinct kind of content from wide content, the problem of the Frege cases.

Briefly put, Frege cases are situations where someone's behaviour or cognitive economy is affected in different ways by their having propositional attitudes that are content-wise identical, when content is understood as wide. The trouble with these cases enters when we try to spell out how this is possible, and moreover try to do so in such a way that (a) the individuals involved are treated as rational and (b) the behaviour is explained in terms of the intentional states of the individuals concerned (i.e. intentional psychological explanation is preserved). I will briefly consider what makes the combination of (a), (b), and the existence of Frege cases troublesome. Let's begin by examining the motivations for (a) and (b).

Why assume that people's behaviour should be explained in terms of their intentional states? Because when we ask for an explanation of why someone acted as he did what we want to know are his reasons for doing so and intentional states are good candidates for being those reasons. As such, explanations of people's behaviour typically involve the ascription of propositional attitudes to them. Propositional attitudes are intentional states of mind such as beliefs, desires, wishes and hopes, among others. Let's consider an ordinary example. John gets up from the couch, walks over to the fridge, grabs a beer, walks back, sits down, and drinks the beer. The typical explanation of John's behaviour has it that John desired to drink a beer, he believed that there was beer in the fridge, and

proceeded to act in such a way as to satisfy his desire. Of course, John might have been thinking and feeling many other things, but it seems very plausible that his being in those particular states mentioned in the explanation was integral to his having acted as he did. Suffice it to say then that, for purposes of explaining people's rational behaviour, we ascribe propositional attitudes to them and attempt to explain why they do and think as they do in terms of those beliefs and desires. The reason John went to the fridge is that he desired to have a beer and thought there was beer in the fridge.

So far we have considered that the mental states referenced in psychological explanations should be content-bearing. It is in virtue of John's desires and beliefs being *about beer* that he went and grabbed one. Before we go on to discuss what is problematic about Frege cases, another aspect of psychological explanations needs to be in place. The dominant view in contemporary philosophy of mind is that not only should the mental states referenced in psychological explanations be content-bearing, but also that the kind of content referenced should be broad.

I will make use of the most typical example cited for the purpose of describing a Frege case, namely the case of Oedipus. Oedipus is a rational individual who, due to ill-fated circumstances, marries a woman named Jocasta without realizing that she is his mother. Oedipus thus fails to act in accordance with the following generalization that I quote from Susan Schneider:

> (M) Ceteris paribus, if Oedipus desires that he not marry Mother/Jocasta, and Oedipus believes that not marrying Mother/Jocasta is the only way to bring this about, then he will try not to marry Mother/Jocasta. (Schneider, 2005, pg. 435)

Note that Mother here should be taken as a proper name, that is, as a non-descriptive rigid designator. Oedipus fails to conform to this generalization because Mother *is* Jocasta and Oedipus unwittingly marries *her*. Though Oedipus meets the conditions stated in the antecedent of (M), he fails to act in accord with the consequent. An explanation of his transgression is required and it seems that any psychological explanation that references only Oedipus's broad content states fails to capture the situation. The reason for this is that broad content explanations cannot distinguish between Oedipus's Mother-oriented propositional attitudes and his Jocasta-Oriented propositional attitudes. At the broad content level the object of his beliefs and desires is the same individual, Mother/Jocasta, so there is no means of capturing Oedipus's discriminate behaviour.

In summary, Oedipus is a rational person and his behaviour should be subsumable under generalization (M), but it is not. The reason it is not is that generalizations like (M) are taken to appeal to Oedipus's broad content states, while Oedipus's behaviour is sensitive to something more fine-grained than those broad-content states are able to capture.

This is the general problem of wide content explanation. As it has just been described the problem concerns psychological generalizations, yet this is strictly speaking irrelevant to our present concerns. The important point concerns

folk explanations not the generalizations of what might be taken to be the most adequate scientific psychology. David Braun, Susan Schneider and Jerry Fodor have each argued that, despite the problem raised by Frege cases, intentional psychology should nevertheless individuate mental states widely. (Fodor, 1994; Schneider, 2005; Braun, 2001) Part of the general strategy these authors employ involves treating Frege cases as exceptions falling under the ceteris paribus clauses of psychological generalizations such as the one above. Their arguments are motivated by two beliefs (1) that wide content generalizations subsume more individuals than narrow content generalizations, and so are overall preferable, and (2) that accounts of narrow content are thoroughly problematic. Regardless of how these points bear on the scientific enterprise, they do not have any bearing on the explanatory activities of the folk. Folk -psychological attitude ascriptions work sufficiently well for everyday predictive and explanatory purposes. The folk have no problems, for example, with explaining the behaviour of people having Frege cases. As such, we can assume that the attitude ascriptions they employ pick out mental states that are individuated more narrowly than an ideal intentional psychology would recommend. Why then should we agree with the NTPA that the truth values of ordinary speakers' attitude ascriptions are not the ones which ordinary speakers pre-theoretically assign?

Compare the situation in Psychology with one that might occur in Physics. Say that all ordinary people in a society share knowledge of Newtonian Physics. When someone says "Object X is moving" what they say is to be understood in

terms of its meaning within the conceptual framework of Newtonian Physics. Now the question may arise as to what the best physics is. This question is independent of the physics that is operant for the community we are considering. Let's stipulate that it is agreed by a small community of physicists that the best physics is Einsteinian. Then the scientific standard for physics will be Einsteinian physics. At best there may be motivation to replace the Newtonian folk theory by the scientific standard through educational reform, reprimands, inquisitions, etc. Yet it cannot be the case that we should treat sentences employed by ordinary folk in their normal discourse as false just because they are false under the .interpretation of their constituent terms in standard physics. These speakers are wrong about what the best theory is**:** there is a better theory for explaining the phenomena they observe. Yet, they are not thereby doing a poor job of applying the terms of Einsteinian physics.

Let's return to the psychological explanation of Oedipus's behaviour. Here is one statement that someone might employ to capture the situation:

(1) Oedipus married Mother because he didn't realize that Jocasta was Mother.

David Braun claims that (1) is explanatorily equivalent with

(2) Oedipus married Mother because he didn't realize that Jocasta was Jocasta.

Since both statements have the same proposition as semantic content, the NTPA proponent will claim, they cannot differ in explanatory content, since they say the

exact same thing about the world. How can two sentences which express the same truth about the world differ in their explanatory content? People don't think that the two statements are explanatorily equivalent, according to Braun, for the familiar reason we noted in the first two chapters. They internally represent (1) and (2) by means of distinct mental sentences and they mistake the cognitive difference between the two distinct mental sentences for a semantic difference between (1) and (2).

While this suggestion is plausible, I think that there is an important difference between the application of Braun's psychological strategy to attitude ascriptions considered in isolation, and its application to the phenomenon of folk explanation as a whole. I will try to explicate the problem with generalizing upon Braun's psychological explanation in the rest of this section and move on to consider a resolution in the following section.

NTPA is committed to claiming that any utterance of (3) is false:

(3) Oedipus doesn't realize that he is marrying Mother.

This statement is false because Oedipus *does* realize that he is marrying mother when he thinks of her as Jocasta, and so its negation (4) is true:

(4) Oedipus realizes that he is marrying Mother.

In the second chapter I claimed that the decision to take (3) to be false and take the negation of (3) to be true is due to NTPA's commitment to the following

principle (Bias Against Negation):

> **(BAN)** Positive BEL-propositions entail positive believes-propositions, while negative BEL-propositions do not entail negative believes-propositions.

We can equally hold that (3) is true and its negation, (4), is strictly speaking false. This would amount to accepting the opposite of BAN, namely BAA (Bias Against Affirmation). We can spell out BAA as follows:

> **(BAA)** An affirmative belief ascription whose 'that'-clause has singular propositional content (like (4)) is false if there is a mode of presentation (relevant for purposes of explanation and prediction) under which the believer fails to believe the content of the 'that'-clause.

Note that BAA requires only that the believer fails to possess mental sentences that are relevant to explanation and prediction of their behaviour in some particular context. Also, and in some sense more importantly, BAA is a principle concerning the *truth-value* (rather than the meaning) of belief ascriptions.

If we put aside the features of the NTPA framework which favour BAN, specifically the idea that the belief-relation is an existential generalization of the BEL-relation, the linguistic evidence does not count overwhelmingly in favour of BAN. The felt lack of aptness of statements like (4) provide prima facie support for BAA, and such statements are neither unsystematic nor rare, it is part and

parcel of the ways we speak about one another.

Since BAN and BAA cancel each other out, we have no definitive means, outside of the theoretical commitments of NTPA, for deciding which of the competing principles ought to win out. This seems to provide us with reason for adopting a contextualist attitude towards the situation. Whether BAA or BAN guides our decision with regards to the truth-value of a belief report depends on some contextual feature(s). I will return to this suggestion below.

Does the mental sentence account Braun relies on allow us even to state how BAA might be implemented? We clearly cannot demand that Oedipus simply does not have any sentence extensionally equivalent to "I am marrying mother" in his belief box in order for (3) to be true. He does, after all, have the mental sentence "I am marrying Jocasta" in his belief-box. Instead we might require that a certain sentence be included in Oedipus's belief box: "I am not marrying mother". Of course, not believing P and believing that not-P are logically independent, however they are not *explanatorily independent*. Here then is my suggestion for how we might handle the situation: In certain cases where an ascription of the belief P is understood as being relevant to an explanation of Oedipus's action, his having not-P in his belief-box *can* cancel out his also having P in his belief box, rendering "Oedipus doesn't believe that P" true. The point is that in making negative reports we are not claiming that the believer fails to have mental states with a certain propositional content. Rather we are claiming that,

among those states that are relevant to the believer's deliberations with regards to a contextually salient issue, there are none which might count against the verdict that the believer fails to believe P.

Oedipus's behaviour is to be explained by reference to the story we know about him. Some of his mental sentences are more relevant to explaining his transgression than others, given what we know of the story. Oedipus tries extremely hard to avoid marrying his mother, yet his efforts are frustrated. The intuitive explanation for his failure is that Oedipus decided to marry a woman named "Jocasta" thinking that she is not his mother. Oedipus's mental sentence, #I am marrying Jocasta# is only relevant to an explanation of his transgression when coupled with his belief that Mother is *not* Jocasta *as this belief occurs in his deliberations on the subject.* While Oedipus also (trivially) believes the proposition that Mother *is* Jocasta because he believes that Jocasta is self-identical, this trivial belief does not enter into his action-directed deliberations.

Above I claimed that we might avoid the conclusions of the NTPA proponents by arguing that attitude reports do not pick out mental states widely, but narrowly. That is to say, if attitude ascriptions ascribe narrow contents then the binary analysis of believing that NTPA provides is inadequate to the task. The considerations regarding explanation might however allow us to block the NTPA conclusions without appealing to narrow content, and moreover without

dispensing with a binary belief-relation account. The attempts at carving out the difference between narrow and wide content have been far from productive, and there has been little agreement about the distinction. If we understand narrow content states as precisely those states which are contextually relevant for the purpose of explaining and predicting an agent's behaviour, there seems to be no need for engaging in a difficult debate as to the metaphysical nature of narrow content. We can instead claim that the truth-values the folk ascribe to attitude reports differ from the truth-values NTPA mandates because the folk truth-evaluations are sensitive to the explanatory import of the states being ascribed.

IV.3 Desiderata and how to meet them

Our aim is to provide an account of attitude ascriptions which allows us to keep the referentialist core of NTPA while resolving the truth-value discrepancy problem. The following features seem desirable in light of considerations that emerged in previous chapters:

1. Deviation from NTPA should be well-motivated.

2. It is preferable to provide a semantic solution, if one is available, since all things considered, intuition should be preserved.

3. The account should be phenomenologically realistic, taking referential expressions to refer to the objects we pre-reflectively take them to refer to.

4. Systematicity should be preserved.

5. De re / De dicto differences should be accounted for within the framework of the account.

I want to begin by explaining why the contextualist accounts that appeal to Modes of Presentation are inadequate to the task of resolving the problem. There are three reasons that we can put forward here: (a) If we take ordinary speakers to be talking about agents' mental representations in uttering propositional attitude ascriptions, then the force of our criticism of Salmon's Pragmatic Explanation approach disappears. That criticism, following Braun, relied precisely on the implausibility of taking people to refer to or mentally consider the modes of presentation of agents. (b) Such an account would require us to give up the third desideratum. When ascribing propositional attitudes to someone we seem to be talking about the objects of their attitudes, not about internal mental states of the agents. When we say that Lois believes that Clark Kent is nearby we are saying that she believes something about that very individual, we are not marking a distinction among Lois's ways of thinking of the individual. (c) The fifth desideratum becomes hard to satisfy. It is unclear how to account for the fact that speakers often are confused, or perhaps unconcerned, about how the agent they ascribe beliefs to thinks of the object of belief. As we noted in chapter 3, this is the reason Crimmins needs to reject the availability of *de re* readings. Since *de re* readings often present themselves as the only reasonable ones, as Reimer points

out, the challenge of denying these readings *en bloc* is substantial.

These points make a strong case against the Crimmins or Richard types of contextualist accounts. This is bad news because those accounts seemed to provide us (at least to a large extent) with the intuitive truth-values of attitude reports. How exactly then can we develop an account which meets the desiderata, one that fits somehow in the logical space between NTPA and Contextualism? To answer this question I will turn to a new emerging account of semantic evaluation, proposed by Stefano Predelli and John MacFarlane. I start by providing Predelli's take on semantic evaluation and move on to discuss MacFarlane's.

IV.4 Predelli's Account of Semantic Evaluation

In his 2005 paper "The Price of Innocent Millianism", Stefano Predelli has argued that the debate over the merits of Millian accounts of attitude ascription has been improperly formulated. On the one hand we have NTPA theorists offering a plausible and systematic bottom-up account of semantic content, one which mandates a certain distribution of truth-values to attitude reports. On the other hand we have the facts as to ordinary speakers' evaluation of belief reports. Since there is disagreement between the evaluation mandated by NTPA and the evaluation of ordinary speakers, the participants of the debate have argued either that we have to consider ordinary speakers to be mistaken about the truth-values of the ascriptions or that we have to give up on the bottom-up semantics of

NTPA.

Predelli disagrees with both of these resolutions of the conflict, and argues for a third option. He notes that the intensional profile of sentences, under NTPA, only licences the counterintuitive truth-value assignments under a particular construal of the points of evaluation (POEs). It licenses the truth-values it does when POEs are taken to be possible worlds understood as "ways things may be". He claims that "the parameters with respect to which the module relativizes the assignment of truth-values to sentence-index pairs may be understood as 'possible worlds' only on an understanding of possible worlds as items able to provide a definite answer to questions of the relevant kind." (Predelli, pg.349) By 'module' here Predelli is referring to the NTPA itself considered as a functional apparatus that takes sentences as input and delivers as output functions from those sentences in context to truth-values, relative to POEs. These output functions constitute the *intensional profile* of a sentence. Predelli claims that POEs need to be construed as items "able to provide definite answers" to certain questions, by which he means that the items need to be capable of delineating what counts as falling under the extension of the predicates contained in the uttered sentence. The reason can be best seen by considering examples.

Let's return to the example considered in the third chapter of someone uttering (5)

(5) Bob cut the grass.

Under a conception of POEs as unrestricted possible worlds, the module takes as input the sentence relative to a time assignment, presumably the moment of utterance, and provides as output truth-values relative to any possible world. If in a certain possible world Bob exists and he engaged in the activity of cutting grass prior to the utterance, the utterance is true at that POE. Predelli objects to this semantic evaluation procedure, claiming that possible worlds do not suffice to establish the truth of (5). The truth-value assignment of (5) at a given POE depends in part on whether the candidate activity Bob performs there *counts as falling under the extension of the predicate* "cut the grass". (Predelli, pg.350) Which events and objects are understood by language users to satisfy which predicates is a contextual matter, depending on how speakers and hearers actually employ those terms.

To simplify matters we can describe Predelli's position as the view that there is a distinction between the intensional profile of a sentence and its truth-functional profile. All that NTPA delivers is the intensional profile of a sentence, whereas its truth-functional profile depends crucially on contextual differences among how words are actually used. Debates over the viability of NTPA have not acknowledged this possibility because philosophers of language in the referentialist tradition have assumed that the intensional profile is the truth-functional profile, perhaps subject to certain pragmatic processes. Ordinary language users' intuitions are intuitions concerning the truth-functional profile of sentences, so they cannot be used to argue against NTPA. Likewise, claims

Predelli, nor can NTPA theorists argue on the basis of the intensional profile of sentences that ordinary language users are mistaken in their truth-value assignments.

So far we have discussed how Predelli's account deals with truth-value discrepancy for certain simple sentences. We need to consider now how the account deals with propositional attitude constructions. Predelli takes a fairly orthodox contextualist line on belief-reports. He introduces the notion of 'cognitive media' which refers to the way in which information is presented. (Predelli, pg. 352) Consider two utterances of (6) and (7):

(6) Bob believes that Samuel Clemens is signing autographs

(7) Bob believes that Mark Twain is signing autographs

According to Predelli, in some contexts the type of media under which the relevant information communicated by both (6) and (7) is presented is salient for the purpose of conversation, while in some contexts it is not. As a result, the reports can receive different truth-values in different contexts, not because of any differences in their respective intensional profiles, but rather because what counts as satisfying the predicate "believes that X is signing autographs" can differ depending on Bob's sensitivity to some rather than other names of the author. (Ibid) On Predelli's account of the evaluation of belief-reports people count a belief report as true if the agent believes the information it encodes *as it encodes it* in scenarios where the encoding makes a difference to the agent's behaviour.

Where the means of encoding is irrelevant, truth-evaluation depends solely on whether the agent believes the relevant information contained in the ‘that’-clause.

It is unclear whether this kind of approach is capable of handling the various challenges raised by belief reporting that it needs to handle. One specific issue that the account does not have the resources to handle is cases involving significant changes in the object of singular belief. Here is an example:

Imagine the conversion of Constantinople to Istanbul and assume that the following events occur according to the timeline bellow:

- at time t0 the city is named "Constantinople" and it's full of churches and Christians and crosses, etc.

- at time t1 the conversion occurs.

- at time t2 the city is named "Istanbul" and it's full of mosques and Muslims and old men counting beads.

Bob was a resident of Constantinople at time t0, but had to leave because of the riot caused by an atheistic treatise he wrote. Consider that Bob has been in exile all through time t1 and was not aware of the conversion. Now at time t2 we find him having a conversation with someone (in Central Europe) about Constantinople and he says how wonderful Constantinople is. Bob really believes Constantinople is a wonderful place.

Consider now a bystander and a friend are having a quarrel at time t2 over whether the city after all its changes is still beautiful. If one of the parties to the quarrel (call him Jonah) were to point to Bob and say "see, he agrees with me: he thinks Istanbul is beautiful" I would argue that he does not speak truly. This is because they are discussing the *current* state of the city, something that Bob has no idea about. The use of different names for the city here is not relevant. The example would work just as well if the city had retained the name Constantinople. Predelli's account has little to say here about the intuitive truth-value of Jonah's belief report because the way the object is presented by the name (the media) isn't of importance. As such, while the Predelli account can offer a way to accommodate intuition in the Clemens/Twain type examples, it has little to offer in the present situation. The context sensitivity involved here goes beyond mere sensitivity to names.

What counts as rendering true the report "Bob believes that X is beautiful" depends not on whether the agent believes the information as it is encoded, but rather on the relationship between the report and the implicit or explicit background of the context. We can see then that Predelli's solution involving media-sensitivity is just a special case of the broader account of intuitions presented in section 2 of the present chapter. Media-sensitivity affects the truth-value of a belief report when the requirement that a belief be sensitive in this way is part of the shared presuppositions of the context. In the Constantinople type of example the belief is evaluated relative to a certain stage in the career of

the singular object, Constantinople.

It was also said in the last section that the truth-value of belief reports depends on whether the reports have a place within an *explanation* of agents' behavior or dispositions for behavior. Clearly Jonah's aim in ascribing the belief to Bob is not essentially predictive-explanatory. Yet presumably Jonah takes what Bob said to be explained by the fact that he believes that the city is beautiful. In the context under consideration however, where the topic of discussion is the present state of the city, the ascription fails to satisfy its explanatory purpose. The ascription is irrelevant to the question it is meant to bear upon, namely whether the city in its present state is beautiful. While the explanation of Bob's verbal behaviour is not the topic of conversation, the explanatory function of the attitude ascription is nevertheless essential to its relevance to the conversation.

Strictly speaking Predelli cannot be faulted for not offering an account which can handle the Constantinople case, since the aim of his paper is not to show how intuitions about belief reports can best be reconciled with NTPA. Rather his task is to show that intuitions regarding the truth value of certain attitude ascriptions does not require one to abandon Millianism. The belief reporting cases which are typically used against Millianism are of the Clemens/Twain variety since these cases seem to show that names must contribute more to semantically expressed propositions than their referents. The present task of this chapter however is to find a systematic account of the attitudes

which explains the intuitive truth values language users assign to belief reports generally. I turn now to another recent argument for a position similar to Predelli's.

IV.5 MacFarlane's Non-Indexical Contextualism

Predelli's motivation for making a distinction between the intensional and the truth-functional profile of sentences is to show how Millianism and ordinary speakers' truth-evaluation can be reconciled. John Macfarlane argues for much the same distinction, however he does so in an attempt to reconcile Lepore and Capellen's Minimalism with Contextualism. He proposes to do so by discussing sentences involving comparatives (e.g. "is tall") and showing that the minimalist analysis of such sentences has troubling consequences. MacFarlane does not discuss the issue of attitude ascriptions, so it is unclear whether he intends his account to extend to such constructions, however his treatment of other alleged context sensitive expressions provides a framework that allows for a similar treatment of the truth value discrepancy problem for NTPA.

Consider a sentence involving a comparative:

(8) Bob is tall

This sentence, according to the Minimalists, expresses the proposition <Bob, *being tall*>. Comparative adjectives like "tall" fall outside the Basic Set of context-sensitive expressions that Minimalists allow for. Yet it is unclear just

what property is being ascribed to Bob by this sentence, because it seems that Bob will count as being tall compared to some things and not so compared to others. How can Bob simply possess the property of tallness, irrespective of some comparison class? Cappelen and Lepore respond to this challenge in their *Insensitive Semantics* by claiming that this question is not for the semanticist to answer, but rather for the metaphysician. (Cappelen and Lepore, 2005, pg.164) However, MacFarlane thinks that this response is insufficient. If, as appears evident, metaphysicians cannot answer this question in a satisfactory way, the blame ought to lie with the semantic theory that burdens the metaphysicians with this impossible task. (MacFarlane, pg.243)

To resolve this issue, MacFarlane suggests that the POE for a sentence ascribing a property like "tallness" requires a further "counts-as parameter", which "fixes what things have to be like in order to count as having the property of tallness". (MacFarlane, pg.246) According to him POEs need to be understood as pairs consisting of a world and a counts-as parameter. (*Ibid*) The counts-as parameter limits what counts as falling under the extension of predicates at POEs. This proposal, according to MacFarlane, integrates Minimalism and Radical Contextualism into an account that satisfies the concerns of each.

As a result of treating POEs as pairs of worlds and counts-as parameters, it follows that some sentences, such as (8) above, do not have intensions. (MacFarlane, pg.246) There are no functions from these sentences in context at

worlds to truth-values. Bob might count as falling under the extension of ‘tall’ in a circumstance where we are discussing average people, and he might count as falling outside the extension of ‘tall’ in a circumstance when we are discussing average professional basketball players. Since both these circumstances can occur at the same world, it follows that there is no one truth-value that can be assigned to the (8) at that world. This is just a simple consequence of any view which takes POEs to be more narrowly defined than possible worlds.

Despite the similarities between Perdelli’s reflections on belief reports and MacFarlane’s reflections on sentences involving comparatives, there is an important point of divergence in terms of how they deal with intensions. If ‘intensional profile’ refers to that aspect of sentences in contexts which assigns them a truth value relative to a possible world then belief reports do not seem to have intensions, just as sentences involving comparatives do not. MacFarlane proposes that we give up on intensions when it comes to comparatives whereas Predelli proposes that there *is* an intensional profile to belief-reports even though it does not always issue truth values which accord with intuition. How can Predelli have it both ways, that is how can he maintain that (6) and (7) have identical intensional profiles while at the same time holding that the truth-conditions of utterances of (6) and (7) can differ?

According to Predelli (6) and (7) have identical intensional profiles because they do not contain indexical expressions and differ only in the fact that

they contain different coreferential proper names, which is irrelevant given that we are assuming NTPA. The intensional profile for (6) and (7) yields truth at all POEs where a belief-relation holds between Bob and the singular proposition <Clemens/Twain, is signing autographs>. This requires us, it would seem, to dispense with the intuitive difference in truth-value. Again Predelli's response to the clash between NTPA and intuitions involves marking a distinction between the truth-condition of an utterance of a sentence and the output of the NTPA module. Predelli claims that "a module's output may not always immediately be translated into conclusions suitable for a comparison with intuitions." (Predelli, pg. 394) Rather, he conceives of the module's output as one stage in the determination of truth values. What else lies between the output from the module and the truth-conditional profile? Predelli offers the following:

> On an understanding of 'semantic theory' as a theoretical device able to justify and explain the interpretation of an utterance in terms of a particular truth-conditional profile, a semantic theory needs to include additional hypotheses, regarding the appropriate understanding of the module's results. [...] Which hypotheses are appropriate at a level logically posterior to the assignment of intensions does of course depend upon aspects peculiar to the context in which the utterance under analysis has taken place, such as the speaker's interests or the topic of conversation. (Predelli, pg. 394)

I want to make two points with regard to Predelli's views on semantic evaluation: (1) If the intensional profile delivered by the module is simply a function from a possible world to a truth-value, then any semantic theory whose aim is to account

for the intuitive truth-value of an uttered sentence has no interest in intensional profiles. The whole problem, after all, is that the output of the NTPA module is (sometimes) counterintuitive. Intensional profiles have no role to play in a semantic theory as such theories are described by Predelli in the above passage. They are red-herrings in the process of semantic evaluation. (2) If we choose instead to consider intensional profiles as functions from sentence-index pairs at worlds interpreted in light of certain hypotheses to truth-values, i.e. if we choose to equate the intensional profile with the truth-conditional profile, then (a) we give up the traditional sense of 'intensional' and (b) the hypotheses become part of the *content* of the utterance of the sentence.

I take both (1) and (2) to be unwelcome. (1) maintains the incompatibility of NTPA and intuitive truth-values, forcing us to give up on one or the other, while (2) affects a merger which is essentially not substantially different from orthodox contextualism.

From this vantage point I think that the best option is to give up on intensions for attitude ascriptions, as MacFarlane suggests doing for sentences involving gradal adjectives. Treat the module as delivering functions from sentence-index pairs at worlds to contents at those worlds, rather than truth-values. Take the hypotheses that Predelli discusses to filter those contents which count as properly belonging to the sentence in context, and finally call *those* contents the truth-conditions of the sentence. This option, unlike (2) above,

does allow the NTPA module to be independent from the hypotheses relevant to circumstances. It also shows how the NTPA module can be relevant to a semantic theory: By specifying the singular proposition that a belief report expresses in a context, NTPA specifies the total set of worldly conditions that would render the sentence true prior to consideration at specific circumstances of what is taken by language users to fall under the extension of predicates. As such, the proposition a belief sentence expresses when uttered in some context does not *determine* the truth of the sentence, but rather constrains it. Depending on the circumstance in which it is uttered, a statement of (7) may be true or it may be false. Which it is has to do with the predictive or explanatory task it is intended to fulfill, and whether it does fulfill those tasks.

When abstracting from every POE, the semantic content of a sentence can be seen as the set of all worldly conditions that *can* render the sentence true. For (5) this would include all the possible activities that involve Bob and blades of grass and incisions, including all the bizarre ones I discussed in chapter 3. However, even when we relativize to a possible world, say the actual one in which (5) is uttered, the number of worldly conditions that can fill the role of semantic content for (5) is astounding. If the truth of an utterance of "there's milk in the fridge" depends solely on whether there is *any* worldly condition that satisfies the predicate then that utterance can be rendered true by the presence of both suitable amounts of milk in a container and by the presence of miniscule amounts of dried up clunks of milk sticking to a shelf. Even on the most austere

views regarding semantic content however, such as Cappelen and Lepore's version of Semantic Minimalism, it is argued that semantic content plays an important role in communication. It is a notion that is relevant both to determining what a speaker says as well as what the speaker implicates when they are not speaking literally. Korta and Perry rightly raise the concern that the very notion of semantic content which Cappelen and Lepore are discussing would be entirely uninteresting if minimal propositions were not relevant in this way. (Korta and Perry, pg.109) If semantic content, relative to the actual world, is unconstrained in the way mentioned, then the notion of semantic content cannot play the communicative function that it is understood to play. As such, if the interpretation of an utterance of (5) leaves open all of the possible combinations of activities that involve cutting and grass and Bob then it is incredibly difficult to assess whether the speaker spoke truly or not, thereby rendering communication itself incredibly difficult.

To return to belief reporting, when someone says "Lois believes that Clark Kent will show up to work today", the proposition semantically expressed by the sentence embedded in the 'that'-clause can obtain in two importantly different ways. The proposition can be rendered true by the worldly condition of the individual showing up to work disguised as the clumsy reporter, or it can be rendered true by the individual showing up in superhero costume. Ordinary language users mark a sharp distinction between these two worldly conditions because the point of belief reporting is to say something very specific about Lois

which is sensitive to one of these worldly conditions being realized *rather than the other*. The predictive and explanatory functions of the report would be entirely undermined if either one or the other of the worldly conditions which are represented by the singular proposition might be taken as a satisfactory truth-condition for the utterance.

Immediately the account we arrive at recommends itself as a candidate for our purpose of constructing a semantics for attitude ascriptions because it satisfies desiderata 1 and 2. What might be said with respect to the systematicity requirement? As I argued above, we have good motivation for separating the intensional profile of sentences from their truth-functional profile along the lines Predelli suggests, otherwise the very notion of semantic content is rendered irrelevant to linguistic practice. As regards the systematicity requirement the issue is a bit more complicated. In part the account is systematic since it employs NTPA to determine the semantic content of larger units such as sentences from the semantic contents of their constituents and how they are put together. In part it is not systematic since the issue of whether a sentence is true at a POE depends on contextual specificities such as speaker and hearer interests, intentions, social conventions, etc. There is no reason however to think that a systematic semantics ought to guarantee a systematic distribution of truth-conditions to sentences across contexts even if we focus on the subset of non-indexical linguistic expressions. The failure of this latter kind of systematicity is explainable by a very simple fact: Agreement among speakers of a language (and even more

specifically among conversational participants in a given situation) as to what satisfies a predicate is a local affair since language use must cater to the needs, interests and limitations of those speakers. What activities count as "grass-cuttings" depends on communal agreement and is governed by practical constraints. Nevertheless, as mentioned, the semantic content of complex expressions is compositionally determined from the contents of the constituents, and this may give us enough systematicity.

We have, I think, an even more satisfying way to achieve systematicity for attitude ascriptions when we appeal to the explanation-based treatment of ascriptions discussed above. The explanation-based treatment of attitude ascriptions evaluates sentences as parts of explanations rather than as isolated statements. The semantic properties of attitude-ascribing sentences relative to contexts is restricted in definite ways by the information speakers and hearers are interested in, i.e. by their explanatory purposes. As such, while the semantics for attitude ascriptions is relative, it is relative to the explanations within which the ascriptions figure, not relative *tout court*.

As regards the phenomenological constraint, this desideratum also seems to be satisfied since the account takes the names embedded in the 'that'-clauses of attitude reports to refer to the individuals the names refer to, rather than modes of presentation. The *de re* vs. *de dicto* distinction can also be accounted for: That distinction tracks a real difference among circumstances of evaluation. Those

circumstances of evaluation where reports depend crucially for their explanatory relevance on the agent having a mental state that is narrowly individuated are circumstances that require a *de dicto* reading. Circumstances that do not impose such constraints, are circumstances where a *de re* reading is optimal.

Furthermore, the Predelli - MacFarlane account of semantic evaluation seems to furnish us with precisely what we need in order to incorporate the explanatory role of belief-reports into the semantic evaluation procedure. The discussion in the last section ended with the consideration that perhaps we can account for the truth-value discrepancy problem by taking explanatory relevance to select from among the agent's states those that ordinary speakers actually pick out with their ascriptions. We need to adjudicate here whether the explanation account presented there is overall more satisfactory than the media-based contextualist account Predelli himself offers.

To begin with, consider once more how the Predelli account differs from the contextualist accounts of Crimmins and Richard. On the standard contextualist accounts intuitive truth assignments are preserved either (1) *a la* Richard, by treating 'believes' as an indexical that is sensitive to contextual restrictions, or (2) *a la* Crimmins, by taking modes of presentation to be unarticulated constituents of the propositions expressed by a report in a context. As such, intuitions are preserved in each case by modifying the intensional profile of belief-sentences. The trouble with option (1) is that it does not seem right to claim that 'believes'

picks out a different relation in (6) than it does when it occurs in (7) if the simple sentences embedded in their 'that'-clauses are afforded the NTPA evaluation. The term 'believes' can only affect the truth-value of the sentence if it picks out different relations in different contexts. However, since the relata of the belief relation is the same for (6) as it is for (7), there is nothing that can provide the needed difference in belief-relation. The problem with (2) is that it fails to satisfy the phenomenology desideratum. On Predelli's account intuitive truth assignments are preserved not by making any such modifications but rather by taking the semantic content assigned by NTPA as only a partial contributor to the truth-functional profile along with something else, namely specific information as to what counts as satisfying the belief predicate in the context of utterance.

The account that has been developed so far in this section seems to reasonably capture the semantics of attitude ascriptions. I do think however that some will find the approach less than fully satisfactory. The challenge is specific to the belief report sentences rather than the simple sentences discussed above or ones involving comparatives. Here is how the challenge might be stated:

Predelli's conception of semantic evaluation makes it the semanticist's business to discover what hypotheses are relevant to the truth-evaluation of a belief report. But these hypotheses, as Predelli mentions, need to be sensitive to details regarding speaker interests and intentions. What tools does the semanticist have at her disposal for classifying relevant hypotheses, or more bluntly put, what

ARE hypotheses such that a semanticist might figure them out?

The account needs to be amended so that Predelli's hypotheses or (equivalently) the contents of MacFarlane's "counts-as" parameter do not appear as *ad hoc* additions useful only for the purpose of getting the intuitively right truth-conditions for belief reports. They cannot be magical black-boxes in our semantic theory.

IV.6 Incorporating Relationism

One proposal for how this can be achieved is by incorporating Fine's relationism into our present framework and taking what counts as satisfying the belief predicate to depend on semantic relations among statements. The semantic relations that are relevant are the non-intrinsic semantic relations holding among the sentences that constitute an explanation, rather than a disorganized set of speaker interests and intuitions.

Using Kit Fine's notion of 'coordination' as an extrinsic relation that holds amongst co-referring terms, I suggest that differences in the referring expressions speakers employ in 'that'-clauses might affect the truth-value of reports in different ways depending on whether those expressions are coordinated with the expressions occurring in other attitude ascriptions we seem licensed to make in those contexts. Which attitude ascriptions might these be? In light of what has been said in the previous section, we can claim that the ascription needs to be coordinated with other (actual or possible) ascriptions which together jointly form

a folk-psychological explanation of the agent's behaviour.

Can a relationist account focussed on 'coordination' actually help with the account under consideration? To answer this question I will briefly examine two proposals for how a relationist semantics for belief reports might be developed. The first of these proposals is suggested by Scott Soames in a critical paper on Fines's *Semantic Relationism*. (Soames, 2010, pg.469) The second proposal is advanced by Fine in response to some of the worries raised by Soames. I will argue that the Soames proposal is the more plausible of the two and also more amenable to the explanatory account I seek to provide. First, some comments on relationism.

As applied to the truth discrepancy problem, Semantic Relationism attempts to resolve the problem in the same way that it resolves the problem of informativeness for simple sentences, by appealing to the relational semantic property of coordination. (9), below, differs from (10) insofar as the agent is belief-related to a coordinated proposition in the one case and belief-related to an uncoordinated proposition in the other:

(9) Lois believes that Superman is Clark Kent

(10) Lois believes that Superman is Superman

While these sorts of sentences are unproblematic, others cannot be afforded the same relational analysis. Consider the following two sentences:

(11) Lois believes Superman is nearby

(12) Lois believes Clark Kent is nearby

Whereas the names embedded in the 'that'-clauses of (9) and (10) bear different relational properties to one another, no such difference in coordination holds for the 'that'-clauses of (11) and (12). What might the relationist say about these sentences if the truth-value difference cannot be arrived at as before?

Scott Soames suggests one way the relationist might tackle this problem. (Soames, 2010, pg. 469) While (11) and (12) might not exhibit relational differences when considered in isolation they do so when embedded in the context of other reports. The following discourses bear this out:

(13) Lois believes that Superman is nearby. Lois believes she is talking to Superman.

(14) Lois believes that Clark Kent is nearby. Lois believes she is talking to Superman.

The second sentences in (13) and (14) may either be explicitly stated or presupposed by conversational participants at the time of utterance of (11) and (12). Discourses (13) and (14) do differ in their relational properties, since the two occurrences of "Superman" in (13) are coordinated, whereas the occurrences of "Clark Kent" and "Superman" in (14) are not. The first sentence of (14) might be true, while the first sentence of (13) false because the correlation exhibited by

(13) requires, unlike (14), that Lois's beliefs are themselves coordinated.

Regarding this proposal, Soames says (and Fine agrees) that "[although] these results are fine they do not go far enough", and the solution will not work "in the many discourses in which antecedent assumptions about the agents' beliefs are not part of the shared presuppositions of speaker / hearers' utterances …" (Soames, 2010, pg.470) It is unclear precisely why Fine and Soames think the account does not go far enough. Were the conversational context so impoverished that the participants do not know what other sentences regarding Lois's beliefs to accept aside from (11) and (12), presumably they would not in the first place be capable of discerning the truth of (11) and (12) either.

While the semantic difference between (13) and (14) explains why someone might think that (11) can differ in truth value from (12), it seems as though we want more from the Soames proposal than just this explanatory feature. We want the Soames-style account to mark a real difference between what (11) says and what (12) says! And patently it does. (11) and (12) report beliefs of Lois's that play distinct roles in her reasoning. (13) entails that Lois believes that she's talking to the person she thinks is nearby, whereas (14) doesn't.

As mentioned, Fine rejects Soames's proposal and attempts to respond to the belief sentence truth-value discrepancy problem by denying a critical assumption that underlies the problem:

(SB) If the sentence S expresses the proposition p, then the belief report 'John

believes that S' is true iff John believes p. (Fine, 2010, pg. 476)

If the truth of a belief report doesn't depend solely on the agent believing the proposition expressed in its 'that'-clause, then the relationist does not have to ascribe the same truth-value to (11) and (12). But then what else goes into the truth-value assignment for a belief sentence? Fine claims that the 'that'-clause of the belief report must be coordinated with the belief of the agent. The worry that Fine notices with pushing this line, and which he tries to alleviate, is that it seems as though we cannot give up (SB) while holding on to the compositionality of meaning for belief sentences. Here is how he states the worry:

> [Under] a compositional semantics, the meaning of a belief report such as 'John believes that S' will depend upon the meaning of its parts - say, 'John', 'believes that', and 'S'. But under the relationist semantics, there is nothing for the meaning of 'S' to be other than the proposition that it expresses. So it follows that, if S and S' express the same proposition, then 'John believes that S' and 'John believes that S'' will have the same meaning and will therefore have the same truth-value. (Fine, 2010, pg.477)

To remedy the situation, Fine provides a relationist compositional semantics for attitude-ascribing sentences. Even to someone willing to go along with relationism however the compositional semantics he provides will smack of mysticism.

The relationist compositional semantics Fine proposes requires that the individuals referred to by the names in a belief-report be understood as *abstracta*

in total semantic space. Semantic space is the set of all propositions that are the objects of "propositional acts" such as believing, desiring, accepting, asserting, etc. The propositions making up semantic space are coordinated with one another depending on whether their constituents are linked in appropriate ways. A compositional semantics is achievable on this model, according to Fine, because any two belief sentences which differ only with respect to the coreferential names embedded in their 'that'-clauses will pick out distinct token propositions in total semantic space. These propositions may be intrinsically identical, yet the objects of semantic space are defined as mentioned not only by their intrinsic properties but also partially by their place within the universal body of propositions. As Fine puts it, relationism at the sentence level becomes under the current proposal relationism at the semantic level.

This proposal is both counterintuitive and avoidable. It is counterintuitive because part of the solution involves claiming that the individual "Hesperus" picks out is distinct from the individual that "Phosphorus" picks out in semantic space. As a result, identity sentences such as "Clark is Superman" cannot ever be said to be true in the intuitive sense that there are not two individuals but only one. The token individuals referred to by the names flagging the identity signs are different on Fine's proposal. This consequence appears to be more devastating than the problem the proposal attempts to answer in the first place since I assume that the identity of "Phosphorus" and "Hesperus" is non-negotiable in the absence of the above consideration regarding semantic space.

The proposal is also avoidable. To see this, consider that a compositional semantics can be construed as showing how the meaning of a sentence is arrived at from the meaning of the constituent expressions plus syntax. (SB) on the other hand connects the meaning of the constituents to the *truth* of a belief-sentence. Applying the Predelli – MacFarlane distinction between semantic contents and truth-conditions here, we can claim that the semantic content of a belief sentence is arrived at from the semantic contents of the constituent expressions. The truth of a belief sentence is another matter, and its calculation requires a specification at a POE of conditions on what counts as satisfying the belief predicate there.

The relationist-explanatory account offers a neat semantic way of determining what counts as satisfying the belief predicate. It is determined by means of the semantic relations between the belief report and the other constituents of an explanation that is relevant in the context under consideration. It might seem that the relationist-explanatory account has the added problem that belief-sentences cannot receive a truth-evaluation in the absence of contextually supplied implicit or explicit information regarding the situation of the believer. While I think this point must be conceded, it does not render the account less plausible. The intuitions that ordinary speakers have with regards to the truth-value of given reports (such as (9) – (12)) would themselves be significantly weakened if those speakers had no access to the type of cognitive facts in question.

IV.7 Summarzing the Account

The account we arrive at can be summarized as follows:

A belief report of the form “S believes that p”, where p is a sentence that expresses a singular proposition, has as its semantic content in a given context the proposition, <S, believing, <p>>. The truth-value of the report relative to a POE depends on whether a contextually relevant subset of the worldly conditions which can render the singular proposition expressed by p true obtains. Which worldly conditions might be relevant is relative to speaker-hearer interests and intentions. Given that the primary purpose of attitude-reporting is explanatory, the constraint on which worldly conditions would render the report true depends on the explanation the belief report figures in. The truth of the report then depends on whether the believer stands in the belief-relation to the *relevant* worldly condition for p, rather than whether the believer stands in the belief-relation to the singular proposition *as such*. A believer can stand in the belief relation to the same singular proposition while standing in distinct belief-relations to two worldly conditions both of which render that same singular proposition true. Which mental sentences occur in the believer’s belief-box determines which worldly conditions the believer is related to. Since distinct mental sentences have distinct inferential profiles, and since these inferential profiles are responsible for differences in the agent’s behaviour and thought processes, these distinctions are what explanations of the agent’s behaviour are sensitive to. Nevertheless the

reporter does not need to think about the agent's mental representations directly, since the explanation already limits which mental representations could be at issue indirectly by raising to explanatory salience some specific behaviours or inferences which are of interest to the audience.

These are the essential elements of the semantics of belief-reporting on the present picture, however as mentioned in the penultimate section of this chapter it will be worthwhile to incorporate relationism into the present framework, if only in order to avoid the charge that the hypotheses relevant to truth-evaluation are not systematic enough for the purpose of semantic theorizing. Not doing so might lead some to think that truth-evaluation is not really the subject matter for semantics, but rather for pragmatics. Coordination relations between the proper names occurring in a belief report and other referring expressions that occur in the statements that make up a salient explanation may allow us to keep track of semantic differences among belief reports. Take for example the following report made in response to an inquiry as to why it is that Lois Lane ran in a certain direction:

(15) Lois believes that Superman ran west.

An explanation of her behaviour should presumably include (perhaps among other statements) that Lois wanted to be safe, believed that Superman can offer her safety, noticed Superman running westward, decided to follow him, and thereby ran west. Explanations are linguistic, they are sets of statements, and so the name

occurring in the ‘that’-clause of an utterance of (15) needs to conform to the name of the individual as it occurs in the other statements that compose the explanation in order to be rationally compelling. Furthermore the kind of information that is embodied in the explanation, namely that Superman can offer her safety, attaches also to (15). It is because we take ‘Superman’ to refer to the person that can offer her safety in the explanation that the belief report has a place within the explanation. Substituting ‘Clark Kent’ for ‘Superman’ in an explanation of why Lois acted as she did would not preserve the inferential connections that jointly account for her behaviour. Coordination of the name in the ‘that’-clause with the name that figures in the rest of the explanation offers us a semantic means of capturing at the level of language relevant underlying differences at the level of thought.

This account avoids the problems encountered by the contextualist who resorts to unarticulated constituents. Unarticulated constituent analyses take belief reporters to single out with their utterances agents’ modes of presentation of objects. According to them, when someone says “Lois doesn’t realize that Clark Kent can fly” that someone is *explicitly representing* Lois’s ‘Clark Kent’-mode of presentation. The name that is employed in a belief report’s ‘that’-clause signals or makes salient a particular modes of presentation. It is because the reporter is saying something about Lois’s ‘Clark Kent’-mode of presentation (rather than her ‘Superman’-mode of presentation) that the report is true. Absent this condition, the report would be false, since patently Lois does realize that Clark Kent can fly

when she thinks of him as Superman. While this may seem reasonable sometimes, there are clear cases when this reading is implausible, for example when the reporter possesses no knowledge regarding the agent's ways of thinking or when the reporter is mistaken about the identity of the agent. How can this be however? Either modes of presentation are constituents of the propositions expressed by belief reports or they are not, no middle ground can be had here.

Our account does not have this problem because it does not take modes of presentation to be constituents of propositions at all. When someone says "Lois doesn't realize that Clark Kent can fly" that person only represents Clark Kent, not any of Lois's modes of presentation. The intuitive truth of the statement is accounted for in terms of the context in which the ascription is made, and more specifically in terms of the role of the ascription within an explanation of Lois's behaviour. The mental state that is pertinent for explaining Lois's behaviour *just happens to be* the very same mental state which involves her 'Clark Kent'-mode of presentation. As such, agents' modes of presentation are determined indirectly by their explanatory relevance not directly by taking speakers to talking about modes of presentation at the level of isolated reports. Essentially then the suggestion is that modes of presentation or mental sentences can be what the folk truth-value assessments are sensitive to, and yet they can serve this function *without themselves being represented within the semantics*. The truth of a belief report depends on whether the agent has a mental state which serves the explanatory or predictive goals which participants in a conversation are interested

in.

A belief report expresses a relation between the believer and a proposition. While the names employed in ‘that’-clauses do not themselves express information about modes of presentation, the names do have *relational* properties of cohering with the other names that are employed in the remaining statements (explicit and implicit) that make up the explanation. Without such coordination among names we would not have the inferential connections required for rational explanation.

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Appendix 1 - Sentence List for Chapter I

(1) Soren Kierkegaard authored *Fear and Trembling*

(2) <Soren Kierkegaard, having authored *Fear and Trembling*>

(U) You lost the election.

(3) Soren Kierkegaard is Johannes Climacus.

(4) <Soren Kierkegaard, = , Soren Kierkegaard>

(5) Soren Kierkegaard is Soren Kierkegaard.

(6) Soren Kierkegaard is a better author than Johannes Climacus.

(3') Soren Kierkegaard is the same height as Johannes Climacus

(5') Soren Kierkegaard is the same height as Soren Kierkegaard

(7) The person named "Soren Kierkegaard" is the person named "Johannes Climacus"

(8) The person named "Soren Kierkegaard" is the person named "Soren Kierkegaard"

(9) Kierkegaard was a contemporary of Johannes Climacus.

(10) <Kierkegaard, *being a contemporary of*, Johannes Climacus>

(11) <the bearer of "Kierkegaard", *being a contemporary of* , the bearer of "Johannes Climacus">

(12) My favorite author, Soren Kierkegaard, authored "Fear and Trembling"

(13a) The great Danish philosopher Soren Kierkegaard was the infamous author Johannes Climacus.

(13b) The great Danish philosopher Soren Kierkegaard used the penname "Johannes Climacus"

(14a) The great Danish philosopher Soren Kierkegaard was the great Danish philosopher Soren Kierkegaard.

(15) Hesperus is identical with Hesperus.

(16) Hesperus is identical with Phosphorus.

(17) The brightest heavenly body in the evening sky is identical with the brightest heavenly body in the evening sky.

(18) The brightest heavenly body in the evening sky is identical with the brightest heavenly body in the morning sky.

(19) Hesperus is following the same orbit as Phosphorus

(20) Hesperus is following the same orbit as Hesperus.

Appendix 2 – Sentence List for Chapter II

(S1) Thomas believes that Soren Kierkegaard is Johannes Climacus

(P1) <Thomas, *believes*, <Soren Kierkegaard, = , Johannes Climacus>>

(S2) Thomas believes that Soren Kierkegaard is Soren Kierkegaard.

(S3) Soren Kierkegaard is Johannes Climacus.

(S4) Soren Kierkegaard is Soren Kierkegaard.

(S5) Thomas believes that Johannes Climacus wrote *Fear and Trembling*.

(P2) <Thomas, *believing*, <Johannes Climacus, *writing*, *Fear and Trembling*>>

(P3) <Thomas, *BEL*, <Johannes Climacus, *writing*, Fear and Trembling>, m>

(S6) Thomas believes that Soren Kierkegaard wrote *Fear and Trembling*.

(S7) Bob believes that Samuel Clemens is a great writer.

(S8) Bob believes that Mark Twain is a great writer.

(S9) Peter believes that Paderewski is a talented musician.

(S10) Lois believes that Superman can fly.

(S11) Lois disbelieves that Clark Kent can fly.

(S12) Lois withholds belief from the proposition that Clark Kent can fly.

(S13) Lois does not believe that Clark Kent can fly under a guise similar to ‘Clark Kent can fly’.

(S10a) Lois believes that Superman, the person she is in love with, can fly.

(S10b) Lois believes that Superman, the local superhero, can fly.

(S14) Lois believes that Clark Kent can fly.

(S14a) Lois believes that Clark Kent, the timid reporter, can fly.

(S14b) Lois believes that Superman, her co-worker, can fly.

(MS1) #Lois believes that Superman can fly#

(MS2) #Lois does not believe that Clark Kent can fly#

(MS3) #Clark Kent is Superman#

(S15) Lois believes that Superman is running late.

(S16) Lois doesn’t believe that Clark Kent is running late.

(S17) Lois wants Superman to be there.

(S18) Lois doesn’t want Clark Kent to be there.

(P4) <Lois, wanting, <Superman/Kent, being-there>>

(P5) ~ <Lois, wanting, <Superman/Kent, being-there>>

Appendix 3 – Sentence List for Chapter III

(0) Bob believes that Mark Twain is a good author

(1) Bob believes that Sam Clemens is a good author

(2) Superman is Clark Kent

(2a) Clark Kent believes that Mark Twain wrote Huck Finn

(2b) Superman believes that Mark Twain wrote Huck Finn

(R1a) Clark Kent: "Mark Twain" →{"Samuel Clemens"}

(R1b) Superman: "Mark Twain" →{"Mark Twain"}

(R1a') <Clark Kent, mild-mannered-reporter mode of presentation>: "Mark Twain" → {"Samuel Clemens"}

(R1b') <Superman, man-of-steel mode of presentation>: "Mark Twain" → {"Mark Twain"}

(3b) This bag is over the weight limit at Pearson Airport

(3) This bag is the same bag I'm taking to Schipol

(3a) The bag I'm taking to Schipol is over the weight limit at Schipol Airport

(2a-dd) Superman believes, by means of a mental sentence which can be translated as "Mark Twain wrote Huck Finn", that Mark Twain wrote *Huck Finn*

(2b-dd) Clark Kent believes, by means of a mental sentence which can be translated as "Samuel Clemens wrote Huck Finn", that Mark Twain wrote *Huck Finn*

(4) Lois believes that Clark Kent is nearby.

(5) Lois believes that Superman is nearby.

(X) John believes that he is tall.

(Y) John believes he is not athletic.

(Z) John believes that he is a good athlete.

(6) Bob cut the grass.

(7) I put all the beer on ice.

(8) I spoke to everyone and could not get a straight answer as to where the lake is.

Appendix 4 – Sentence List for Chapter IV

(1) Oedipus married Mother because he didn't realize that Jocasta was Mother.

(2) Oedipus married Mother because he didn't realize that Jocasta was Jocasta.

(3) Oedipus doesn't realize that he is marrying Mother.

(4) Oedipus realizes that he is marrying Mother.

(5) Bob cut the grass.

(6) Bob believes that Samuel Clemens is signing autographs

(7) Bob believes that Mark Twain is signing autographs

(8) Bob is tall

(9) Lois believes that Superman is Clark Kent

(10) Lois believes that Superman is Superman

(11) Lois believes Superman is nearby

(12) Lois believes Clark Kent is nearby

(13) Lois believes that Superman is nearby. Lois believes she is talking to Superman.

(14) Lois believes that Clark Kent is nearby. Lois believes she is talking to Superman.