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Demonstratives and Cognitive Significance

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It may come as a surprise that some of the simplest sentences receive some of the greatest attention in semantics. Declarations like 'The man with the yellow hat is nice', 'Barack Obama is tall', 'Jay-Z is Sean Carter', 'I am hungry', 'The meeting starts now', 'That dog is cute' are all sentences with which we are so familiar that they seem to stand in little need of explanation. Yet such familiarity has failed to yield a widely accepted semantic theory, accounting for their *meanings*. This failure is betrayed by many ideas and criticisms appearing in print over the last 120 years.

As interesting as it is, my aim in this paper, however, is not to mark the various trends that have come and gone in the history of semantics. Rather, I consider how semantics has treated a small portion of language—that involving demonstrative expressions—in order to flesh out how semantics simpliciter has fallen on a mistake; or more accurately, a misdiagnosis. This misdiagnosis has either led incorrect semantic treatments of demonstratives, or has created a "shadow-sickness"; which is bound to be left untreated by any account semantics can give, because *those* accounts process machinery ill-equipped to deal with such a sickness. To push the medical metaphor a bit further, the former result of the misdiagnosis is like the doctor who, after being mislead by one of a patient's symptoms, is led to offer the wrong method of treatment. The latter result of the misdiagnosis is like the specialized doctor who, upon encountering a patient with two distinct illnesses, is misled into trying to treat both illnesses; though one happens to be outside of her specialization.

Metaphors aside, I maintain that semanticists have believed that the notion *cognitive significance* is a semantic notion, and therefore should be treated in an adequate account of semantics for any relevant portion of language. For example, Dr. Perry comments:

> What the semanticist should worry about depends on what the semanticist is trying to do...By "semantic theory" he means a theory of linguistic meaning for natural languages. Wettstein is interested in how demonstratives, descriptions, and proper names work in English, not how variables, iota operators, and individual constants work in languages for quantification theory. If this is the semanticist's interest, then he has picked a subject matter that, whether he likes it or not, ties in with a number of other subject matter that, whether he likes it or not, ties in with a number of other subject matters, including the study of cognition. (Perry 1988, pp. 231)

I take this belief to wrong-headed. Since demonstratives provide the best reason as to why this usual belief is wrongheaded, they are the subject of the vast majority of this paper. I conclude that instead of cognitive significance being conceived and handled as a semantic notion, it should be handled as an epistemic notion applying to theories of communication, action, and linguistic behavior. My hope is that this all becomes clearer over the course of this paper.

I should take a moment to outline the structure of this paper. I first give some background on demonstratives and then outline the questions that an adequate semantic theory of demonstratives is supposed to answer. I hold that such a theory is compelled to answer the first to question, while the third is inappropriate to the subject matter.[1] The second section presents and criticizes each of two rival approaches--the *descriptivist* and the *directly referential*--that offer two different accounts of demonstratives. In the third

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[1] On my bolder days, I would simply say that the third question, which centers around cognitive significance, is just irrelevant.

section, I try to diagnose the root of the problem, and show why this diagnosis is an accurate one. The upshot, I believe, is two-fold: (a) it will show that cognitive significance is not to be treated in semantics, and (b) it goes some way towards explaining why semanticists have mistakenly thought that cognitive significance should be so treated. This all will become clearer later.

Preliminaries

So what are demonstratives? Well, one way to answer this question is to provide a complete list of demonstratives expressions. Such a list would enumerate pronouns like 'I', 'my', 'me', 'you', 'she', 'he', 'it', 'them', 'we', etc; pure demonstratives 'this', 'that', and adjective expressions 'actual', 'present', local'; even more homely expression like 'honey' or 'mom'. But such a list would be it would obviously fail to provide any informative answer to the question. A more promising approach is to highlight the most characteristic feature of demonstratives, *context-dependency*, and show how this feature factors into the questions that must be answered in a correct semantic account of demonstratives.

Demonstratives are highly *context dependent*. This means that the extension (or reference) of demonstrative *can* change given changes between contexts in which it is uttered. Thus the sentence-type 'I am making a mess' expresses something different when uttered out of my mouth than it does out of John Perry's mouth and that difference consists in the fact that the utterances respectively attribute *making a mess* to different individuals. Mutatis mutandis for other demonstratives. This context-dependence doesn't

seem to be exhibited in terms like proper names and predicates nearly as much. When I say "Cicero was a roman orator" today in my apartment and likewise you say the same "Cicero was a roman orator", tomorrow in your office it seems plausible to say that we have expressed the same thing. Further, it seems we express the **same** information in virtue of uttering sentences of **same** type, having the **same** constituents 'Cicero' and 'was a roman orator', that function in the **same** way regardless of the context in which they are uttered.

Our experience bears out these remarks. We all tacitly understand demonstratives and the context dependence they exhibit; and this understanding comes with a reasonable amount of ease. Anyone who understands 'he' understands that she can use the same simple expression to refer to different males, at different times. But it seems that when we start trying to account for how this all works—this context dependency—we can't quite get things right. We are in the same position as David Kaplan when he gripes, "Proper names may be a practical convenience in our mundane transactions, but they are a theoretician's nightmare. They are like bicycles. Everyone easily learns to rid, but no one can correctly explain how he does it" (Kaplan 1978). Perhaps our nightmare will grow more vivid in light of a few examples that show the questions that need to be answered by a correct semantic account of demonstratives.

In any case, consider this:

I'm walking down the street with my hands in my pocket. Distracted by someone yelling across the street I trip on uneven pavement and fall, landing on my head. I arise and later call my mom saying "I was wounded". Some time later, I

(recovering) receive a call from my mom. She tells me that she was just involved in a car accident. Then she says "I was wounded."

Now think about the particular utterances cited in the example:

1. "I was wounded" [as uttered by me]

2. "I was wounded" [as uttered by my mom]

It seems clear that there is a way in which both (1) and (2) mean exactly same thing and at the very least we can say that both are instances of one in the same sentence—"I was wounded." On the other hand it seems clear that there is a way in which (1) and (2) mean (say) dissimilar things; (1) asserts something *about* me, while (2) asserts something *about* my mom. So a question arises as to how to characterize the similarity and dissimilarity in sentences where 'I' occur.

Consider further:

My mom, being the gossipy type, shortly after recovering from her accident begins to inform others of my injury. She says "He was wounded" or "Adam was wounded."

So think of the utterances involved here:

3. "He was wounded" [as uttered by my mom about me]

4. "Adam was wounded" [as uttered by my mom]

Now, it seems clear that there is a way in which (1), (3), and (4) mean (say) exactly the same thing; they all assert something (the same thing) *about* me. Again, on the other hand it seems clear that (1), (3), and (4) mean dissimilar things and at the very least we can say that (1), (3), and (4) are instances of different sentences—"I was wounded", "He was wounded", and "Adam was wounded"—respectively. So another question arises as to how to characterize the similarity and dissimilarity between our utterances ((1), (3), and (4)) where 'I', 'He', and 'Adam' occur (respectively), particularly where they assert something *about* the same individual.

These examples and their accompanying explanations suggest two general questions that must be answered in regard to demonstrative expressions. The first question is completely concerned with accounting for demonstratives context dependency. More exactly, it inquires as to how any particular demonstrative expression—'I', 'you', 'my car', etc.—can itself be used in the same way by different utterances to say different things (as in (1) and (2)). The second question enjoys greater generality than the first, in that it is concerned with referring expressions in general; both demonstrative and non-demonstrative. The question centers around issues of *reference* and *propositions*, which are connected with demonstrative expressions in obvious ways. More exactly, it inquires as to how different expressions (both demonstrative and non-demonstrative)—'I', 'you', 'Adam'—can be used to say the same thing with different utterances (i.e. (1), (3), and (4)). I maintain that both questions will have to be addressed by any semanticist who is serious about giving an adequate account of demonstrative

expressions. But is a third sort of example that has seemed to signal another question in regard to demonstratives.

John Perry famously opens his paper, *The Problem of the Essential Indexical*, with such an example:

> I once followed a trail of sugar on a supermarket floor, pushing my trolley down the aisle on one side of a tall counter and back along the aisle on the other, seeking the shopper with the torn bag to tell him he was making a mess. With each trip around the counter, the trail became thicker. But I seemed unable to catch up. Finally it dawned on me I was the shopper I was trying to catch.
>
> I believed at the outset that the shopper with a torn bag was making a mess. And I was right. But I did not believe that I was making a mess. That seems to be something I came to believe. And when I came to believe that, I stopped following the trail around the counter, and rearranged the torn bag in my trolley. My change in beliefs seems to explain my change in behavior. (Perry 1979)

So, the above suggests a question about the *cognitive significance* of demonstrative expressions.[2] How can the cognitive aspects of two sentences containing demonstratives differ, if both sentences assert the same thing of the same object? Perhaps another example will help clarify this question.

I often make mistakes in planning and my family, friends, and professors all are well aware of this fact. One day I forget when I have to work next so I call my manager Rich at *Chili's* and ask him. He tells me that I "have to work tomorrow at 10:30am". Since there is no reason for me to believe Rich is lying or mistaken (we'll assume he's not) I thereby come to have a true belief expressed by

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[2] I admit here non-committal as to what the nature of cognitive significance exactly is. I actually think that the normal construal of it is quite sufficient for my purposes here. Most notably, the oft cited criterion of difference is appropriate: if A understands an expression E and an expression E', and does not assent to the identity E=E', then E and E' differ in cognitive significance. Of course the criterion of difference is usually put in the context of propositional attitudes, as does Evans in his *Understanding Demonstratives* or Perry in his *Frege and Demonstratives*.

(C) I have to work tomorrow at 10:30 am

Now this is all well and good but as luck would have it my grandpa calls wanting to get together and play golf on April 9th at 10:30 am in the morning. He asks if I have to work on the 9th during that time to which I respond "No"; thinking, as I do, that the current date is April 4th and that I have the whole following week off. So now we can say that I believe something else. Namely,

(D) I don't have work on April 9th at 10:30 am

So far we really have no problem with accepting this situation as a possibility. The problem comes in when we add that the date of the conversation with Rich as well as my grandpa is April 8th, contrary to my belief that it is only the 4th. But then, since the tomorrow in question concerns April 9th that the content of my belief (C) can be expressed as:

(C') I do have work on April 9th at 10:30 am

Now it is easily seen that I must believe in a blatant contradiction, since (D) is the negation of (C'). But I would never knowingly believe in such contradictions, being a philosophy major, so what gives?

There are many who take these sorts considerations to merit a semantic account of demonstratives that explain both Perry's cleaning up after himself or my seemingly contradictory beliefs. They give credence to idea that an adequate semantic account must take into consideration the question of *cognitive significance*. The *descriptivist theory for demonstratives* (hereafter *DS theory*) seems to be mostly motivated by this third question, whilst discovering that it *seemed* it could answer the first and second without any major modifications. On the other hand, the directly referential theory for demonstratives (hereafter DR theory) seems to be completely motivated by the first and second questions, whilst discovering that it seemed it could (and felt it needed) to answer the third without any major modifications.[3]

In what follows I shall try to show that the apparent discoveries of both the DS and the DR theory are just that, *apparent*. More specifically, the DS theory fails to provide real answers to the first and second questions. Contrarily, the DR theory fails to provide a real answer to the third question. These failures, however, do not signal that DS theory and DR theory are on the same sinking ship. Rather, while DS theory fails to provide answers to real semantic questions concerning demonstratives, DR theory fails to provide an answer to a fundamentally non-semantic question. That DR theory, being a semantic theory, fails to provide an answer to such a question should not be surprising; and such failure certainly shouldn't tell against DR theory's legitimacy as such (a semantic theory). These are, of course, conclusions that I will try to argue for here.[4]

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[3] Needless to say, if such adventitious discoveries come as a delight in everyday life, they come as an effusive joy (and relief) in philosophy.

[4] The conclusions reached about both theories are really done in different matters. Firstly, I think that it is safe to say that any descriptivist theory carries too much baggage—in the form of objections—to be much of a candidate for a theory of demonstratives. Of this I am quite sure. The conclusions I reach about DR theory are done in a much less conclusive manner. I present the problem that cognitive significance seems to pose for a DR theorist (basically the same problems the "New Theories of Reference" are thought to

The Descriptivist Account

I hinted earlier that the main impetus for DS theory, was the felt need to deal with the third question discussed above; that of cognitive significance. I also hinted that in providing an account which could handle certain peculiar cases having to do with cognitive significance, it seemed (when properly construed) that the DS theory could also handle the pressing concerns regarding the functioning of demonstratives; concerns which seem to be made explicit by the first and second question above. DS theory's concern for accounting for cognitive significance is, not all that surprising, evidenced by Frege. He remarks:

Consider the following case. Dr Gustav Lauben says, 'I was wounded'. Leo Peter hears this and remarks some days later , 'Dr. Gustav Lauben was wounded'. Does this sentence express the same thought as the on Dr. Lauben uttered himself? Suppose that Rudolph Lingens was present when Dr. Lauben spoke and now hears what is related by Leo Peter. If the same thought was uttered by Dr. Lauben and Leo Peter, then Rudolph Lingens, who is fully master of the language and remembers what Dr. Lauben said in his presence, must now know at once from Leo Peter's report that he is speaking of the same thing. But knowledge of the language is a special thing when proper names are involved. It may well be the case that only a few people associate a definite thought with the sentence 'Dr. Lauben was wounded.' For complete understanding one needs in

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incur) and the strategy that is used to answer such problems. But these are open to counterexamples. To my knowledge such counterexamples cannot be overcome by any strategy yet given. I think that this signals that we should redraw the lines a bit. Perhaps I am overzealous in this conclusion, but I do attempt to say where and why the lines have been mis-drawn in the first place, and in doing so separate semantics, from matters which seem purely, epistemological and pragmatic.

this case to know the expression 'Dr. Gustav Lauben'. Now if both Leo Peter and Rudolph Lingens mean by 'Dr. Gustav Lauben' the doctor who is the only doctor living in a house known to both of them, then they both understand the sentence 'Dr. Gustav Lauben was wounded' in the same way; they associate the same thought with it. But it is also possible that Rudolph Lingens does not know Dr. Lauben personally and does not know that it was Dr. Lauben who recently said 'I was wounded'. In this case Rudolph Lingens cannot know that the same affair is in question. I say, therefore, in this case: the thought which Leo Peter expresses is not the same as that which Dr. Lauben uttered. (Frege 41-42)

Whether or not Frege was himself a DS theorist with respect to demonstratives, is beside the point (he in fact offers some comments to the contrary).[5] The point is that the above *suggests* a certain theory of demonstratives, here called *DS theory*. At the core of DS theory are the following theses:

Descrip. 1: The semantic content of an utterance of demonstrative term *d* is a set of descriptive (conceptual) conditions.

Descrip. 2: An utterance of *d* possesses its semantic content in virtue of association by the speaker (of the utterance). This association assigns *d* a set of descriptive conditions and is conscious or unconscious.

Descrip. 3: When a set of descriptive conditions is satisfied uniquely by an object (in a wide sense), they refer to said object.

Descrip. 4. An utterance containing a demonstrative *d* is about the object which satisfies its associated descriptive conditions.

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[5] I can never decide on whether Frege was a DS theorist or a DR theorist and it seems my indecision is reflected in the literature regarding the subject. Many believe that he was, as many believe that he was a descriptivist with regard to names. But there are those like Evan's ("Understanding Demonstratives", chapter 1 of "The Varieties of Reference") who give views to the contrary. I don't think all ever be able to come to a completely compelling conclusion on the matter, but I think the quoted is descriptivist in spirit, and therefore I use it.

Thesis (1) of the descriptivist position tries to get at what is said by a use of a demonstrative by appealing to the notion of *descriptive conditions*. A set of descriptive conditions is something like a conceptual complex or a purely qualitative set of descriptions. Some such descriptive conditions might be *the tall man in the yellow hat and who plays professional basketball and gave the interview*, or *the only even prime*, or *the president of the United States*, etc. The semantic content (what is said) by each use of a demonstrative is some set of descriptive conditions.[6] Implicitly, thesis (1) explains the usefulness of demonstrative expressions. For one, demonstrative expressions are communicative short-cuts which stand in for a set of descriptive conditions that could be quite long if explicitly stated (in longer, more rigid locutions). For two, demonstratives allow a relatively short list of expressions, to stand in for a potentially limitless set of different conditions. 'I' can stand in for *the tall man in the yellow hat and who plays professional basketball and gave the interview*, or *the mulatto IWU philosophy student*, or *the president of the United States has the power to veto*, etc..

While Thesis (1) of the DS theory explains that the semantic content of a use of a demonstrative expression is a set of descriptive conditions, it leaves the question as to

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[6] Dr. Perry lays this out quite nicely and succinctly but in his writings (mainly Essential Indexical and Frege on Demonstratives) he seems to be ambiguous about how demonstratives possess semantic content according to the DS theory. Two different positions result; although both are in the final analysis, equivalent. The first is the one presented above whereby a demonstrative stands in for a set of descriptive conditions; descriptive conditions which are the demonstrative's semantic content. The second is the position whereby a demonstrative expression only acts as a purely linguistic substitute for another locution which has a fixed semantic content; and it is through the mediation of this other locution that the demonstrative expression possesses its semantic content. So 'I' can act as an abbreviation for another locution, say "the tall man in the yellow hat and who plays professional basketball and gave the interview", a locution which has as its semantic content *the tall man in the yellow hat and who plays professional basketball and gave the interview*. But as should be obvious, in the end it doesn't matter which horn of the ambiguity is cut off, you still end up with the same semantic content in the end. There is a parallel in the writings on Frege and Russell on names. I take Frege to say that a name, used by a speaker, denotes a sense which is uniquely satisfied by an object. I take Russell, on the other hand, to say that a name, used by a speaker, is just and abbreviation for a longer locution which in turn denotes a description that some object uniquely satisfied. Since the outcome from both pictures is essentially the same, we find authors like Kripke criticizing the 'Frege-Russell view' of names.

how any particular use of a demonstrative gains a set of descriptive conditions unanswered.

Thesis (2) provides an answer. Briefly, an utterance of a demonstrative expression possesses the semantic content it does as a result of being **associated** by the **utterer** with a **set of descriptive conditions**. When a set of descriptive conditions is so associated by the utterer of the demonstrative, those conditions are just the semantic content of the demonstrative (in *that* particular case). The association that links the demonstrative expression to a set of descriptive conditions can be conscious or unconscious, depending on how things are with the speaker. To make things clear, an example may help.

You are at a cocktail party with a friend (call him Bob), and I run into you. After some light conversation, I ask you both what you are drinking. You then say, "I'm drinking a martini. He is drinking champaign." Now consider the second of your utterances:

5. 'He is drinking champaign' [as uttered by you.]

The demonstrative term 'He' needs to make a contribution to the semantic content of the whole utterance 'He is drinking champaign' (on compositionality), and therefore needs to have a semantic content. We know from thesis (1) that the DS theorist holds that this content is just a set of descriptive conditions. Thesis (2) tells us how this semantic content is determined in every case a demonstrative is used. In this case, **you** associate a set of descriptive conditions with your use of 'He'. Perhaps Bob is a distinguished classicist, who is tall and thirty-four, and who likes ranch dressing on his fries; being his friend, you are, of course, well aware of all of this. Perhaps then when you say 'He' in (5)

you unconsciously associate the descriptive conditions *the man who is a distinguished classicist and who is tall and who is thirty-four years old and likes ranch dressing on his fries* with your use of the expression. This set of conditions is the semantic content of 'He' in (5). And the semantic content of the whole of your utterance is *the man who is a distinguished classicist and who is tall and who is thirty-four years old and who likes ranch dressing on his fries is drinking champaign.*[7]

Still there is more that needs to be done. Remember, that the DS theorist needs to provide an account of how demonstratives work in practice, while explaining our strongly held intuitions concerning their use. Presumably every competent language user (of English) would agree that your utterance in (5) is *about* an individual; namely Bob. Further, we think that uses of other demonstratives—'I', 'now', 'here', 'that dog'—refer to a speaker, a time, a place, a dog respectively, and these referents are just what utterances containing the relevant demonstratives are about. One approach would say that the relevant object is just part of the semantic content of an utterance containing a demonstrative. But for the DS theory, no readily identifiable objects are part of the semantic content of the utterance, and therefore another approach is needed. The DS theory's 3rd thesis seeks explain *reference* and *aboutness* in theses (4) and (5), by utilizing the notion of *satisfaction.*

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[7] It is not misleading to assimilate the semantic content of an utterance (such as 5) to an intension, and indeed I speak as if it were an afterthought here.

The DS theorist holds that when an object satisfies a set of descriptive conditions, (where 'satisfies' is equivalent to something like 'is true of'), those descriptive conditions refer to that object.[8] If we adopt an intuitive principle like

Intuitive principle (1): The referent(s) of an utterance u is what u is about.

then we can also say that (in the DS theory) whatever object satisfies the descriptive conditions associated with demonstrative in an utterance u by the speaker (of u) is what u is about. The special notion of *satisfaction* (similar to what Evans calls 'fit'; see Evan's 1973) thus gives a reference to demonstrative terms, and *aboutness* to utterances in which they occur.[9] Further, with the notion in hand we can give truth-conditions for any utterance of sentence-type containing a demonstrative expression. Here are the truth-conditions for utterances of the sentence-type 'I am 23 years old'.

TC(ex): 'I am 23 years old' at w is true iff Ex [$x \varepsilon D$ & a(x)] at w, for all w[10]

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[8] At least, under the DS theory, this is the only account of reference that is given. A conceptual complex (here construed as a set of descriptive conditions) taken at a circumstance of evaluation is supposed to determine an object.

[9] This can happen a number of ways. Perhaps, as in our examples, it supplies a subject which the utterance's is about. Or perhaps it provides an direct or indirect object. Etc. The notion of aboutness is noticeably vague, yet seeming fundamental to our understanding of utterances of declarative sentences. These utterances are most often used to express information and one cannot have information that is about nothing (in some sense), therefore the relevant utterances must be about something (in some sense). At first blush we would equate aboutness with semantic content, but since we think that a good many of our demonstrative expressions are about the objects determined (by some mechanism), and the fact that the DS theory does not incorporate objects into its conception of semantic content, it must utilize satisfaction. Satisfaction, also in intergral in determining the truth and falsity of propositions under evaluation.

[10] I must admit that it seems to me now to be a bit misguided to not include that the value of the bound variable 'x' should occur on the left side of the biconditional. Otherwise, the truth condition will be fulfilled for anyone who utters 'I am 23 years old' if and only if there is someone for whom a set of descriptive conditions D is fulfilled and that someone is 23 years old. I leave the presentation as is because it is indeed part of an objection to DS theory that it accepts this sort of construal of the truth-conditions for utterances of 'I am 23 years old'. It is open for the DS theorist to supply an individual as the utter of the sentence, but how would this introduction come about. A description?—if so the problems for DS theory

where w is a variable that ranges across the set of circumstances of evaluation, D is a set of descriptive conditions associated by the speaker (with 'I'), and a is just the property of being 23 years old.

TC(ex) construed in English says that, "I am 23 years old" is true at a circumstance if and only if there is some object that satisfies the set of descriptive conditions associated by the speaker with 'I' and that object is 23 years old at the circumstance." Now a general method of getting to the truth conditions of a demonstrative in general is provided.

TCD: 'F(d)' at w is true iff Ex [xεD & F(x)] at w, for all w
where w is a variable that ranges across the set of circumstances of evaluation, D is a set of descriptive conditions associated by the speaker (with 'I'), and F is the property in question.

TCD in English says something like, "A use of a demonstrative sentence of the form 'F(d)' is true at a circumstance if and only if there is something that satisfies the set of descriptive conditions associated by the speaker with 'd', and it is F at that circumstance."

So let's briefly canvass the DS theory. Every time a demonstrative term d is used in an utterance, d 'stands for' for a set of descriptive conditions Ψ associated by the utterer with d, and Ψ is d's semantic content on that occasion (Thesis (1) and (2)). Furthermore, d refers to the object that satisfies its Ψ and the relevant utterance is about that thing (thesis (3) and (4)). Furthermore, DS theory maintains that the truth conditions of an utterance of any demonstrative can be constructed out of these notions.

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reemerge. If not, then the DS theorist needs to accept as basic the determination of the individual by which the associated definite description is secured.

Here's the answers DS theory provides for the semantic questions posed in the beginning.

1. **How can different utterances of the same sentence type containing demonstratives by different speakers, say or be about different things?**

The similarity between utterances of the same sentence type, for instance mine and my mother's utterances of "I was wounded", derives quite simply from the fact that we (my mother and I) used the same English sentence-type, which function in the same way. For sentences containing demonstrative expressions, this *way* is what the DS theory needs to explain. DS theory gives the following explanation: Demonstratives are used in certain ways to refer to certain individuals in different circumstances. For instance, my mom's use of 'I' due to convention is understood to concern her. In her utterance of 'I was injured' she says something about herself. DS theory employs the notions of descriptive conditions, satisfaction, and association as described above to explain how such an utterance can be about her. It is interesting that 'I' has acquired the interesting attribute of referring to the individual utterer, because what is really doing the work is the associated descriptive conditions, but take the DS theorist at her word on this point (perhaps this attribute is just a common coincidence).

2. **How can different utterances of different sentence-types containing demonstratives and other singular terms say or be about the same thing?**

The similarity between utterances of two different sentence-types that say the same thing about the same object derives simply from the fact that they (both utterances)

concern the same object. For sentences containing demonstratives, the DS theorist needs to explain how this is possible. And the DS theorist has a straightforward explanation: every time a demonstrative is used there is a set of descriptive conditions that the user associates with that her use, and these conditions are satisfied by a particular object. But this doesn't rule out a particular object satisfying other conditions associated with other uses of demonstratives, or the possibility of other non-demonstrative terms referring to the object in question. Since this is a possibility, it is quite alright if utterances of different sentence-types say the same thing about the same object, and the DS theorist maintains this will happen (in the case of demonstratives) through the association, descriptive conditions, and satisfaction.

3. How can the cognitive aspects of two sentences containing demonstratives differ, if both sentences assert the same thing of the same object?

You'll remember that a main motivation behind DS theory was accounting for the phenomenon of cognitive significance. We framed such questions in the context of propositional attitude reports. By uttering "I robbed the store" after long interrogation I seem to assert (and believe) the proposition *Adam Simon robbed the store*.[11] But, at the same time, I might say "It's not the case that he robbed the store", perhaps while eyeing a security video in which the individual involved seems (to me at least) not be myself, even though I am actually the individual filmed (this could have been due to spotty camera work, or whatever you like). When I say "It's not the case that he robbed the store" I seem to assert (and believe) the proposition *Adam Simon did not rob the store*. How are these kind of peculiar situations possible? DS theory provides a neat answer. In the case

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[11] As far as I can remember, *I* have not robbed a store.

of my first utterance—"I robbed the store" I associate a set of descriptive conditions which 'I' is to 'stand-in' for. These descriptive conditions could take the form *the IWU graduate, who resides in Elgin, works at Chili's...* These associated descriptive conditions factor into the semantic content of the utterance. They are 'about', or refer to, myself because (presumably) in this case I am the individual that *satisfies* that description. In the case of my second utterance—"He robbed the store" I associate a set of descriptive conditions which 'he' is to 'stand-in' for. These descriptive conditions could take the form *the hooded man, carrying a shotgun, walking with a limp...* These associated descriptive conditions factor into the semantic content of the utterance. They are 'about', or refer to, myself because (presumably) in this case I am the individual that satisfies that description. So for one utterance we seem an assertion like *F(a)* and for the other one like *~F(a)* by the same individual, who doesn't stand for contradictions (I would at least like to think this). How is this possible?

DS theory answers cites the fact that the semantic content of the utterances is not something like, *F(a)* and *~F(a)*, rather it is something like $Ex(x\varepsilon D\ \&\ F(x))$ and $\sim Ex(x\varepsilon E\ \&\ F(x))$ (or $Ex(x\varepsilon E\ \&\ \sim F(x))$) depending on your reading of the scope of the negation). If the two utterances above have two distinct semantic contents, then it is step to answer the question of cognitive significance. The DS theorist need only say that since the semantic content of an utterance is the object of cognitive awareness, playing a role in cognitive attitudes and behaviors, and since the descriptive conditions factor into this semantic content, two utterances with different semantic contents have different cognitive significances. It is no wonder that the two utterances above have different cognitive significances, citing the fact that their associated descriptive conditions differ sufficiently,

even though the same individual, Adam Simon, satisfies both sets of descriptive conditions.

DS theory also, in addition to answering these questions, provides reasons for the usefulness of demonstratives; citing their comparatively short size (as longer locutions which bear the same content) and the fact that they can stand in for a large variety of different descriptive conditions via association by the speaker (accounting for the seeming context-dependence). Citing these strengths[12] what, if anything, could possibly be wrong with the descriptivist account of demonstratives?

I contend that there are at least two general problems and three explanatory problems with the DS theory, which have to do with the core concepts the descriptive theorist helps herself to in giving her account; those concepts being 'association' and 'satisfaction'. [13]

The first problem for the DS theory is general. Notice that in accounting for the content of demonstratives, nowhere does it individuate between correct uses of different demonstrative expressions. A demonstrative term simply refers to whatever satisfies the set of descriptive conditions the utterer associates with her use of that term, and the utterance containing the demonstrative is about the satisfier. But this misses something we find fundamental to the linguistic meaning of demonstratives, and how they differ from one another. When we use 'I' in an utterance we use it with the understanding that it is supposed to refer to the speaker of the utterance, with 'You' it's the person being addressed, with 'that dog' it is the relevant canine. All of this is lost in the DS theory's set of thesis (1)-(4), listed above. There is nothing in principle barring

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[12] These really are strengths.
[13] Quite obviously, I look to *Perry 1977* here.

me, upon having a toothache, from uttering 'You are in pain' thereby referring to me, having in mind some appropriate set of associated descriptive conditions that I alone satisfy. This gives rise to a bigger problem when DS theory attempts to account for communication via demonstratives (something that requires widespread understanding among uses of demonstratives. How can I overhear a man talking to his wife over the phone, saying 'You told him that he could drive it' and know that the man I hear is telling the addressee (with 'You') that some male (with 'him' and 'he') could drive something which presumably can be driven (with 'it'). As long as he associates the appropriate descriptive conditions he could be saying that George W. Bush told Jenna she could drive some golf ball. How do we ever understand each other in the simplest of conversations involving demonstrative expressions? As it stands the DS theory lacks an account of this. It might be contended that these problems can be met by the DS theorist with some amendments to the theory. However, I believe that the next objections tell quite strongly against the heart of the theory.

The first problem for the DS theory might be called the *irrelevancy of association* (or the irrelevancy of belief).[14] The descriptivist says that when I use a demonstrative d, I associate a set of descriptive conditions with my use of d which the object x talked about satisfies. But notice that the conditions I associate with my use of d do not really determine the proposition (semantic content) expressed by an utterance containing that demonstrative. Suppose I believe that I am the only male that is a mulatto IWU philosophy student. From this it is does not follow that when I utter:

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[14] It needs to be assumed here that belief is a relation between the believer and a proposition (or semantic content). Other author's, most notably Perry, speak as if DS theorists have held this view of propositional attitudes and I follow suit. I do not believe that the assumption is misleading.

I was wounded

I express the proposition:

The male that is a mulatto IWU philosophy student was wounded

Suppose I am an all black business major who attends Morehouse College and has been in great health, and by some mistake I believe I am a male mulatto IWU philosophy student. I would still say something false in uttering 'I was wounded' even if there happens someone *a* who satisfies the condition *male mulatto IWU philosophy student* and that person *a* had been wounded. That the description I associate with my use of 'I' in 'I was wounded' happens to be satisfied by a person who (as it happens) had been wounded, is irrelevant to the truth or falsity of my utterance of 'I was wounded'.

The second problem for the DS theory might be called the *non-necessity of association* (belief). Stated briefly it is just not necessary that when I use a demonstrative like 'I' that I need to be able to produce some description I associate with 'I' in order to express a proposition (semantic content) with my utterance of 'I was wounded'. I might have no description that I can produce which differentially picks me out when I use 'I' in an utterance. And still this doesn't really matter; in fact I would say that most all of the time when we use 'I' we have no description we consciously associate with 'I' that picks out ourselves only, and sometimes we might not even have a subconscious description which picks out ourselves only.

The third problem for the DS theory might be called the *non-sufficiency of association* (belief). Stated briefly, no set of descriptive conditions one associates with a

demonstrative like 'I' will be sufficient to individuate the relevant demonstrative proposition (a proposition an utterance containing a demonstrative expression expresses). Let's take another example. Perhaps, by accident, I am somehow hit in the head and think 'I was wounded' associating the 'I' term with the descriptive condition 'the author of the Tractatus'. What follows? Well, firstly my associated description really picks out *Wittgenstein* and not *Adam Simon*, or at least it seems. In the case where Adam Simon was wounded and Wittgenstein wasn't this will obviously be true, since the proposition I express by uttering 'I was wounded' will be true, whereas the proposition Ludwig Wittgenstein would express after having had uttered the sentence type 'I was wounded' will be false (within the same evaluation). And obviously a proposition (upon the same evaluation) cannot be both true and false (at least in the sorts of cases we are considering). But if we consider the type of case where both of our utterances (mine and Wittgenstein) have the same truth value we can still see that the conditions aren't sufficient to pick out the relevant proposition. Consider this. I associate 'the author of the Tractatus' with my use of the demonstrative 'I' in my utterance of 'I was wounded' and this is true. Perhaps it is also true that Wittgenstein was wounded and he says 'I was wounded'. Wittgenstein expresses a proposition. Is my proposition the same? Well, not really because Wittgenstein could have expressed a proposition with 'I was wounded' without having associated the descriptive condition 'the author of the Tractatus' with his use of 'I', perhaps forgetting (being hit in the head after all) that he actually authored the famous work. This might seem devastating, but the descriptivist does have a response. She might say that 'No, of course there is not some one unique description that Wittgenstein associates with 'I' such that another would express the same proposition in

associating those conditions with 'I'. But what *is* important is that Wittgenstein does with every use of 'I' associate some descriptive conditions picking him out that that use is supposed to stand in for; these conditions are libel to change from occasion to occasion. But is this really plausible? First we see that this response is really a faux response as we saw that it isn't really *necessary* that Wittgenstein associate any descriptive conditions with his use of 'I' to express a proposition with an utterance of 'I was wounded'. In any utterance of 'I was wounded' by Wittgenstein, Wittgenstein needn't have the 'I' term associated with any set of descriptive conditions. But then no set of descriptive conditions can be associated with 'I' by me in order to bring about that I am expressing the same proposition with my utterance of 'I was wounded'[15] as Wittgenstein does with his utterance of 'I was wounded'; which is just to say that descriptive conditions aren't really sufficient.

In light of these problems, we can see that the DS theory as it stands is not a plausible account of demonstratives after all. This lack of plausibility is due, mainly, to the fact that it really doesn't answer our first and second questions in any manner that is at peace with our intuitive use and understanding of demonstrative expressions. It just gives us an incorrect account on how our intuitive use of demonstratives actually works. Something else is needed. Such a theory will do well not to utilize the notions of satisfaction and association in its core account of demonstratives in order to eschew the problems the descriptivist encounters above. Indeed such a theory has been developed, and has been an undeniable step forward in the understanding of the semantics of

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[15] There is a caveat here: namely, that we need to consider the actual linguistic practice involving the use of 'I'.

demonstrative expressions. In what follows I shall provide an overview of the theory and its answers to the three semantic questions posed above.

The Directly Referential account

We saw that while DS theory supplied answers to our three questions, there was something 'superficial' about this appearance; and I offered several arguments to this conclusion. Crudely, the theory seems just too complicated to deal with our every day intuitions on the working of demonstratives in our communication. Correct English uses of 'I' always refer to the utterer, regardless of ties to some description that I can form in my mind of myself; certainly such a description isn't necessary for my use of 'I' (if this was so, it would be so much harder to be a megalomaniac). In order to pay do respect to these intuitions we must search for another account that answers our three questions, and luckily such an account—DR theory—has been influentially provided by the likes of David Kaplan and others. Kaplan offers these preliminary comments:

> I became more and more intrigued with problems centering on what I would like to call the *semantics of direct reference*. By this I mean theories of meaning according to which certain singular terms refer directly without the mediation of a Fregean *Sinn* as meaning. I there are such terms, then the proposition expressed by a sentence containing such a term would involve individuals directly rather than by way of the "individual concepts" or individuals directly rather than by way of the "individual concepts" or "manners of presentation" I had been taught to expect. [Kaplan 1989, pp 483; his italics]

Here, Kaplan remarks on the possibility of objects being constituents of the semantic content of an utterance. This possibility is at the heart of DR theory, and

makes it unmistakably different (and in opposition to) from DR theory. At the core of DR

theory are the following theses:

Direct. 1: The semantic content of an utterance of a demonstrative term d is an object (or referent); i.e. uses of demonstratives are directly referential.[16]

Direct. 2: The semantic content of a demonstrative is determined by the character of the demonstrative-type, and context in which it is uttered (and perhaps other factors).

Direct. 3: The character of expressions in the language is fixed by the linguistic conventions of the language.

Direct. 4: An utterance u (in a language) containing a demonstrative expression(s) is *about* the object(s) that are the semantic content(s) the demonstrative expressions(s) contained in u.

Thesis (1) of the DR position tries to tries to get at what is said by a use of a

demonstrative. When a demonstrative expression occurs in an utterance, it's contribution

to the semantic content of the utterance, is just an object; i.e. it is directly referential.

Kaplan says terms are directly referential, "when the proposition expressed by a sentence

containing such a term would involve individuals directly rather than by way of the

'individual concepts" or "manners of presentation"(Kaplan 1989, pp.483)." This is in

direct contrast to the DS theory; just look at their contrasting analyses of semantic content

for demonstratives, and further utterances containing demonstratives.

Take an utterance (call it E) of a demonstrative sentence like:

The Gareth Evan's memorial lecture is starting now.

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[16] This is not meant to say that this extends itself to all singular terms.

where the demonstrative term occurring in E is 'now'. Imagine I utter E on my way to hear Dr. Richard Heck deliver a paper on Fregean thoughts and, upon crossing the road I remember that is the exact time when my father gets off of work overseas, and hear a clock tower ringing 5 pm while the Pembroke rugby team rides there bikes past me back to the college. On the D.S. theory I utter E associating the 'now' with a set of descriptive conditions that it is to stand in for. These conditions are its semantic content, a content that is something like:

Semantic content of E: *The Gareth Evan's memorial lecture is starting at the time when I am crossing this street and when my father gets off of work and when this clock tower strikes 5pm and when the Pembroke rugby team rides there bikes past me.*[17]

which yields something like this for E's truth conditions:

Informal truth-conditions for E. E is true at a circumstance w iff there is some time such that [(I am crossing the street, my father gets off work, this clock tower strikes 5 pm and the Pembroke ruby team rides past me) and at that time the Gareth Evan's memorial lecture starts].

Contrast this with the DR theory where the semantic content of E is something like:

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[17] Obviously, the stated semantic content of E is not the content exactly, because more demonstrative terms occur in the above. These will have to be analyzed further with more descriptive conditions. Perhaps this can't be done which lends weight against the DS theory. Even if these can be analyzed in a theoretic setting, it is implausible that for such simple utterances as E, utterers (even me!) associate a set of fully descriptive conditions with them (even tacitly).

Semantic content of *E* (on DR theory): *The Gareth Evan's memorial lecture starts at t.*

Here, *t* is just a time that my use of 'now' refers to; actually later it will be specified that *t* is just the time of the utterance. There it is—a time which is part of the utterance. Kaplan writes:

> [Directly referential terms]. In determining a semantical value for a formula containing a free variable we may be given a value for the variable—that is, an individual drawn from the universe over which the variable is taken to range—but nothing more. A variable's first and only meaning is its value. (Kaplan 1989, 484)

And later,

> There are semantic rules which determine the referent in each context of use—but that is all. The rules do not provide a complex which together with a circumstance of evaluation yields an object. They just provide an object...(Kaplan 1989, 495)

Again,

> I am not claiming, as has been claimed for proper names, that indexicals lack anything that might be called 'descriptive meaning'. Indexicals, in general, have a rather easily statable descriptive meaning. But it is clear that this meaning is relevant only to determining a referent in a context of use...(Kaplan 1989, 498)

Individuals, times, places, etc. all can be part of the semantic content of an utterance containing a demonstrative expression on the DR theory; something that is quite foreign to the descriptive condition laden DS theory. Futhermore, these individuals, times, and places that figure into the semantic content of demonstrative utterances, are what the utterances are *about* (in an intuitive sense). These also figure into the truth conditions of an utterance. On the DR theory the truth conditions of *E* are:

Informal truth-conditions of E (on the DR theory): E uttered at t is
true iff The Gareth Evan's memorial lecture is starting at time t.

But now we are left with the question of how t and, the referents of demonstrative

terms in general, get determined. Thesis (2) seeks to answer this.

Briefly, DR thesis (2) says that the semantic content of a use of a demonstrative

expression is determined (at least in part) by the *character* and *context* of the

demonstrative expression; in the case of pure indexicals this combination of character and

context are exhaustive in the determination of content. But what is *character* and what is

context in regard to demonstratives?

We've noticed that there is some sort of meaning that is fixed when the same

demonstrative is uttered. When two different people utter 'I was wounded' some aspect

of (the meaning of) the two utterances is the same though the demonstratives involved

pick out different people. Likewise when a person utters at different times 'the game is on

now'; some aspect (of the meaning) of the uses of the demonstratives involved remains

the same though they pick out different times. The DR theorist contends that this is

because demonstrative expressions have a type-meaning or character. These type-

meanings are rules that are assigned to (and individuate) demonstrative expression types

and, "determine the referent in each context of use—but that is all" (Kaplan 1989, 495).

For instance, for 'I' this character might run:

Character 'I': 'I' refers to the speaker or writer.[18]

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[18] **Character 'You':** 'You' refers to the person addressed by the speaker

These characters are construed as rules that pick out certain facts about the situation in which a sentence is uttered and its relation(s) to other situations. For instance, 'He' in an utterance of 'he is tall' picks out a certain male in virtue of its meaning along with relations holding between the utterer of 'he' and a certain male.[19] These rules take one from contexts to semantic contents and are thus usually represented as a function. In general:

Character: Context → Semantic Content

Commentators have been less concerned with the notion of *context*, taking much to be intuitive (in my opinion). Generally, the DR theorist will hold that all utterances occur in contexts or possible occasions of utterances, and furthermore that evaluation (of truth and falsity) of what is said with the use of the demonstrative expression must involve the assignment of a context, because context is necessary to determine the content of a demonstrative expression.[20] Typically, the context is thought as a set of parameters $[w, a, t, p]$ ranging across worlds, agents, times, and places. The thinking is that every utterance occurs in a certain w, with an agent (or speaker), at a time, and at a

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Character 'Here': 'You' refers to the location the speaker is speaking from.

[19] Whole semantic programs have been built on this, such as Perry and Barwise's 1983. Taking meaning to be a certain type of relation holding between different sets of situations; a program exploiting the interchange between situations follows, esp. from the que given by demonstratives.

[20] Contents are the sorts of things that are evaluated for truth and falsity.

place. Perry called these uniformalities among discourse situations, i.e. situations in which utterances are made. I shall not pursue this further.[21]

Thesis (3) states that the character's of demonstrative expressions is what is fixed by linguistic convention. Kaplan offers:

> Let us call the second kind of meaning, *character*. The **character of an expression is set by linguistic conventions and, in turn determines the content of the expression in every context** [My emphasis]. Because the character is what is set by linguistic conventions, it is natural to think of it as meaning in the sense of what is known by the competent language user (Kaplan 1989, pp. 505)

The assimilation of character to what is fixed by linguistic convention comes from such considerations as the fact that what is known by a competent language user appropriately abstracted from the context of an utterance is some such rule (or just the character). If you happen to overhear, when waiting in the airport, a disgruntled fellow passenger exclaim over the phone "You're an idiot!", you understand that the person being addressed, whoever he or she is, is an idiot, or at least that is what your fellow passenger is saying. What you understand is how to apply the linguistic meaning of 'You' (in English) to any utterance of 'You'; a meaning that is something like

You: The person addressed by the speaker in the context

Now if you also happened to know the addressee of the conversation, you could then determine the semantic content your fellow passenger's utterance. Directly

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[21] For instance, if I say 'I am here' at 3:00 pm, at the Amtrak train station in Bloomington Il; the 'I' and the 'here' pick out certain facts about the situation of my utterance—that a certain person (me!) is at a certain train station at a certain time (3:00 pm; thanks to 'am').

referential theorists believe that we need to appropriately separate what is known by a speaker, via competence in a language, from what is known to a speaker via knowledge of the context of utterance.

The question of *aboutness* is answered more directly and intuitively on the DR theory. Utterances containing demonstrative expressions are just about the objects contained in their semantic contents; i.e those objects which serve as the semantic contents (referents) of their constituent demonstrative expressions. On this theory there is really no need to search for alternative explanations of how these utterances are about individuals, places, times, etc. because these individuals, places, times, etc. figure into the semantic content of the utterance itself. In this regard the DR theory trumps the DS theory, because it offers an intuitive and theoretically natural explanation, as opposed to the clumsy one put forward by the DS theory. Also, DR theory seems to avoid all of the objections mounted against the DS theory in the above. So let's briefly look at DR theory's answers of our questions.

1. How can different utterances of the same sentence type containing demonstratives by different speakers, say or be about different things?

On DR theory the similarity involved here is due the fact that every correct use of a demonstrative expression functions in the same way to yield an extension or semantic content, given the circumstance in which it is used. For instance, Perry says:

> When we understand a word like "today," what we seem to know is a rule taking us from an occasion of utterance to a certain object. "Today" takes us from an occasion of utterance to a certain object. "Today" takes us to the very day of utterance, "yesterday" to the day before the day of utterance, "I" to the speaker, and so forth. I shall call this the *role* of the demonstrative. (Perry 1977, 8)

So, we see that the character (the role) of a demonstrative expression accounts for the similarity between two utterances by different individuals of an identical sentence-type containing a demonstrative(s). Semantic difference can occur between two utterances of the same sentence-type if the contexts in which they are differ from one another. When I

say "I was wounded" I assert something about me, when my mom says the same, she asserts something about herself.

2. How can different utterances of different sentence-types containing demonstratives and other singular terms say or be about the same thing?

DR theory explains that while the demonstratives involved in different utterances of distinct sentence-types, if those utterances occur in the appropriate contexts. This is evident in the situation where I utter 'I was wounded' and my immediately confirms my assertion with 'Yeah. He was wounded" gesturing to me (perhaps we are informing a family friend of my unfortunate mishap). Here, in uttering 'I', I manage to refer to myself; likewise, in uttering 'he', my mother manages to refer to me. This is a situation, where the rules of use or characters of 'I' and 'he' are uttered in such contexts that determine the same individual as factoring to the semantic content of both utterances.

3. How can the cognitive aspects of two sentences containing demonstratives differ, if both sentences assert the same thing of the same object?

Obviously the DR theory is going to have problems answering this question.[22] The major reason for which Descriptive theories (for proper names, demonstratives, etc.)

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[22] DR theory conceives of the contribution of a demonstrative to the semantic content of an utterance containing it. The semantic content of my scheduling mishap seems to have been:

    < Me, work on April 9th at 10:30 am>
and,
    not-<Me, work on April 9th at 10:30>

But I am not being illogical. Since, on the DR theory, the semantic content of the two utterances are contradictory, the theory must look for some other aspect to explain the cognitive difference at play here, which leads to my mistaken beliefs.

were developed was to deal with issues of cognitive significance that arose for co-referential terms. Utterances like:

Cicero denounced Cathleen

And,

Tully denounced Cathleen

Involve the same truth-conditions. Since the names 'Cicero' and 'Tully' refer to one and the same man, and both propositions say of that man that he denounced Cathleen; the question immediately arises as to how someone can rationally believe one without believing the other. DS theory individuates semantic content in a more fine grained way then offering truth conditions (or structured propositions containing objects for singular terms). DS theory just says that 'Cicero' and 'Tully' involve different concepts, or have different descriptive conditions as their semantic contents, utterances in which they occur are different, even though these two terms designate the same individual. Similar explanations apply to all singular terms.

DR theory accepts the burden of accounting for the cognitive significance of puzzles concerning demonstratives but cannot utilize the same strategies (as DS theory) for accounting for cognitive significance. In Perryesque examples utterances of:

I am making a mess.
And,

He is making a mess.

when 'I' and 'He' refer to one and the same person express the same proposition. Kaplan instructs:

> What we must do is disentangle two epistemological notions: the *objects of thought* (what Frege called "Thoughts") and the *cognitive significance of an object of thought*. As has been noted above, a character may be likened to a manner of presentation of a content. This suggests that we identify object of thought with contents and the cognitive significance of such objects with characters.
>
> **E. Principle 1** *Objects of thought (Thoughts) = Content*
>
> **E. Principle 2** *Cognitive significance of a Thought = Character* (Kaplan 1989, pp.530)

Perry offers:

> Breaking the connection between senses and thoughts, we give up any reason not to take the options closed to Frege. We can take the sense of a sentence containing a demonstrative to be a role, rather than a Fregean complete sense, and thoughts to be the new sort, individuated by object and incomplete sense, rather than Fregean thoughts. Though senses considered as roles, and thoughts considered as information, cannot be identified, each does its job in a way that meshes with the other. (Perry 1979)

The above presents a strategy in line with the DR theory that is designed to account for cognitive significance of demonstrative terms. Test cases like the one above, involving utterances that have the same semantic content, yet differ in cognitive significance, are dealt with by saying that the difference results in the semantic content being apprehended under different characters or roles (which are equated with modes of presentation). In general, a semantic content can be apprehended under (with, in virtue of,

etc.) different characters thus opening up the possibility of presenting different cognitive significances to an agent, speaker, believer, etc. at the same time.

I must insist this account is too ingenuous. This is because there are two different objections that can be raised against it. But let me explain.

There is an equation of the *cognitive significance of a proposition* with *character of a proposition*. But really if we go along with Kaplan in thinking that non-demonstrative terms have 'fixed' character (See Kaplan 506, 1989), then it is not immediately obvious how we handle puzzles of cognitive significance involving proper names. This is because proper names have fixed character, then it is not obvious how to explain the prima facie difference in cognitive significance involving co-referential terms. And the same goes for other linguistic items (common nouns, natural kind terms, etc.). Now perhaps the DR theorist can meet this first objection, by providing an account of characters for other non-demonstrative terms that explains the relevant puzzles in cognitive significance involving those terms. But it is important to observe that, as it stands, the DR theory is inadequate, if the assimilation of cog. Sig. to characters is to be taken in generality (and not just a quality of demonstrative terms)[23]

A second objection arises that questions whether or not, even with the utilization of character, the DR theorist can account for all cases of cognitive significance. Consider the following example:

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[23] I think it would be cheap to offer a disjunctive account of cognitive significance without due argument; whereby cognitive significance with respect to demonstratives is assimilated to characters, and cognitive significance with respect to non-demonstratives is assimilated with semantic contents. The beginning pages of Felicia Ackerman's *Content, Character, and Nondescriptive Meaning* offer useful comments as to why such a disjunctive solution is unattractive.

Lois Lane is a reporter, she works the Daily Planet. One day she walks into the news room busy as it is, and showing up on a huge T.V. monitor is Superman's latest exploits. Her colleague Jimmy Olsen walks up beside her and comments "Do you notice how similar Superman and Clark are in size and demeanor?", implying that maybe there's more to Clark than meet the eye. Lois knows what Jimmy is hinting at and she will have none of it, pointing to Superman on the monitor and uttering "He is a superhero" then pointing at Clark (who's across the newsroom) and uttering "He is not a superhero".

How can the DS theory account for Lois's utterances? We know that Clark Kent is Superman, and also that the nerdy reporter Louis points to in the newsroom, is the amazing superhuman she sees flying around saving people on the monitor. It seems we have a case where the demonstrative term 'He' in both of Louis's utterances have one in the same man as their semantic content (referent). But that is no problem, for the cognitive significance involving demonstrative terms is supposed to be due to character differences right? Well, at first blush it seems that since the same demonstrative term is used by Lois in both utterances, both utterances involve terms possessing the same character, role, or mode of presentation. So both utterances have the same content and character. So how do we account for cognitive significance?

We have this account of the utterances[24]:

Lois 1:   [Lois, 'He', a is a superhero]

_____

[24] Actually, I over-simplify triadic views here, but still this presentation, I believe, gets at the heart of it. An agent, asserts proposition, in a certain way.

Lois 2:   [Lois, 'He', *a* is not a superhero]

Where an individual Louis asserts a proposition about an individual, namely of him that he is a superhero, under the character of 'He'. On the other hand, the same individual Louis asserts a proposition about an individual, namely of him that he is not a superhero, under the same character of 'He'; which is the negation of Lois (1). Now if we hold that Lois is not one for asserting such a blatant contradiction, we are stuck with providing an account of cognitive significance, one which cannot be explained using DR theory's character/content machinery.

Or are we? The first response the DR theorist might offer is that Lois's utterances occur in different contexts and that somehow this can form the basis for an explanation of the cognitive significance exhibited above. But here are some reasons to reject this sort of response.

First, remember I explicated characters as functions from a set of parameters called the context [which included a world, agent, time, and place] to a semantic content. In our case above, both utterances involve the same function and the same parameters, save for maybe time. Even if, one wanted to cite the fact that utterances take time, and that the utterances above involve different times, we can agree that both of Lois's utterances involve the content (person) and utilize the same function to fix that content.

Second, utterances take time, it's true. The DR theorist might be cognizant of this fact, and explain that the so-called *test of cognitive significance* is applied wrongly. Comments from Evan's are relevant here:

> ...the fundamental criterion of difference of thoughts which rests upon the principle that it is not possible coherently to take different attitudes towards the same thought. For that principle, properly stated, precludes the possibility of coherently taking different attitudes towards the same thought at the *same time* [his emphasis].(Evan's 1981, pp. 308)

Taking a cue from the above, the DR theorist will say that Lois, even being a glib speaker, will not and could not have asserted both contradictory sentences at the same time. Perhaps this response meets the challenge of cognitive significance posed above, but at a huge cost—the DR theorist hasn't so much explained the question of cognitive significance in the case above so much as erased it. It seems as though we have committed ourselves to an *atomistic* position. On this view, it's difficult to see how cognitive significance of any two utterances could be the same. Substitutions of co-referring terms that seem to be cognitively informative are not, if only because the same proposition cannot be expressed by the same individual at different times.[25] However implausible this may be, note that if we want to adopt such a position, where propositions are tokened utterances, or supervene on such), it becomes a small step to abandoning a formal semantic theory, which attempts to not only classify propositions, but also seeks to draw connections between different propositions (of inference, structure, etc)?[26][27]

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[25] There is some question of on the DR conception would be taken as atomistic, contexts or contents. For a few reasons, character won't work. First, in general characters are taken to be functions from contexts to contents, and it is not clear what sense can be made of the idea that the context in which characters are uttered operate on the character; if this makes any sense. Further, if this did make sense, it is not obvious how communication results when what is fixed by language is render so unstable because of the ongoing changes in features of context. If on the other hand, contents are supposed to be atomistic, then there is some question as to whether the atomistic response with help the DR theorist, if such a theorist holds that cognitive significance relates to characters and not contents.

[26] Consider attitude contexts. It seems Lois can tacitly be in a position to assent to contradictory beliefs like the one above. These beliefs *can* be held contemporaneously. So the problem of cognitive significance arises again for the DR theorist.

[27] It might be held that these sorts of objections apply only to pure demonstratives. Maybe that's right. But I tend to believe that similar remarks can be given for certain, more indexical terms. I actually wanted to include an argument of the kind, involving the demonstrative 'today', but it is quite a bit more sophisticated then the above. It is complicated by the fact that it involves quotation, and I am not certain as to what effects this would have. It's something I'm still working out.

But we've overlooked something haven't we? Perhaps there is more to the character involved. Obviously there is not just 'he' but also *the pointing*, yet this doesn't separate the utterances in our example—Lois is pointing and saying 'he' about the same individual, so that's not it. Maybe we ought to treat he like Kaplan's notion of *dthat*. He says:

> Now why not regard descriptions as a kind of demonstration, and introduce a special demonstrative which requires completion by a description and which is treated as a directly referential term whose referent is the denotation of the associated description? Why not? Why not indeed! I have done so, and I write it thus:
>
> Dthat [α]
>
> Where α is any description, or, more generally, any singular term. 'Dthat' is simply the demonstrative 'that' with the following singular term functioning as its demonstration. (Kaplan 1989, 521-22)[28]

So now we can offer an analogous interpretation of the character of 'He'.

He [α][29]

Where α is any set of descriptive conditions, perhaps with the constraints that α be consistent with being a male. So the character of 'he' now has two components—the original character of the term along with an appropriate set of descriptive conditions. Applied to Lois's utterances, the analyses might look something more like:

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[28] I am aware that perhaps Kaplan here associates the descriptive conditions with components of the context, but I'm not so sure. I don't have time to consider the matter. But he seems to be pretty inclined to say what I say. Indeed he writes:

The character of a complete demonstrative is given by the semantic rule:

In any context c, $d[\delta]$ is a directly referential term that designates the demonstratum, if any, of δ in c, and that otherwise designates (Kaplan 1989, 527)

[29] After writing this I came to realize that this had already been done by Kaplan also; see 'Dhe' in his 1978

[Lois, He<the man in blue tights and a red cape, flying through the air>, a is a superhero]

[Lois, He<the nerdy guy in glasses and a suit, dropping papers>, a is a not superhero]

So how does the descriptive component of the character get assigned?—It is hard to see how could be determined other than on the part of the utterer; at least if it is to give an explanation of the difference in cognitive significance above. But now we have something like the notion of association exploited in the descriptive theory. If so the DR theorist is susceptible to the same objections as the DR theorist (at least with demonstrative terms that are not also pure indexicals).[30]

So my argument against the DR theory's ability to deal with certain cases of cognitive significance runs something like this:

(1) An adequate semantic treatment of demonstratives must account for the phenomenon of cognitive significance.

(2) If a person understands the meaning of a sentence S and a sentence S' in a language L and accepts an utterance u of S as true, while failing to accept an utterance u' of S' as true, then the cognitive significance of u differs from the cognitive significance of u'.

(3) [In our story] Lois Lane understands the meaning of both her utterances--"He is a superhero" and "He is not a superhero" —and accepts both as true at the same time. Her two utterances thus differ in cognitive significance. Also, the reference of 'he' in both utterance is the same person.

(4) According to DR theory, in Lois's case the semantic content she expresses with her utterance of "He is not a superhero" is a direct denial of her first utterance "He is a superhero". Also, the characters of both of her utterances are identical.

(5) The cognitive significance of an utterance is either its semantic content or its character.

(6) Therefore, either the DR theory is wrong, or a correct semantic account of demonstratives need not worry about accounting for cognitive significance.

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[30] Analogous arguments can be fashioned in large part, not because the descriptive conditions are constituents of the semantic content but rather they are components of a function which determines the content.

This line of argument fails to have direct application to a larger conclusion, namely:

(7)   Either the New Theories of Reference[31] are wrong, or it is not the business of semantics to understand cognitive significance. (Perry 1989, pp. 231)

Perry has said that "since we cannot embrace [7], we must avoid his conclusion." His opposition is couched in his particular attention to the explanation of behavioral aspects of language use.[32] He explains:

> Our main interest in language is the way its use can communicate beliefs, inspire action, and have other effects on what we think and do. In these uses of language, it is aspects of the meaning of the language used that are crucial. A theory of linguistic meaning should help provide us with an understanding of the properties sentences have that lead us to produce them under different circumstances, and react as we do to their utterance by others.
> If I were to divorce semantics from these interests, many of my reasons for adhering to the two principles ... definitive of being a New Theorist would be undermined. (Perry 1988 pp. 231)

In arguing against this conclusion Perry cites it as an example of the "fallacy of misplaced information.[33]" Perry draws a distinction between the 'proposition created' and

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[31] Of which I assume DR theory to be a part.

[32] Something which Perry thinks is adequately explained by 'New Theories of meaning". For instance, he says 'the mental significance of language, including the role of sentences embedded in attitude reports, is adequately explained by their external significance, properly understood' (Perry and Barwise, 1983 pp. 42) Since this is in controverts

[33] Perry explains

> Construing the meaning of an expression as a multiplaced relation is what lets us account for information, since information is available about any or all of the coordinates, not just about the coordinate that gives us the [proposition expressed]. The idea that all the information in an utterance must come from [the proposition it expresses] we call the fallacy of misplaced information (Barwis and Perry 1983,38, 164-66,264)

the 'proposition expressed'. The proposition created when I utter the sentence 'I was wounded' is a proposition that the truth conditions of the utterance are satisfied. Namely:

An utterance u of "I was wounded" by an agent a at a time t in circumstances C expresses singular proposition P,

Iff

(i) a utters u at t as part of C;
(ii) P is the singular proposition that a was wounded.

Here, the proposition P I express—namely <Adam Simon, was wounded>--is only a part of the reflexive content[34] related to my utterance. In this reflexive content of my utterance certain other facts are also constituents. Using this distinction, Perry goes on to reject counter-examples of the form I have presented above. He says in response to a similar example:

> There are two utterances in question. Both have the same speaker, emply the same sentence with the same meaning, "He is about to be attacked," and express the same proposition, for, although neither the speaker nor hearer realize it, the two uses of 'he' refer to the same person...On the approach to cognitive significance sketched here, the cognitive significance of the two utterances of 'He is about to be attacked" would be different. Basically, to accept the first utterance as true, the linguistically competent listener has to believe that the speaker is then referring to someone who is about be attacked. To accept the second utterance as true, the linguistically competent listener has to believe that the speaker is referring, at the second time, to such a person. Even if the speaker is referring to the same person on both occasions, neither the linguistically competent listener nor the linguistically competent speaker need to believe that she is. (Perry 1988 pp. 239-40)

All of this can be translated back to our example. Perry has it that Lois's utterances do have different cognitive significances (as seems to be the case). Lois's contradictory utterances are such that any linguistically competent person—for instance, Lois and Jimmy Olsen—can understand their reflexive truth-conditions. In the case of the

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[34] See Perry, *Situating Semantics: A Response*; version of October 16, 2005, pp. 11-25

first utterance, Lois believes herself to be using 'he' to refer to someone who is a superhero. In the case of the second utterance, Lois believes herself to be using 'he' to refer to someone who is not a superhero. Even if the Lois happens to be referring (using 'he) to the same person on both occasion, neither Lois nor Jimmy need to believe that she is.

Perry's response seems to rely on the context sensitivity of 'he' and Lois and Jimmy's knowledge of the reflexive truth-conditions of "He is a superhero" and "He is not a superhero". I do not disagree that the reflexive truth-conditions are what Lois and Jimmy understand by the formers utterances, but what semantically is the difference here. Both utterances involve 'he' which makes the same reflexive contribution to the understood reflexive truth-conditions. Furthermore, the 'he' in both utterances fixes the same individual, and so we get contradictory semantic contents[35] that are believed. I'm am clueless as to the semantic difference to be drawn here—both Lois and Jimmy understand and believe what both utterances express even though they are contradictory and neither semantic nor reflexive content have given an answer as to why this is so.

Perry seems to believe that what they understand is only the reflexive content. In their knowledge that 'he' *can* refer to different individuals in different contexts, they assent to both propositions, mistakenly thinking that the 'he' in the first utterance refers to a different individual than the 'he' of the second utterance. But this *possibility* of different references in different contexts seems only to warrant Lois's first utterance, while putting at the monitor, of 'He is a superhero' and her failure to utter and believe the same of the clumsy looking co-worker she sees sitting at his desk. It does not really

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[35] Which accords to Perry's current use of 'referential content'. Again, see his *Situating Semantics: A Response*; version of October 16, 2005, pp. 11-25

explain her belief in a contradictory semantic content. Philosophically, possibility doesn't entail actuality. Or more crudely, just because something *can*, doesn't mean it *does*! My point is that Lois actually does think that 'he' does refer to someone different in her two utterances, not just that 'he' can refer to two different individuals in those utterances, and her thought compels her to say the two utterances we have been discussing at length. So, Perry needs to sight some further aspect that allows him to explain the case presented within his semantic theory.

There is one further problem with Perry's contention. It seems that it can slide dangerously towards an atomistic conception of utterances. In such a conception, every utterance will have a different cognitive significance than any other. Obviously, such a conception would curtail the possibility of any rigorous semantic theory. Let me explain. If all Perry does is cite the possibility that singular terms like 'he' can refer to different individuals in different utterances as reason to say that both Lois's utterances thereby have different cognitive significances, then what about the same for other singular term phenomena. Names, anaphora, and the like all seem to be able to refer to different individuals. In the case of names this is simple. A 'lotta' people got em'. An instance of the 'supposed' cognitively uninformative identity statement:

Adam=Adam

Could seem to be very informative given that we know there are a lot of people named 'Adam' running around (perhaps unfortunately). If Perry's response is in any way

connected with these further consequences, I think that it is pretty evident that his response is inadequate.

So now what are we to do given that DR theory fails to provide any solution to the problem of cognitive significance? I believe that we should entertain a different conception of semantics, one which separates legitimate semantic concerns from purely epistemic ones.

Afterthoughts

In the foregoing, I have attempted to show that both the DS and DR theories give mistaken semantic accounts for demonstratives. So what gives? Why are they mistaken? Perhaps some examples might provide a clue.

First consider Putnam-like thought experiments.

> Suppose that somewhere in some distant galaxy there is a planet which we will call Twin Earth. Twin Earth is very similar to Earth; people on Twin Earth even speak English. In fact Twin Earth is virtually identical to Earth, save for a few differences. One of the differences of Twin Earth is that what is called 'water' is not H2O, but, rather, a liquid whose formula we shall call XYZ. While this is true, XYZ is indistinguishable from 'water' in normal circumstances; XYZ tastes like water, quenches thirst like water, is clear and the like. Furthermore, on Twin Earth XYZ makes up the oceans, seas, and lakes, and also is present in Twin Earth's precipitation.

Now consider Rod (an Earthian) and Todd (a Twin Earthian), who are exact physical duplicates—sharing the same attributes, perceptual capabilities, mental capacities, etc; the usual story. Let us also assume that both equally ignorant of modern

chemical and molecular theory. The clear liquidy stuff on Earth Rod calls 'water'; which is just H_2O. The clear liquidy stuff on Twin-Earth Todd calls 'water'; which is just XYZ. What would happen if we gave Todd a tall glass of H_2O and asked him what it was? Well, after some rudimentary testing (tasting, etc.), he'd probably say 'This is water'. Lets explicate Todd's utterance as follows:

[<Todd, w, t, p>, This[α], H_2O is water][36]

But since what Todd has been calling 'water' is fixed as XYZ, the semantic content of Todd's utterance is really:

H_2O is XYZ.

which is false. From this we can reasonable conclude that descriptive conditions are not sufficient to determine the semantic content of an utterance of 'this'. Furthermore, the descriptive conditions lead Todd astray and so he utters something that is false. The descriptive conditions α that Todd associated with 'this' in his utterance throughout his life had been determining XYZ. But in this case α determines 'H2O'. Now this is just to say that the descriptive conditions aren't sufficient to differentially determine a reference, the 'right' reference—Todd intends to refer to a glass of XYZ and not H2O, and using his

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[36] The quad-tuple represents the context c in which 'This is water' was uttered. Since the agent has been most important in prior representations of semantic contents and characters of utterances, I have left everything but the agent out. Here I represent it as a structure consisting of four parameters, but only have the agent specified explicitly. Since this paper is not concerned with the logic of demonstratives which is examined with a technician's precision in Kaplan 1978, 1989 and also to a certain extent in Richard 1983, though this work is primarily concerned with giving an account of utterances concerning singular terms (mostly demonstratives though) in belief contexts (*de dicto*, *de re*, and *de se*)

descriptive conditions gets it wrong.[37] We saw the same thing before. We have a situation where someone said something they didn't think they were saying. Todd thinks he made an utterance about XYZ, but he didn't; instead he made an utterance about H2O. Given our assumptions Todd cannot distinguish between cases where he encounters H2O and cases where he encounters XYZ. But his utterance does have a determinate semantic content given the context in which it was uttered. This sort of example gives reason to prefer a DR theory. [ii]

But consider different though connected examples.

Let's say that I'm tall. Let's even say that I'm noticeably tall, lets say 6'9 or something. I believe this, and say pompously:

Adam 1: I am tall.

Now I like to go out, and imagine that I am out again at a club and happen to see, what I take to be a very tall gentleman across the room. I say to a friend, pointing:

Adam 2: He is tall

I decide to approach the gentleman to get a closer look—I am surprised to see someone with similar height and also am a bit off-put that someone might be taller than

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[37] Usually we take natural kind terms like 'water' to fix 'essences' in reality. If so 'water' at least on the Earthian use fixes H2O, and on the Twin Earthian use fixes XYZ.

me in the room. I approach until I am reasonable close, stop and then turn back. Why? Because I realize that I was seeing my reflection in a mirror lining the wall. I go back to the friend and say:

Adam 3: I am he.

Thereby conferring the information that I realize that the referent of 'I' in my first utterance was one and the same man as the referent of the 'He' in my second utterance.

Now since I offer some reasons above as to why the DR theory is mistaken, I have not set up the example to be problematic for that theory.[38] I do believe some version of the DR theory is the best kind of theory that can be given for an explanation of the mechanism in play that determines the semantic content of utterances containing demonstratives. What I question is the place of cognitive significance within the theory A 'Perry inspired' Kaplan writes:

> Why should we care under what character someone apprehends a thought, so long as he does? I can only sketch the barest suggestion of an answer here. We use the manner of presentation, the character, to individuate psychological states, in explaining and predicting action. It is the manner of presentation, the character and not the thought apprehended, that is tied to human action. When you and I have beliefs under the common character of 'A bear is about to attack me', we behave similarly. We both roll up in a ball and try to be as still as possible. Different thoughts apprehended, same character, same behavior. When you and I both apprehend that I am about to be attacked by a bear, we behave differently. I roll up in a ball, you run to get help. Same thought apprehended, different characters, different behaviors. (Perry 'Frege on Demonstratives') [39](Kaplan 1989 pp. 532)

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[38] Indeed, the DR theory is in a position to explain my example, since 'I' and 'He' differ in character.

[39] Now that I think about it, this 'individuation of psychological states' seems at odds with many articles by externalists like Tyler Burge. But perhaps this rests on ambiguity concerning the notion of psychological states.

I cannot help but be demur over these comments. More specifically, I question whether or not the notion of cognitive significance should be divorced from a purely semantic theory. Consider a parallel situation to the example above save for the fact that there is no mirror and there actual is another man, call him Chris, at the other side of the club. Assume to that all my utterances and actions are the same—I have been fooled like this before, and hence think that it is just me in a mirror, stop approaching, and turn back to go to my friend. In this situation the 'he' in both Adam (2) and Adam (3) have Chris as their referent (semantic content) and not me. Still, in this situation, I act just the same so again what gives?!?! All I can offer is a few loose remarks.

The first remark I want to make is rather uninformative: cognitive significance is an epistemic notion. And this fact just follows from the fact that the test for cognitive significance incorporates knowledge and belief in its formation. This cognitive significance accounts for our actions, the utterances we make, etc. It is not the semantic content of the propositions I believe that (fully) explains exactly why I do what I do. Many semantic contents are perhaps compatible with my actions. Yet there are ways I believe in the semantic contents I utter, and on the basis of these ways I form beliefs about the semantic content my utterances take. For instance, Todd's perceptual capacities and experiences lead him to take any clear liquid he sees that tastes a certain way, is odorless, etc. as good evidence that the clear liquid is water.[40] On the basis of a certain amount of this identifying evidence being satisfied, Todd comes to have the belief, when presented with H2O, that it is water (or XYZ). Thus he says and sincerely believes:

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[40] There is a maximal point in this evidence—relating to the set of factors available to Todd that allow him to identify XYZ—in general this point can fluctuate with how things are with Todd.

This is water.

But is wrong. Now my suggestion is this. Philosophers have been too quick to incorporate epistemic notions into what they have to account for as semanticists. Instead we should clearly delineate between what we see as semantics and what we see as epistemology. Admittedly, there is a minimal sort of epistemology to be accounted for in semantics. First, the semanticist must account for what is *known* by competent language users. Second, there are semantic contents we fix via known bodies of information. Kaplan's Dthat is one case of this, where the user means to refer to the object that satisfies some set of known descriptive conditions, in her current situation or context. And there are probably other ways in which epistemic notions figure into the fixing of content. But I believe that we should bifurcate these from purely epistemic considerations.

We often use what I call 'identifying information' to help us get around in our 'Strawsonian' world. Such lead us to produce utterances, act in certain ways, and believe certain things in certain perceived circumstances. There is a way in which 'identifying information' is relevant to semantics. In the course of initial baptisms for names, descriptions for dthat operators and other descriptive demonstratives such 'identifying information' is vital. But, I think, that the role of 'identifying information' shouldn't be over-emphasized. In Lois's case she has two bodies of information, bodies which help her re-identify a particular individual and make judgments about that individual. She also takes these two bodies to be incompatible in her case, and that they apply to different individuals. As we have seen, her peculiar attitudes towards these bodies of information, which depend on her lack of knowledge and lack recognition that 'he' in both of her

utterances, is used in a context which determines one and the same individual. She does not lack understanding of the sentences used, nor if she were given the situation by way of stipulation would she fail to give the appropriate explanations of the semantic content of her utterances. In short, she knows how the language works, and subsequently how it is supposed to hook onto the world if she were objectively given a situation. What she lacks is the ability recognize, when encountering the situation under discussion, that she is actually making contradictory statements about one and the same person. Her identifying information is associated with particular uses of 'he' are there to help her coherently make sense of a particular situation, as it relates to past information she has acquired. Unless there is some other knowledge by which we can utilize, in a particular situation, mitigate the force of our dictums—'things that look the same are the same' and 'things that look different are different'—we inevitably apply them to the situations we encounter even though we often have limited epistemic access to our current surroundings. In a perfect world, one where we had full epistemic access to all circumstances in which we might find ourselves, we obviously wouldn't make the same type of mistakes that Lois made with her utterances if we were rational and competent in English. Unfortunately, this is not the case. More often than not, people can by perfectly well by utilizing their 'identifying knowledge' because, more often than not, this identifying knowledge is rich enough for people to make correct assertions, act in appropriate ways, and hold true beliefs. This 'more often than not' has made semanticists believe that the 'identifying information' can and should be fully incorporated into semantic theory, in which case (for demonstratives) we get the inadequate DS theory.

This identifying information is surely relative to a number of factors—the capacities of the relevant individual, for instance.

In particular situations it is inevitable that agents will sometimes utter sentences that do not have the contents they think they do. Ignorance of the 'discourse situation' and other situations to which they are presently connected surely explains this. My going to a meeting at five instead of six is connected to the fact that I believe:

The meeting starts at 6 o'clock.

And the fact that I believe, at 5 o'clock:

It is now 6 o'clock.

Perhaps because I forgot to set my clock back an hour, and I believe the clock to be telling the right time. [In such a situation I believe the clock to be a good indicator of the present time, and since it reads 6 o'clock, I believe that the 'now' in an utterance of 'It is now 6 o'clock' refers to 6 o'clock when it in fact refers to 5 o'clock.] This belief of what 'now' fixes 6 o'clock is the reason behind my utterance, and the reason behind this belief is certain beliefs about my clock's keeping of the current time. These other beliefs influence what I think the content of my utterance is, and these can lead to mistakes as in the above. Todd believes, on the basis of his previous experience, that the clear, odorless liquid in front of him is what he has always called 'water' and so he says 'this is water', thinking that 'this' fixed something that it didn't, in the case above 'this' fixes H2O as its semantic content. I think that semanticists become confused when they believe that

questions of cognitive significance like the ones posed by Frege, are what a philosophy of language should account for. This confusion is largely due to the fact that the semantic content that language fixes in everyday discourse, and what the competent language user thinks is fixed by her use of language in a particular situation mostly coincide. If this wasn't the case language would be useless to us, at least insofar as it is a vehicle for transferring information. My suggestion is that questions of cognitive significance should be pushed over into theories of communication (pragmatics), action, and linguistic behavior and away from purely semantic concerns. Something draws me to such conclusions, at least in the case of demonstratives, if only a use of a demonstrative can fix a semantic content that the user doesn't know (or even disbelieves) it fixes. Still, it is on the basis of our beliefs about language (as competent language users) and its application to real-life situations that explains and predicts our behavior and actions.

That the DS and DR theories don't recognize this makes them defective. The DS theory bases its whole account on the accommodating cognitive significance. The DR theory does not fall wholly into this trap, but it trips because it thinks that cognitive significance need be accounted for. In attempting to provide such, it is mistaken. Because of this both theories offer mistaken semantic accounts for demonstratives. Here I have tried to explicate both accounts of demonstratives, and offer arguments showing them to be mistaken. I hope these are not only coherent but cogent criticisms. I cannot be so sanguine about my comments in this **Afterthoughts** section, though I do hope that the reasoning can be tightened into an argument calling for the separation of notions in semantics from notions in epistemology.

[ii]   Evan's book 'The Varieties of Reference' defends a principle, Russell's principle, which seems to me to be at odds with what is said here. He explains the principle as 'the principle is that a subject cannot make a judgment about something unless he knows which object his judgment is about" (Evan's 1982, pp 89). He thinks that the principle requires discriminating knowledge, in that the subject must have a "capacity to distinguish the object of his judgment from all other things." This is just a informal explanation of his more tightly conceived *Generality Constraint* (See Evan's 1982 pp. 100-114) . In our example the Rod might say 'This is some good water' perhaps after a long trip to twin earth, while drinking a tall glass of *XYZ*. Evan's would have this be a two level thought involving a demonstrative thought

This is H_2O

And,

H_2O (at the time) is good.

      Can Rod really distinguish the first thought where 'this' happens to refer to *XYZ* from:

This is H_2O

      Where Rod is back at his home planet drinking a glass of H_2O? On our assumptions, no, he can't and therefore under Russell's priniciple we cannot say that Rod has a genuine thought.

      I actually am one of the people who think this principle is wrong generally, due to certain recherché cases involving Dnames (whose functioning is something in between a descriptive name and Kaplan's Dthat operator). However, I do not have the length here to discuss such cases, I hope that the reader will accept my recognition of this problem, but will allow me to pass on attempting a solution.

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