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Good News about the Description Theory of Names

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Abstract

This is an attempt at reviving Kneale's version of the description theory of names, which says that a proper name is synonymous with a definite description of the form 'the individual named so-and-so'. To begin with, I adduce a wide range of observations to show that names and overt definites are alike in all relevant respects. I then turn to Kripke's main objection against Kneale's proposal, and endeavour to refute it. In the remainder of the paper I elaborate on Kneale's analysis, adopting a theory of presupposition proposed by van der Sandt.

INTRODUCTION

At the end of the first lecture of *Naming and Necessity*, Kripke gives short shrift to Kneale's version of the description theory of names, according to which the meaning of a name N is 'the individual named N'. I have always felt that Kripke's criticism of this view falls wide of the mark, and that Kneale's position is essentially correct. In the following pages I try to justify this assessment, referring to Kneale's theory and its kin as 'quotation theories'; for their central claim is that the content of a name quotes the name itself.

Although occasionally Russell came quite close to defending the quotation theory, to the best of my knowledge its first proponent was Kneale (1962), who was taken to task for this by Kripke (1980). Subsequently the theory received support from Loar (1976), Bach (1981, 1987), Cresswell (1985), and Fodor (1987). More recently, a number of presupposition theorists have swelled the ranks of the quotation theory: it is more or less taken for granted by van der Sandt and Geurts (1991), van der Sandt (1992), Beaver (1993), and Geurts (1995), among others. And Zeevat (1996) argues at some greater length for a presuppositional version of the quotation theory that is more or less the same as mine.

My defence of the quotation theory is part of a larger project, which is to provide an alternative for semantic analyses built upon such notions as rigid designation or direct reference. Despite their considerable intuitive appeal, I believe that these notions are red herrings, regardless whether they are deployed in the analysis of names, demonstratives, natural kind terms, or wherever. But in this paper the focus will be entirely on proper names.[1]

1 NAMES AND OTHER DEFINITE DESCRIPTIONS

I claim that a name is synonymous with a definite NP of the form 'the individual named so-and-so'. For the time being we can leave the proposed analysis in this somewhat underspecified state, because I first want to raise a number of points that don't require a more precise formulation.

If the quotation theory is correct, then names must be expected to be used and interpreted like other definite NPs. If, on the other hand, names are rigid designators, then we should expect significant empirical differences between names and definite NPs. I will now show that it is the former prediction rather than the latter that is borne out by the facts.

The main objectives of this section are to take stock of the semantic properties of names and definite NPs, and to show that there do not seem to be any fundamental differences between these two types of expressions. I will freely help myself to whatever technical jargon I find convenient for these purposes. For example, I will sometimes pretend that names and definites have scope but will also talk of their 'referents'. This terminological *bric à brac* should not be taken too seriously.

Taken together, the following observations strongly suggest that names pattern with (other) definite NPs in all relevant respects:

- Names often take the form of definite NPs: 'the United Nations', 'the Goldberg Variations', 'the Netherlands', 'the Annunciation', 'the Holy Spirit', 'the Bank of England'. These are names, no doubt, but they certainly look like definite NPs. In English, river names always carry a definite article ('the Mississippi'). In Italian, names of women often have, and sometimes must have, a definite article: 'la Loren', 'la Carolina'. I suspect that all languages which have definiteness markers allow them to occur on proper names, and I wouldn't be surprised if there were languages in which names were always marked for definiteness.[2]
- So-called definiteness effects apply to names and definite NPs alike. On the one hand, if a construction selects for indefinite (or weak) NPs, names as well as definite NPs are excluded. This holds for English *there*-sentences, for example:

  (1) There is {*John/*the philosopher/a philosopher} available.

  On the other hand, if a construction selects for definite NPs, it will accept names, too, as the case of the partitive construction illustrates:

  (2) half of {Belgium/the country/*some countries}

- As Kripke (1980) points out, Donnellan's referential/attributive distinction applies to names just as it applies to definite NPs. In Kripke's

example, two interlocutors observe Smith at a distance and take him to be Jones. Accordingly, they use the name 'Jones' to refer to Smith (although Kripke insists that semantically speaking they are referring to Jones).

- Names can be used literally as well as non-literally (this point is clearly related to the previous one, but it is not exactly the same). For example, a man who jocosely refers to his wife as 'the Queen' may use the name 'Cleopatra' to much the same effect (cf. Bach 1987).
- Names are like overt definites in that they can be used generically:[3]

(3) {The light bulb/Coca Cola} was invented by an American.
(4) {The panzercroc/Pristichampsus} hunted during the Eocene Epoch, about 49 million years ago, but it was very rare. (Bakker 1988: 74)

Obviously, in these examples the names 'Coca Cola' and 'Pristichampsus' are used generically. It is true that it is difficult to think of a plausible scenario in which a proper name like 'John' will have a generic interpretation, but this has nothing to do with the fact that 'John' is a name. It is just that the kind that a generic occurrence of 'John' would denote is of such limited use. It is precisely in this respect that 'Coca Cola' and 'Pristichampsus' are different from 'John', and this is why the examples above are felicitous.

- Definite NPs and names are typically, though not always, used to refer to objects that are part of the common ground between speaker and hearer. We may distinguish two cases here. On the one hand, definites and names may both be used anaphorically to refer to objects that have been explicitly introduced into the discourse. For example,

(5) I have a poodle named 'Horace'. {Horace/My poodle} is three years old.

On the other hand, names and definites may also be used non-anaphorically to refer to individuals that are given in the larger situation in which the discourse takes place. For example, in some contexts either 'the girl from no. 21' or 'Julia' can be used to refer to my daughter, and in England 'the Queen' and 'Elizabeth II' will typically refer to one and the same person.

- Definites and names both have bound-variable uses:

(6) a. If I can choose between a Mercedes and a BMW, I'll take the BMW.
b. If a child is christened 'Bambi', then Disney will sue Bambi's parents.

The definite NP in the consequent of (6a) is bound to the indefinite in the antecedent, and the same applies for the second occurrence of 'Bambi'

in (6b). This observation, which is crucial to my concerns, has not met with unanimous approval from the readers of earlier versions of this paper, so let me dwell on it for a while. One of the referees of this journal claims that (6b) sounds odd, and although I do believe that this sentence is fully acceptable as it stands, I have some sympathy with this judgement. But if (6b) is vaguely odd, it is because the word 'Bambi' is repeated for no good reason: why use this word when a possessive pronoun would have done just as well?[4] If this is correct, then we should be able to come up with better examples if we can somehow motivate the repetition of the name. And we can, for instance by increasing the distance between the name and its antecedent and/or by introducing competing antecedents:

(7) a. If a child is christened 'Bambi', and Disney Inc. hear about it, then they will sue Bambi's parents.
b. The name of a product is essential to its commercial success. For example, if you want to buy washing powder and are given the choice between Black, White, and Grey, you will choose White, won't you?

It seems to me that (7a) is better than (6b), and as far as I can tell there is nothing wrong with (7b).

The following examples are cases of binding, too, intuitively speaking:[5]

(8) a. Every time we do our Beatles act, {Ringo/the guy who plays the part of Ringo} gets drunk afterwards.
b. Every time John goes to see a performance of Hamlet, he falls in love with {Ophelia/the actress who plays the part of Ophelia}.
(9) a. Perhaps Mary has a son named 'John' and perhaps {her son/John} is the thief.
b. Mary is under the illusion that she has a son named 'John' and she believes that {her son/John} is the thief.

In (8a, b) the definite NPs as well as the names can be interpreted non-referentially. On this interpretation, 'Ringo' is more or less equivalent with 'whoever plays the part of Ringo', and the same holds, *mutatis mutandis*, for 'Ophelia'. In (9a, b) there is a preference for a non-referential interpretation, and intuitively 'her son' or 'John' in the second conjunct is 'bound' in the first. As a matter of fact, in Geurts (1995, to appear) I present a treatment of intensional contexts that allows us to view these expressions as bound elements, but this is by the way, because all I want to do at this point is establish the parallels between names and overt definites.

- Although definite NPs and names normally refer to objects in the common ground, they can be used to introduce new objects:

  (10) My best friend is {my sister/John}.

  Both variants of (10) can be used in a situation in which the intended referent is new to the hearer.
- Names generally take wide scope. In this respect, too, they are like many other definite NPs. Compare:

  (11) a. The Prime Minister could have been rich.
  b. The man could have been rich.
  c. John could have been rich.

  (11a) is ambiguous: it can either mean that the person who happens to be Prime Minister could have been rich, or just that we might have had a rich Prime Minister. (11b) and (11c), by contrast, only allow for readings of the first type.

  The suggestion that, with respect to scope, names are unlike definites in that they always take wide scope is incorrect for two reasons. First, as we have just seen, only some definite NPs alternate relatively freely between wide-scope and narrow-scope interpretations. Secondly, and this is the last point on my list,
- Names *can* take narrow scope, too. For reasons to be discussed below, this may require a somewhat outlandish type of context, but it does happen. For one thing, there are the bound-variable uses of names mentioned above. For another, there is the case of Aaron Aardvark:

  (12) The electoral process is under attack, and it is proposed, in light of recent results, that alphabetical order would be a better method of selection than the present one. Someone supposes that 'Aaron Aardvark' might be the winning name and says, 'If that procedure had been instituted, Ronald Reagan would still be doing TV commercials, and [(12)] Aaron Aardvark might have been president' (Bach 1987: 146–7).

Clearly, in this scenario the speaker need not believe that there is anybody for the name 'Aaron Aardvark' to refer to, yet (12) isn't infelicitous in any way. Further examples of the same type are:

(13) a. In English, Leslie may be a man or a woman.
b. But John is always male.

2 PRELIMINARY SKIRMISHES

Although it is always hard to prove that something doesn't exist, the foregoing observations do suggest quite strongly that there are no deep semantic or pragmatic differences between names and overt definites. Such distinctions as must be made set some definite NPs apart from others but they don't draw the line between names and overt definites. Furthermore, most of the observations I have mustered are difficult to reconcile with the hypothesis that names are rigid designators. Not to mince words: they falsify it. If names were rigid designators it would be worrying, at the least, that names can have definite articles, that they can be used attributively and non-literally, and can be used to introduce individuals that are new to the hearer, and it would be a mystery that names have bound-variable uses and may take narrow scope.

It may be challenged that at least some of these observations are irrelevant because they involve 'metalinguistic' uses of names, the implication being that names are generally not used this way.[6] I think this is partly right and partly wrong. What is right about it is that some of the data I have listed are somewhat out of the ordinary. But that is precisely what one should expect if the quotation theory is correct. If it is true that the meaning of a name is 'the individual named N', then the content of a name is special in a way that will make it difficult to construct examples in which names act as bound variables, for example. But the same holds for some overt definites, too. Consider 'the cosmos'. There can be no doubt that this is a definite NP, but due to its truly comprehensive meaning it will be difficult to construct sentences analogous to the ones above in which 'the cosmos' acts as a bound variable. Difficult, but not impossible. And although such cases will be very 'special', they will surely count as evidence that 'the cosmos' is an ordinary definite NP. Therefore, I see no reason to dismiss the data presented in (6)–(9) and (12)–(13) merely because these are special cases.

It is understandable that someone who takes the position that names are rigid designators will want to claim that my counterexamples are irrelevant because they involve deviant uses of proper names.[7] However, this is a lame defence unless it can be shown on independent grounds that the *semantic values* of, say, 'Bambi' in (6b) or 'Aaron Aardvark' in (12) are non-standard. It will not do to note that these sentences are special or require special contexts, and leave the matter at that. In the absence of such independent evidence, these data stand as evidence against Kripke's theory of names.

3 NAMES AND REFERENCE

Kripke charges that the quotation theory is circular because it actually presupposes what it must explain, namely how names come to refer:

> Someone uses the name 'Socrates'. How are we supposed to know to whom he refers? By using the description which gives the sense of it. According to Kneale, the description is 'the man called "Socrates"' . . . We ask, 'To whom does he refer by "Socrates"?' And then the answer is given, 'Well, he refers to the man to whom he refers.' If this were all there was to the meaning of a proper name, then no reference would get off the ground at all (Kripke 1980: 70).

But what if the quotation theory didn't explain how names manage to refer? Suppose we analyse definite NPs along Russellian lines.[8] Then the quotation theory entails that names are non-referential expressions. This may strike some as an intuitively repugnant conclusion, but Kripke himself has argued persuasively that such intuitions are not necessarily detrimental to a Russellian theory. Critics of Russell's theory of descriptions have often claimed that the theory is falsified by referential uses of definite NPs. Kripke (1977) argues, however, that this is not so, because a Russellian may hold that the theory of descriptions is a *semantic* theory and need therefore only be concerned with what is said (in Grice's sense); intuitions about referential uses of definite NPs pertain to what is meant by a speaker on a given occasion. Put otherwise, the idea is that although semantically speaking definite NPs are non-referential expressions, speakers may use them for conveying information about specific individuals. But if names are definite NPs, then the same observations should apply to them, too. Hence, Kripke's complaint that the quotation theory is not a theory of reference not only presupposes that any semantical theory of names should be a theory of reference, like his own; it also denies the quotation theorist an account of reference that Kripke recommends elsewhere.

If NPs of the form 'the individual named N' are to be treated in a Russellian framework, they must probably be viewed as 'incomplete' definites, i.e. as on a par with 'the table', 'the child', and so on.[9] As Strawson was perhaps the first to point out, it would seem that such expressions, which rarely if ever describe unique objects in the world yet can be used without apparent difficulties, cause an especially severe problem for Russell's theory of descriptions. Russell's followers have countered Strawson's objection in various ways. According to Bach (1987), for example, a speaker who produces a sentence containing an incomplete definite NP virtually never says what he means (I am again speaking in Gricean terms): strictly speaking such sentences are false, but if all goes well,

as it usually does, they will none the less manage to convey information about specific individuals.

This may or may not strike one as a plausible strategy for dealing with incomplete NPs, but this is as it may be, since for the moment I merely want to note that the quotation theory is immune to Kripke's objection that it doesn't explain how names come to refer. This objection clearly presupposes that names are referential expressions, where reference is to be understood as a semantic relation between a term and a real-world individual, and this presupposition cannot be taken for granted. Of course, it can hardly be denied that names may be used to convey information about real-world individuals, but the claim that names are referential expressions does much more than restate this banal truth in different terms, and should not be accepted uncritically.

4 BEING NAMED N VS. BEING THE REFERENT OF N

Kripke's criticism is misguided for a further reason, as well, because it doesn't distinguish between two properties that should be strictly kept apart, viz. being the referent of N, and being named N.[10] That N is the name, or one of the names, of an individual *a* does not entail that N refers to *a* or that *a* is among N's referents. Kripke assumes as a matter of course that when we baptize an individual N we *eo ipso* determine the reference of the name N. This is not so. Beethoven's Missa Solemnis is commonly referred to as 'the Missa Solemnis', but its name is 'Missa Solemnis'. Similarly, an Italian may refer to Maria Callas with 'la Callas', but her name was 'Callas'.[11] The difference is slight (a mere two or three letters, after all) but telling: it highlights the fact that although it so happens that in English names can generally be used to refer, it might have been otherwise (and it sometimes is, even in English). The grammar of English might have dictated that in order to refer with the help of a name, it must always be preceded by the definite article, or, for that matter, by 'the individual named'.

Bearing a name is like wearing a tie. Like ties, names are seldom unique, but circumstances permitting they may be used for referential purposes. More accurately, just as you can employ the attribute of wearing a tie to identify to your audience the person you have in mind (John, as the case may be), you can use the attribute of being named 'John' for the same purpose. Taken on its own, however, a name doesn't refer any more than a tie does.

It is instructive to compare names with number terms. Indeed, although number terms are rarely classified among the names, they are often used as such. Bearing a name may be likened to having a number: a crate in

Rotterdam harbour may have a number stamped on it, for example 6. But of course the number term '6' doesn't refer to the crate in question, although it may be used to refer to it. That is to say, when taken on its own, a number term can sometimes be used to refer, but in most cases it must be part of a larger expression: 'crate number 6', '6 Elm Street', 'Paris VI', 'volume 6', and so on (with names it happens to be the other way round, as we have seen).

Another respect in which number terms are like names is that there are countless ways in which an individual may be assigned a number or number term (the distinction is not always clear, but it doesn't seem to matter much, either). Sometimes individuals are inscribed with numbers: houses, banknotes, football players. In many other cases, there is a less immediate relation between a number and an individual that 'has it'. Numbers may be assigned at random or following a rigid procedure, for instance according to some linear order. There are various conventions for assigning house numbers, convicts are numbered as they enter prison, cameras receive a number when they leave the factory, and in some countries citizens receive a number at birth.

Just as there are many ways of assigning a number to an individual, so are there many ways of assigning it a name. There are descriptive names like 'Fatty' or 'Benjamin'. Similarly, the title of a book or film is expected to be somehow related to its content. In my native country, last names are assigned according to strict regulations, but first names are afflicted by whim. Other cultures make use of patronymics, and in still others parents are named after a child. And so on. What all these naming practices have in common is just that some association is established between a name and its bearers, but how this association is initiated and sustained is different from case to case. The name-bearing relation between 'Lolita' and the famous novel was initiated by the author and is sustained, *inter alia*, by printing the name on the front cover of every copy. The association between my last name and myself is sustained, *inter alia*, by records at a register office, but this does not apply for my first name. If I decided that I wanted to be called 'Rudolf' instead of 'Bart', it would just be a nuisance to the people in my social sphere, but I don't think it would be humanly possible to change my last name into 'Carnap' (not in my country anyway).

It is not even true that the name-bearing relation is necessarily grounded in a social convention of some sort. For example, the files on my computer all have names; some of these I chose myself, others were chosen by various people around the globe, only some of whom I am acquainted with, and yet others, such as 'cache183415.shtml' for example, were generated by some program. The association between a file and its name is entirely sustained by the computer's hardware and the programs running on it: if due to some

programming error the file name 'Bocherini' gets changed into 'Corelli', then the file's name *is* 'Corelli', not 'Bocherini'. The original intention behind name-giving is simply irrelevant.

The expression 'bearing a name' covers as many relations as there are naming practices, and it seems to me that Kripke's causal theory of reference is best viewed, not as a theory of reference, but as a partial theory of what it means to bear a name. The theory is only a partial one because there are naming practices that it doesn't account for, such as the one considered in the previous paragraph.

Kripke's charge that the quotation theory is circular can now be countered a second time, as follows. Even if a proponent of the quotation theory should want to explain how names can be used to refer, his analysis of names need not be circular, because the notion of reference need not enter into it: 'the individual named N' is not the same as 'the individual that N refers to', and the former does not presuppose the latter, either.

5 INTRODUCING OTTO

'Ottomobil' is the official name of a domestic robot which is currently being developed in my department; my colleagues and I usually call him 'Otto' (we prefer to think of Otto as male).[12] A central part of Otto's design is a system for natural language understanding and generation, and my personal pride and joy is the robot's presupposition module, which is based upon a theory that I helped to develop.[13] In fact, Otto's presupposition module not only deals with presuppositions, but with anaphora as well. Otto treats presuppositions and anaphors alike as elements that want to be bound to an antecedent. If occasionally an appropriate antecedent may not be found, Otto is prepared to accommodate the presupposition in question; but in general he prefers to bind his presuppositions. This preference is stronger in some cases than in others. For example, while Otto very much likes to bind anaphors and other descriptively attenuate presuppositions, he doesn't mind very much accommodating presuppositions triggered by factive verbs.[14]

(14) a. If someone broke the copier, then the new secretary is the culprit.
b. [: [x, u: copier u, x broke u]
⇒ [z, v: culprit z, new secretary v, z = v]]
c. [u, v: copier u, new secretary v, [x, z: z = x, x broke u, culprit z]
⇒ [: z = v]]
d. [u, v: copier u, new secretary v, [x: x broke u, culprit x] ⇒ [: x = v]]

(14b) is the DRS that Otto's grammar module computes for the sentence in (14a). This sentence contains three definite NPs, which trigger the presuppositions that in (14b) are marked by underlining. Otto will deal with these presuppositions as follows. Beginning with the presupposition triggered by 'the copier', Otto first checks if it can be bound to an antecedent in his current DRS. Seeing that there is no suitable antecedent available, he decides that the presupposition must be accommodated, and since he has a preference for global accommodation, he accommodates the presupposition in the main DRS. The second presupposition, triggered by 'the culprit', can be bound to the indefinite in the antecedent of the conditional, which is the solution that Otto favours. Finally, as there is no suitable antecedent for the presupposition triggered by 'the new secretary', this presupposition is accommodated too, again in the main DRS. The resulting reading that Otto assigns to (14a) is (14c), which is equivalent with (14d).

In this example, all presupposition-inducing expressions happen to be definite NPs, but I should like to emphasize that Otto applies the same handful of principles to all types of presuppositions, regardless whether they are triggered by definite NPs, pronouns, factive verbs, clefts, focusing particles like 'too' or 'even', etc. These principles are, to recapitulate: (i) a presupposition is preferably bound, but (ii) if it cannot be bound it will be accommodated, and (iii) if a presupposition must be accommodated, then it is preferably accommodated in the least embedded DRS, i.e. global accommodation is preferred to local accommodation. Definite NPs and pronouns are special only in that they presuppose their entire content: semantically speaking, these expressions are nothing but presupposition inducers. All there is to say about the content of 'the man' or 'he', for example, is that these expressions trigger the presuppositions that there is a man and that there is a male person, respectively. In contrast to these purely presuppositional expressions, as they might be termed, a factive verb like 'regret' not only triggers the presupposition that its complement φ is true, but asserts, furthermore, that its subject deplores the fact that φ is true.

6 ACCOMMODATION AND COUNTERPARTS

I said that, when Otto is presented with sentence (14a) he will accommodate the presuppositions triggered by 'the copier' and 'the new secretary'. This is not all he does, however. Even if he decides to accommodate a presupposition, Otto verifies if it matches his representation of the world, or is at least consistent with such knowledge he has at his disposal. In order to explain

this process in more detail, let us consider a simpler example. Suppose I inform Otto that:

(15) The new secretary is Irish.

The DRS that Otto will produce for this sentence looks like this:

(16) [x: new secretary x, Irish x]

Formally, this represents a purely existential proposition: (16) is true in any given world iff that world contains a new secretary who is Irish. This is correct as far as it goes, but it doesn't go far enough, for we should expect that someone who is processing (15) will attempt to establish a connection between the presupposition triggered by the subject term, on the one hand, and what he takes to be the case in the world surrounding him, on the other. This is precisely what Otto does. Two cases must be distinguished here depending on whether Otto has already formed the belief that there is a new secretary, or not. In the first case, it is not new to Otto that there is a new secretary, and he has already accumulated information about her. Perhaps they have already met, or maybe Otto has just heard from someone else that there is a new secretary. At any rate, we may assume that in this case he has already a mental representation which symbolizes the new secretary (as *we* might say, if we deemed Otto's belief to be true), and he will link the underlined material in (16) to this representation.

But what exactly do we mean when we say that this presupposition is linked to a representation that was already available beforehand? I have argued elsewhere that a DRS must be seen as a representation of the speaker's commitment slate,[15] and so (16) is Otto's representation of my commitment slate, which he constructed in response to my utterance of (15). It follows that (16) is actually embedded in the context of Otto's beliefs, and if we want to make this context explicit, we get something like the following picture:

(17) [z: new secretary z, Bart believes: [x: new secretary x, Irish x], . . .]

(17) makes explicit the fact that Otto, too, believes that there is a new secretary. It will be obvious that (17) is only a partial representation of Otto's belief box: apart from the two beliefs explicitly represented in (17), Otto will have a wealth of further beliefs, which are abbreviated here by three dots.

(17) says that Otto believes that there is a new secretary, z, and that he believes that I believe that there is a new secretary, x, but it doesn't establish a link between these two individuals. In this particular case, however, such a link may be assumed to exist, and, more to the point, we may take it that Otto believes that such a link exists. As he might say, his z and my x are the

same person. I prefer to say that they are counterparts in the sense of Lewis.[16] If we want to make this relation explicit we need something like the following:

(18) [z: new secretary z, Bart believes [x, new secretary x, Irish x], . . .]

Another, more succinct notation for counterpart relations, which I have proposed in Geurts (1995, to appear), is to simply use the same reference marker twice, as follows:

(19) [x: new secretary x, Bart believes: [x: new secretary x, Irish x], . . .]

The intended interpretation of this structure is the same as that of (18). This notation of counterpart relations exploits the fact that, logically speaking, the two occurrences of x are independent of one another.

Counterpart relations are to capture our intuitions about identity across possible worlds—or, more accurately: intuitions that we would express in terms of identity relations across world boundaries. Counterpart relations are, in Lewis's words, 'our substitute for identity between things in different worlds' (Lewis 1968: 114). When we speculate about what might have happened to John, say, we pretend to speak of the same individual in counterfactual circumstances. We allow that two people are thinking of the same individual, although they may disagree about virtually all of its properties. Even more strikingly, we allow that Hob and Nob have the same witch in mind, although there are no witches.[17] All these cases can be understood in terms of counterpart relations.

Unlike identity, counterpart relations are indeterminate in various ways.[18] To say that two individuals are counterparts is to say that they are alike in some respects, and since similarity is a matter of degree, we have to agree on a lower bound of similarity before we can decide whether a counterpart relation obtains in any given case. More importantly, for our present purposes at least, is that similarity depends on how you look at it. Two individuals may be similar in some respects but not in others, and before we can say that they are counterparts or not we have to decide what respects are to count.

Now I can explain in more detail what happens when Otto decides that 'the new secretary' in (15) cannot be construed as an instance of binding. The speaker who uttered this sentence, i.e. myself, presupposes that there is a new secretary, and Otto will accommodate this presupposition in his representation of the speaker's commitment slate, and link it to his own representation of the new secretary by means of a counterpart relation, as shown in (19). As Otto himself would put it, he and I have the same person in mind.

Otto is a trustful robot. In most cases he has no doubts that what people tell him is the truth, and he is particularly confident that I am usually well-informed and would never lie to him. If I say that the new secretary is Irish, Otto comes to believe that the new secretary is Irish. So eventually the effect of my uttering (15) is that Otto's belief box is updated as follows:

(20) [x: new secretary x, Irish x, Bart believes: [x: new secretary x, Irish x], . . .]

This is what happens when Otto already believed that there is a new secretary before I made my statement. If Otto did not have this information beforehand, the interpretation process will be different in some respects, but the outcome will be more or less the same. Suppose that Otto is not aware that there is a new secretary. Again I enter the scene, and recite my line. This will have the same net effect on Otto's belief box as in the previous case, because Otto is a trustful robot, and expects that what I tell him is the truth. This is not to say that it makes no difference at all whether or not Otto already believes something that is presupposed by the speaker addressing him. Trustful though he may be, Otto sets greater store by what he believes than what people tell him, and if he already is aware that there is a new secretary his representation of the person in question is presumably richer than when he has just gleaned this information from my statement. The important point, however, is that in either case the *relation* between Otto's own representation of the new secretary, on the one hand, and his representation of my representation of the new secretary, on the other, will be the same.

(20) is in a sense a purely descriptive representation. Despite their name, reference markers do not refer to individuals in the world (or model), and the reference marker x does not refer to the new secretary. But if (20) represents Otto's belief box, then surely there must be some connection between this reference marker and the new secretary? And there might be. In fact, there are many types of possible connections between reference markers and real-world individuals. If Otto has already seen the new secretary, he will have a visual memory of her, and the reference marker will be linked to that. If he has heard her speak, he will have an auditive memory which is associated with the reference marker. He may have read her application, he may have seen her photograph, he may talked about her with people who have seen her or who know people who have seen her, and so on. It is connections such as these that prompt us to say that Otto has beliefs about the new secretary.

7 OTTO'S TREATMENT OF NAMES

In accordance with the quotation theory, Otto treats names as definite descriptions of the form 'the individual named so and so'. This is not to say, of course, that Otto treats names as definite NPs in disguise; he doesn't transform a name into a definite NP before he interprets it. It is just to say that Otto regards names and overt definite NPs alike as purely presuppositional expressions, which presuppose their entire descriptive content. Given that Otto already knew how to handle presuppositions, this was by far the most obvious treatment from a designer's point of view: it is more elegant than any other solution we could think of and enables Otto to interpret names in precisely the right way.

To show this, let us consider how the presuppositional version of the quotation theory used by Otto measures up to the observations listed in section 1. The first five of these observations need hardly any comment. Given that names are treated on a par with overt definite NPs, it doesn't come as a surprise that:

- names often carry definiteness markers;
- names are subject to definiteness restrictions;
- the referential/attributive distinction applies to names;
- names can be construed non-literally; and
- names can be construed generically.

I don't mean to suggest that I can account for definiteness restrictions, the distinction between referential and attributive readings, non-literal construals, and genericity. The point I want to make is merely that, given that definites are subject to definiteness restrictions and have referential, attributive, non-literal, and generic interpretations, the presuppositional theory of names leads us to expect that the same will hold for names, which it does.

The remaining observations from section 1 require more detailed explanations:

- Names are typically, though not always, used to refer to objects that are part of the common ground. We distinguished two ways of being part of the common ground: if a name is used anaphorically, its referent was already introduced into the discourse; if it is used non-anaphorically, its referent will generally be given, too, though not in the immediate context. That names prefer their referents to be given is a characteristic they have in common with all other presupposition inducers. It is true that names have a comparatively strong preference for a linking interpretation, which is to say that, on the whole, their presuppositions are rather difficult to accommodate without being linked to a given

referent, but in this respect names aren't exceptional, either, since they share this characteristic with some other presupposition inducers, such as 'incomplete' definite NPs (I will return to this point below).

- Names have bound-variable uses. In the DRT framework adopted here, *any* presupposition that is linked to an antecedent in an embedded DRS will seem to behave like an element bound by a quantifier. So this is just a special case of the general rule that presuppositions prefer to be linked to a given antecedent.

(21) a. If a child is christened 'Bambi', then Disney will sue Bambi's parents. (= (6b))
b. [: [x: child x, x is christened 'Bambi']
⇒ [u: u is named 'Bambi', Disney sues u's parents]]
c. [: [x: child x, x is christened 'Bambi', x is named 'Bambi']
⇒ [: Disney sues x's parents]]

(21b) is the DRS that Otto's parser computes for (21a). The second occurrence of the name 'Bambi' triggers the presupposition that there is someone named 'Bambi' (at its first occurrence the name is mentioned, not used). This presupposition is bound in the antecedent of the conditional, and the resulting interpretation is (21c). Hence, on the present account there are no relevant differences between (21a) and the following:

(22) a. If a farmer owns a donkey, he beats it.
b. If a farmer beats his donkey, his wife beats it, too.

In (22a) the pronoun refers back to the indefinite in the antecedent of the conditional, and similarly, in (22b) the presupposition triggered by the focus particle, that someone other than 'his' wife beats 'it', is bound in the antecedent of the conditional. Hence, the presuppositions triggered by 'it' in the first sentence and 'too' in the second are treated exactly the same as the presupposition induced by 'Bambi' in (21a).

- Although names typically refer to entities in the common ground, they may be used to introduce new individuals, as in:

(23) My best friend is John. (= (10))

In general, if a presupposition cannot be bound to a suitable antecedent, it will be accommodated. So unless there is a suitable antecedent for 'John' in the context in which (23) is uttered (as when the sentence is preceded by, say, 'I have three friends: John, Jack, and Joe'), the presupposition that there is an individual with that name will be accommodated.

- Names generally take wide scope. It seems a rather safe conjecture that if a presupposition is bound it will usually be bound globally, i.e. in the

principal DRS; for surely cases like (22a, b) are the exception rather than the rule. Moreover, if a presupposition must be accommodated, global accommodation is preferred to accommodation in an embedded DRS. Thus, on the whole presuppositions appear to have a strong tendency to be projected to the global level of the discourse representation. Since there is no reason to assume that this doesn't hold for names, we thus explain why names appear to prefer having wide scope. I say 'appear' because I don't actually want to maintain that names are scope bearing expressions. There is a subtle but important difference between saying that a presupposition is accommodated globally and saying that an expression takes wide scope. The difference becomes rather obvious when we consider expressions that have scope and induce presuppositions at the same time, like quantifiers, for example:

(24) John believes that most party members are stupid.

This sentence has at least two readings, depending on whether the quantifier 'most party members' takes wide or narrow scope with respect to the attitude verb. But this quantifier also triggers the presupposition that there are party members, and this presupposition will normally be bound or accommodated globally, i.e. outside John's belief context.

If we refer to the scope of an expression α, we speak of a unit corresponding with α at some level of analysis (e.g., α's correlate at LF or α's interpretation relative to a given model). Although in some frameworks this is only a metaphor, the guiding intuition is that α's scope is determined by moving α about. If, on the other hand, we speak of a presupposition triggered by α, the metaphor is a quite different one, the idea being, rather, that α initiates a search for an antecedent meeting certain specifications.

The distinction between scope taking and presupposition projection is somewhat obscured by the circumstance that certain expressions are purely presuppositional.[19] This holds in particular for anaphoric pronouns, definite NPs, and names. The semantic contributions made by these expressions coincide with the presuppositions that they induce. Consequently, if these presuppositions are bound or accommodated globally, as they usually are, it may seem as if the expressions that triggered them had taken wide scope, but as a matter of fact the notion of scope doesn't enter into this at all. This is why I said that my analysis explains why names *appear* to prefer having wide scope.

The presuppositions triggered by names seem to have a decidedly stronger tendency to 'take wide scope' than some others. In this respect, too, they are on a par with other descriptively attenuate, 'incomplete',

definites like 'the door' or anaphoric pronouns like 'it'. Compare the following sentences, for example:

(25) a. The President might have been a woman.
b. The car might have turned left.

(25a) allows for a reading according to which we might have had a situation *s* in which the President in *s* was a woman. In order to obtain this reading, the presupposition triggered by 'the President' must be accommodated locally, i.e. within the scope of the modal operator, and must not be linked to whoever happens to be president in the situation in which the sentence is uttered. This type of interpretation does not appear to be so readily available for (25b), presumably because 'the car' insists more strongly that its referent be given (either in the previous discourse or in the wider context) than 'the President' does. Van der Sandt (1992) suggests that such differences correlate with varying degrees of descriptive richness. This suggestion is perhaps correct, although it may not be the whole story. But no matter how such differences are to be accounted for, it is evident that in this respect a proper name like 'John' resembles 'the car' more than 'the President', in that it insists rather adamantly that its presupposition be linked to an entity that is given.

- Names can take narrow scope. By way of exception, our robot Otto is prepared to accommodate the presupposition triggered by a name in an embedded DRS. This is how he will deal with the name 'Aaron Aardvark' in the scenario devised by Bach:

(26) Aaron Aardvark might have been president. (=(12))

Supposing that Otto doesn't know of any person named 'Aaron Aardvark' (which he doesn't), and supposing that for whatever reason he doubts that the speaker knows of any such person, then Otto will decide to locally accommodate the presupposition triggered by the name, thus arriving at the following reading:

(27) [: ◇[x: x is named 'Aaron Aardvark', president x]]

In general, local accommodation is only used as a last resort, and as with other semantically attenuate definite NPs, it is exceptional for a name to be interpreted by means of local accommodation. Bach's example really is a rare find.

8 WHAT JOHN MIGHT HAVE BEEN

Suppose that shortly after John's birth his mother utters one of the following:

(28) a. If John had had red hair
b. If John had been a girl
c. If John had been a twin
d. If John had been a Rolex watch

} his father would have been even happier.

We should probably say that (28a) refers to a property John himself might have had. But being a Rolex watch is not such a property, and so (28d) is to be paraphrased rather along the following lines: 'If John's mother had given birth to a Rolex watch *instead of* to John (whatever that may mean), his father would have been even happier.' In short, while (28a) is about a counterfactual situation involving John, (28d) is about a counterfactual situation in which John's place has been taken by a Rolex watch. (Note that, according to counterpart theory, which I still endorse, this distinction cannot be taken over into our semantic analysis, since no individual can inhabit more than one world. However, it does not follow that counterpart theory cannot account for the intuition, which I am trying to characterize, that there is such a distinction.) Examples (28b, c) are in a sense intermediate cases because it is less clear how we should describe them. Speaking only for myself: although I would probably say that John himself might have been a girl, I would rather not say that he himself might have been a twin. Therefore, I would bracket (28b) with (28a) and (28c) with (28d); but I don't expect that these judgements will prove to be uncontroversial. This is as it may be, however, because the relevant observation is that our intuitions about the relation between John and his counterparts vary at all. Needless to say, this variation causes problems for a Kripkean analysis of names. In the present framework, by contrast, it is only to be expected.

According to the theory outlined in the foregoing, the examples in (28) will all be interpreted along the following lines:

(29) a. [: [x: x is named 'John', P x] ∼> [x's father is happier]]
b. [x: x is named 'John', [: P x] ∼> [x's father is happier]]

Here '∼>' symbolizes the counterfactual conditional, and the value of 'P' covaries with the predicates in (28a)–(28d). In (29a) the presupposition is triggered that there is an individual named 'John', and our presupposition theory predicts that this will project to the main DRS. The resulting

interpretation is (29b), which says that there must a counterpart relation between John and the counterfactual individual satisfying the antecedent of the conditional. (29b) does not specify what kind of counterpart relation this should be, which is precisely what we want, because this relation varies from case to case, as we have seen. In other words, the variation we observed in (28) reflects the context dependence of the counterpart relation.

9 THE INTUITION OF RIGIDITY

In imitation of Bach (1987), I would have entitled this section 'the illusion of rigidity'. But on second thoughts I don't believe that rigidity is an illusion: it is a genuine empirical phenomenon. What is illusory is the notion that it calls for an explanation in semantic terms.

I have tried to explain why it is that names appear to have such a strong preference for taking wide scope. But Kripke's most forceful argument in favour of the thesis that names are rigid designators is based on the intuitive truth conditions of *simple* sentences, i.e. sentences without any relevant scope-bearing expressions (such as modals). The argument, which is only seemingly straightforward, as we will presently see, goes as follows. Consider a simple sentence containing a name, such as:

(30) Mary is happy.

If someone understands this statement correctly, then he grasps a proposition which is true in a certain range of possible situations: in each of these situations, Mary is happy, where Mary is the referent of 'Mary' in the situation in which (30) is uttered. This, Kripke suggests, *is* the claim that names are rigid designators.

This observation appears to establish two points at the same time. First, since it is always the same person that makes the proposition expressed by (30) true, in any given possible situation, it would seem to prove that the name 'Mary' is rigid. Secondly, it would seem to prove that the property of being named 'Mary' isn't part of the meaning of the name, because the proposition expressed by (30) might be true even in a possible situation in which Mary had a different name. In brief, if Kripke's observation is correct, then names are rigid and the quotation theory is false.

Kripke's observation is not as straightforward as it appears, however. To begin with, it matters a great deal how we frame our initial question. If we ask, as Kripke does, if (30) might be true in a possible situation in which Mary was called differently, then it will seem as if the name 'Mary' is rigid.

If, however, we ask what information is conveyed by this sentence, then it would seem to be part of its content that Mary is named 'Mary'.

The point I want to make here is prefigured in Lewis's (1981) commentary on Kaplan's (1989) character/content distinction.[20] Kaplan claims that his notion of content captures the pre-theoretical notion of 'what is said' by uttering a sentence in a given context. For example, if two interlocutors simultaneously utter (31a) and (31b), respectively, what is said is the same:

(31) a. You are sleepy.
b. I am sleepy.

Or in Kaplan's terms: although these sentences have different characters, there are contexts in which their contents coincide.

Lewis's objection is the following:

> Unless we give it some special technical meaning, the locution 'what is said' is very far from equivocal . . . Kaplan's readers learn to focus on the sense of 'what is said' that he has in mind, ignoring the fact that the same words can be used to make different distinctions. For the time being, the words mark a definite distinction. But why mark that distinction rather than others that we could equally well attend to (Lewis 1981: 97)?

Lewis does not claim that Kaplan's theory is false. What he objects to is Kaplan's suggestion that his theoretical notion of content captures *the* pre-theoretical notion of what is said, and the implication that genuinely alternative theories of meaning cannot capture this notion. This suggestion and its implication are wrong, because there is no single pre-theoretical notion of what is said. Intuitions about what is said vary with one's interests. In a sense, two interlocutors uttering (31a, b) may have said the same thing in one sense, but in another sense they haven't. A theory of lexical semantics may be expected to explain this shifty behaviour of the verb 'say', but there is no reason to require that central concepts in semantic theory (such as 'character' or 'content') must capture any of our ways of understanding 'what is said'.

Lewis's objection applies to Kripke's rigidity thesis, too. It is true that there is a sense in which (30) correctly describes a possible state of affairs in which Mary happily lives under a different name. But there is also a sense in which (30) is not correct in such a state of affairs; for if Mary is called 'Gertrude', say, then it is incorrect to call her 'Mary'. Indeed, it has never been denied, as far as I am aware, that someone who utters (30) conveys the information that Mary is called 'Mary'. What Kripke denies is merely that this information is part of the meaning of 'Mary', and he suggests that this equally holds for the pre-theoretical and theoretical notions of meaning. Given the chameleontic quality of the pre-theoretical notion of meaning, it is pointless to disagree with the first half of this claim; but the second half is false, in my view.

10 STILL, WHY DOES 'MARY' SEEM TO BE RIGID?

Why is it that names appear to be rigid? This is a legitimate question, even if we mustn't presuppose that the intuition of rigidity is a direct reflection of the semantics of proper names. My answer to this question is not a new one. It has been given, independently it seems, by several reliable sources, including Sommers (1982), Bach (1987), and Fodor (1987).[21] Of these, Fodor's version comes closest to the formulation that I prefer:

> The course of wisdom would be to reiterate the moral—viz., that names are a hard problem for everybody—and then to shut up and leave it alone. Still, how about this: 'Cicero' and 'Tully' are synonymous but differ in presupposition . . . Then 'Cicero was wet' says, in effect, that *he was wet* and presupposes that he was called 'Cicero'. 'Tully was wet' says that *he was wet* too, but it presupposes that he was called 'Tully'. 'Cicero is Tully' is informative because, although it doesn't *say* that the guy who was called 'Cicero' was called 'Tully', it 'carries the information' that he was (Fodor 1987: 85).

I would prefer putting it as follows. The meaning of a name N is 'the individual named N', where the semantic contribution of the definite article is to be analysed in presuppositional terms. Given that the property of bearing the name N is an accidental one (I could name my left ear 'Fortinbras' if I chose), referring to an individual with N will not, in general, be particularly effective unless the hearer already knows the intended referent and that it is named N. Therefore, a name will practically always be used to refer to an individual that was already given to the hearer beforehand, and if a name is thus used it will appear to be rigid.

To say that 'the N', where N stands for any nominal head, is a presuppositional expression is to say that its intended referent *a* is presented as given, and that it is presented as given that *a* is an N. Someone who utters (30), for example, presupposes that there is a person *a* whose name is 'Mary' and asserts that *a* is happy. So what Kripke calls the 'meaning' of this sentence is just its asserted content, and it is of course correct that if we confine our attention to this part of the information conveyed by (30), the 'meaning' of 'Mary' will appear to be rigid, and the property of 'being named 'Mary' ' will appear to be irrelevant.

As Bach (1987) points out, the strategy which Kripke consistently employs in *Naming and Necessity* is to first fix the referent of a name before he broaches the issue whether or not the name is rigid. But then it shouldn't come as a surprise that names always turn out to be rigid. Nor is it surprising that, for Kripke, non-referring names *eo ipso* disqualify as admissible evidence.

My suggestion is that names appear to be rigid because they are presuppositional expressions. But surely not all presuppositional expressions appear to be rigid designators. So there must be something else that gives

names their peculiar rigid feel. There is, but it is not peculiar to names. Consider the following situation. Otto and I are standing in the corridor, discussing the weather. We have just witnessed Mary walk past us and enter the kitchen. A moment later we hear cheerful singing emanating from the kitchen. At that point I say:

(32) She is happy.

To Otto it will seem as if 'she' is a rigid designator. For what I have said is true iff Mary is happy, and this is what it means to say, according to Kripke, that an expression is rigid.[22] Why does it seem to Otto as if 'she' is rigid? As I have explained, Otto maintains a representation of the speaker's commitment slate, which upon my utterance of (32) might look as follows (I ignore the previous discourse because it was irrelevant to my utterance of (32)):

(33) [x: person x, female x, happy x]

Since Otto treats anaphora as a special case of presupposition, he assumes that the pronoun triggers the presupposition that there is a given person who is female, and that it is asserted that this person is happy. There is no suitable antecedent for this presupposition to be bound to, so it must be accommodated. But even so Otto will try to integrate the presupposition with his other knowledge, which is to say, in the present case, that he will connect it to his representation of Mary. Thus Otto's belief box, in which his representation of my commitment slate is embedded, may be pictured as follows:

(34) [x: woman x, x is named 'Mary', x is in the kitchen,
Bart believes: [x: person x, female x, happy x]]

Otto believes that there is a woman called 'Mary', that she is in the kitchen, and that I believe of this person that she is a female person who is happy. Or rather, the person that Otto's beliefs are about and the person that he takes my statement to be about are counterparts. This is why the pronoun in (32) appears to be rigid.

By uttering (32) I have conveyed the information in (33), part of which is that Mary is a female person; for this is the descriptive content of the pronoun 'she' (by approximation, at least). But when we ask Otto if what I have said might be true even if it transpired that Mary is a man, his answer will be yes. This is a reasonable answer because one very common way of interpreting 'what is said' is by restricting it to asserted information.

If instead of (32) I had uttered (30), Otto would construe the name as 'rigid' for the same reason he would construe the pronoun in (32) as 'rigid'. And he would say that the property of being named 'Mary' is not part of what I have said just for the same reason he would say that the property of being a female person is not part of the statement made by (32).

11 WHAT I DIDN'T WANT TO SAY

It is always possible to misconstrue a story, no matter how simple, and I know from experience that my story about names is especially liable to be misunderstood, so let me briefly mention some of the things I didn't claim and don't want to claim, either.

First, I don't want to claim that names are pronouns. This is how Sommers (1982) puts it, but not I. I do want to claim that names are very much like pronouns. They both are presuppositional expressions, and have the full complement of possible interpretations that presuppositional expressions generally allow for. But, of course, the descriptive content of a pronoun is of a different category than that of a name, which makes it much easier to construct examples of 'blocking' for pronouns than for names. For example:

(35) If Mary has a car, it is pink.

It doesn't require much inventiveness to think of examples like (35). Analogous examples with names are much more difficult to produce. The essential characteristic that names and pronouns share is that they are nearly always used to refer to an object that speaker and hearer take to be given (with names this tendency is even stronger than with pronouns). It is this pragmatic fact which accounts for the intuition of rigidity.

Secondly, I didn't claim that names and pronouns appear to be rigid because they generally link up to antecedents that are. I might have claimed this, because the main point that I want to establish in this paper is that the quotation theory is right, and this is a theory about the meaning of names. But I didn't.

Thirdly, I didn't claim that names and pronouns are the only types of expressions that usually seem to be rigid. For example, there are many overt definites that behave exactly the same way, the most obvious class being semantically attenuate descriptions like 'the man', 'the thing', and so on. Also, I believe that the presuppositions associated with quantifiers like 'all' and 'most' are often rigid in the same sense in which names are.

(36) Everybody is happy.

Typically, this will be uttered in a situation in which the domain of 'everybody' is contextually given. Let c be a context in which (36) is uttered, and let A be the intended domain of 'everybody' in c. The proposition expressed by (36) in c is true in any given situation c' iff all individuals in A are happy in c'. Hence, 'everybody' is rigid—or, better perhaps, its interpretation in c has a rigid component.

On the other hand, I don't want to claim that all presuppositional expressions engender the impression of rigidity. To the extent that we

have clear intuitions of rigidity at all they pertain to individuals and sets of individuals. Moreover, the intuition that an expression α is stronger when we feel that the descriptive content of α is inessential. It is for these reasons that we wouldn't want to say that factives are rigid, although *qua* presuppositional expressions they are quite similar to definite NPs.

12 CONCLUSION

At the outset I announced that I would try to rehabilitate Kneale's analysis of proper names. But didn't I actually replace it with something completely different? I don't think so. Kneale's crucial insight was that names are synonymous with definite NPs of the form 'the individual named so and so'. Of course, this is not yet a theory of names; but it has the merit of broadening the problem. If at this point Kneale had adopted Russell's theory of descriptions, his theory of names would already have been superior to the rigid-designator account, as I have tried to show. But he actually suggested a presuppositional analysis of definite NPs, and in doing so he broadened the problem even further, although this will not have been evident at the time.

What I have done is combine Kneale's insight with a theory of presupposition that is more explicit and, presumably, more comprehensive than what he envisaged. The resulting analysis of names is superior to Kripke's for two main reasons. First, it explains a whole range of empirical facts about names that Kripke's theory cannot account for, if they don't falsify it to begin with. Secondly, it treats names as just another class of presuppositional expressions within the framework of a theory that is amply motivated on independent grounds. In comparison, Kripke's theory is clearly *ad hoc*.

What I have outlined in the foregoing is a theory of interpretation in two senses of the word: it is about the mental processes involved in the interpretation of an utterance, and about the mental representations that they give rise to. As I understand it, this is a semantic theory, but it is obviously not what philosophers like Kripke have in mind when they speak of semantics, meaning, and related notions. It might be objected, therefore, that what I have proposed is a change of subject, rather than just an alternative account of names.

In a way this is right. Discussions about names tend to get out of hand in the sense that it is impossible to make substantial claims about the semantics of names without making quite fundamental assumptions about the status and aims of semantic theory. (This is precisely why

names are such a controversial subject, although it is hard to think of a category of expressions that would appear to be simpler.) But Kripke's theory and mine are not incommensurable, since we start out from the same set of semantic intuitions. Our theories are about the same empirical facts, and if one of them provides a more satisfactory account of these facts, then this is bound to have consequences for our views on the status and aims of semantic theory; but these foundational issues must be left for another occasion.

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APPENDIX: EXERCISE

To claim that a name N is semantically equivalent with a definite NP of the form 'the individual named N' is not to imply that the two expressions can always be used interchangeably. Of course, 'John' is *not* the same as 'the individual named "John"'. The latter expression is longer than the former, for example, which is presumably why many attempts at referring to John by means of 'the individual named "John"' will be found incongruous. Clearly, however, observations like these are the province of Gricean pragmatics. They do not even begin to prove that the said equivalence doesn't hold.

Nevertheless, I believe that in quite a few cases the difference between N and 'the x named N', where x is a hyponym of 'individual', is very slight. In order to convey an impression of how similar the two types of expressions actually are, I have devised the following exercise. Below are eight text passages, collected on an Internet tour. These passages are lightly edited: I have occasionally replaced a name N with a description of the form 'the x named N', or vice versa. The purpose of the exercise is to determine which of the highlighted expressions have been tampered with and which haven't. The correct solution is given as note 23.[23]

- Should *Mr Banharn* become successful in his bid to form this country's next coalition government, there are still a number of obstacles to overcome. Certainly the defeat of Narong Wongwan in Phrae Province yesterday has to a certain extent removed one obstacle blocking his success.

  But he still has to convince the Bangkok public that he is suitable for the premiership. He would need to somehow bolster public confidence which appears certain to drop once the realisation sinks in that *the man named Banharn* is expected to be prime minister. In addition, he must answer the question of whether Mr Vattana will be appointed to his Cabinet.
- *The woman named Veronica* had gone through the various treatments and services of the different physicians without finding any solution. She had spent all of her money and her health deteriorated to find her in a worse situation than she was before. When she heard of *Jesus* and pushed through the crowd to touch him, Jesus immediately knew that there was a withdrawal of virtue. He told her that her faith had made her whole.

- *Fox Mulder* hummed as he watched the nine ladies walk down the street. He guessed they were looking for someplace to stay. He sat in his car, silently watching them and waiting to see where they went. He was doing a little of his own observation, on his own time. *Scully* had begun to check the data base for criminal records, Mulder suspected she wouldn't find anything.

  The women, as he watched them, didn't seem to know where they were going. *The one named Vickie* walked slowly behind the group, looking about curiously. It was almost as if she were comparing the city to something. Mulder smiled, they definitely weren't lying about not being from this city.

  The sound of his cell phone beeping was enough to bring Mulder out of his thoughts.

  'Mulder.' he muttered, already knowing that it was his partner that was calling.

  'I found something interesting.' Scully said and Mulder raised his eyebrows.

  'Oh?'

  'Yeah, *the woman named Anik*, she's got quite a lengthy record.' Scully said, the tone of her voice seemed to mock him. Anik, that name was interesting in itself. Mulder had never seen a more intriguing woman and that name just topped off the package.
- *Jack* is in fact a Nightbane, while he appears human, Jack can shed his human form for a demonic looking body, the following is how Jason describes his morphus . . .

  Everyone else in the room is nearly blinded by a bright gleam of black 'light.' When their vision clears a few seconds later, *the boy named Jack* is gone and a monster is in his place.
- The story so far: A man set out on a mystery date with I-74 with only the vague notion of buying a bowl of chili when he arrived. Instead he met a girl named John Ehrlichman who seduced and then kidnapped the man. She carjacked his '73 Cutlass and headed toward Yorba Linda with the promise that they and *Nixon* would 'party like it's 1999.'

  They did and he did and they returned home to the Watergate Café. Unfortunately for them, *Nixon* died, the parties stopped and the Watergate Café fell into disuse.

  At the Watergate Café, where the coffee is always flowing, where the cottage cheese-and-ketchup platter is always being served and where the tapes are always rolling, life was going on as a cheap game show parody of itself.

  The girl named John Ehrlichman, whose structural perfection was matched only by her hostility, was on the telephone hatching another scheme.
- Most people know *the man named John Elefante*. Some have known him since his days as lead vocalist with the rock group Kansas. Others know him as producer of numerous Grammy-winning projects for artists such as Christian rock veterans Petra.
- When *Chambeau Blau* died of equine fever in 1971 newspapers proclaimed the end of an era. Blau was the last and best of the horse hypnotists. At right we see Blau with *the horse named Billy*. Billy was more mule than horse, but he was Blau's favorite subject.
- There was a grocery store. It could have been any grocery store, but it was bigger than most. It had twelve aisles, a produce section, a deli, a bakery, a liquor section, a magazine bin and a bulk candy section. It had a man named Val working the express lane cash register. We were in the grocery store, larger than most, for half an hour, when the man wearing a beach towel walked in.

  He went to the produce section, grabbed a bag of apples, a bag of oranges and then went to the bakery and grabbed a loaf of bread. Then he walked out of the larger than most grocery store. *The man named Val* followed him and asked, 'Why are you stealing from my grocery store?'

NOTES

1 I should like to thank Rob van der Sandt and the three anonymous referees of the *Journal of Semantics* for their uncommonly elaborate comments on the previous version of this paper. I have profited greatly from their criticism and advice, and I hope the paper has, too. During the final stage of my working on this project I was supported by a grant from the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG), which I gratefully acknowledge.

2 Strawson (1950) refers to definites like 'the Glorious Revolution' and 'the Great War' as 'quasi-names' or 'embryonic names', and remarks that an expression may 'for obvious reasons, pass into, and out of, this class (e.g. "the Great War")'. Although this observation is undoubtedly correct, I prefer to express it differently. Instead of postulating a separate class of 'quasi-names', I would say that the distinction between names and other definites is vague, because the relation 'being named N' does not have a precise meaning (see section 4).

3 Here I am indebted to one of the referees, who suggested that this is not possible.

4 This is a familiar situation in presupposition theory. It is widely held, for example, that in a sentence like the following the presupposition that there is a king of France, which is triggered by the definite NP in the consequent of the conditional, is absorbed in the antecedent:

> If France has a king, then the king of France is bald.

Of course, this sentence is slightly awkward, too, and for the same reason: there is no apparent reason why a full definite should be used instead of a pronoun.

5 Here I am indebted to one of the referees for suggesting that examples like (8a, b) don't exist.

6 It may seem easy to distinguish 'metalinguistic' from 'ordinary' uses, but in fact it isn't easy at all. See Geurts (1998) for discussion.

7 Presumably, this would be Kripke's position. Cf. Kripke (1980: 62, n. 25).

8 Just suppose. I don't endorse Russell's analysis but I want to show that Kripke's criticism can be refuted without presupposing the analysis of definite NPs that I favour.

9 This terminology is tendentious because only in the context of Russell's theory of descriptions is it necessary to consider such NPs to be incomplete. I use the term here merely because it has gained some currency in the Russellian tradition.

10 This distinction is emphasized by Bach (1987), who proposes to speak of 'the bearer of N' instead of 'the individual named N', in order to forestall any further confusion. I am not convinced, however, that such terminological measures will prove to be very effective.

11 Of course, Callas's real name was 'Kalogeropoulos'.

12 Ottomobil is a continuation of the legendary Immobil project.

13 See van der Sandt and Geurts (1991), van der Sandt (1992), Geurts (1995, to appear), and Geurts and van der Sandt (to appear).

14 Here and in the following I ignore the possibility that accommodation is not possible because the presupposition clashes with the Otto's beliefs (or because of any other reason).

15 See Geurts (1995, to appear). My notion of commitment slate derives from Hamblin (1971). Commitment is crucially different from belief: a speaker who utters φ accepts that φ is true, as Stalnaker (1984) would say, in the sense that he commits himself to act, at least for a while, as if he held φ to be true. Of course, in many cases speakers actually believe what they say, but sincerety is not a prerequisite for

successful communication, and it is not part of the notion of commitment. Having said this, I will go on to speak in terms of the speaker's beliefs, because this is often more convenient than speaking in terms of commitment, and nothing hinges upon the distinction for my current purposes.

16 See Lewis (1968, 1971, 1983b), Edelberg (1992), Geurts (1995, to appear), Zeevat (1996). The technical apparatus that I can only sketch here is developed in much more detail in Geurts (1995, to appear).

17 See Geach (1967), Edelberg (1992), Geurts (to appear).

18 For more extensive discussion of this point, see Lewis (1983b).

19 An additional complication is that the notion of scope may be applied at different levels of analysis. To see why this matters, consider the following example:

(i) Maybe John has started smoking.

Here the presupposition that John didn't smoke (before a given date) is triggered within the scope of the modal expression. In the absence of evidence to the contrary, this presupposition will be accommodated in the main DRS, and the default interpretation for (i) that we predict may be paraphrased as follows:

(ii) John didn't smoke, but maybe he has started smoking.

Now logically speaking this means that we give wide scope to the *presupposition* that John didn't smoke, but linguistically speaking there is no *expression* which has obtained wide scope. It is only in the latter sense that the notions of scope taking and presupposition projection are orthogonal to each other.

20 As pointed out to me by one of the referees for the Journal.

21 More accurately: it seems to me that the intuition underlying the answers given by these authors is the same in each case, although strictly speaking their proposals are incompatible with one another.

22 Cf. Sommers (1982). One of the referees objected that Kripke has never claimed that pronouns are rigid designators, or that they can be used as such. That is correct, but I am merely extending Kripke's observations to other types of expressions. To the extent that Kripke's is an empirical theory it is based on the observation that the interpretation of a name engenders certain intuitions. But other expressions (pronouns, certain overt definites, and other presupposition-inducing expressions) engender the same intuitions, so instead of asking why names appear to be rigid, it is a sound policy to ask why any expression may appear to rigid.

23 Solution: I lied when I said that I had edited these texts; they are printed here exactly as I found them.

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