COGNITIVE SIGNIFICANCE WITHOUT COGNITIVE CONTENT

Howard Wettstein

University of Notre Dame

Imagine how it must appear to the Martian making his first visit to earth. Let us suppose that he too is an intelligent being whose intelligence has, however, evolved without the mediation of language, but rather, say, through the development of ESP. So he is something like the angels who, according to St. Thomas, can see things directly in their essences and communicate thought without language. What is the first thing he notices about earthlings? That they are forever making mouthy little sounds--clicks, hisses, howls, hoots, explosions, squeaks--some of which sounds name things in the world and are uttered in short sequences which say something about these things and events in the world.

Instead of starting out with such large, vexing subjects as soul, mind, ideas, consciousness, why not set forth with language, which no one denies, and see how far it takes us toward the rest.

From "The Delta Factor,"[1] by Walker Percy.

1. INTRODUCTION: TWO CONCEPTIONS OF SEMANTICS

IN THE BEGINNING, there was Frege who approached the philosophical study of language with his gaze firmly fixed upon one of those "large, vexing subjects," the "eternal structure of thought."[2] Michael Dummett attributes the following three theses to Frege.

". . .first, that the goal of philosophy is the analysis of the structure of thought [that is, the objective and eternally existing contents of thought]; second, that the study of thought is to be sharply distinguished from the study of the psychological process of thinking; and, finally, that the only proper method for analysing thought consists in the analysis of language."[3]

A central aim of semantics, for Frege, is thus the elucidation of how language expresses thought contents. 'Hesperus = Phosphorus', maintained Frege, expresses a significant piece of information, a nontrivial thought content. Our semantic account of names must explain how this is so. Frege concluded that the contribution of the two names to the thought content must be different.

Frege's sense-reference approach not only explains the contributions of names to thought contents, it does so in a way that respects what I will call the "intentionality intuition." This is the powerful traditional idea that in order to be thinking about something, one must have a cognitive fix on it, that something in one's thought must correctly distinguish the referent from everything else in the universe.[4] 'Hesperus' and 'Phosphorus', then, not only contribute differently to the thought content, but, holds Frege, what each name contributes is its distinctive mode of presentation, its own cognitive fix on the referent. That a semantic account of a name must make plain the cognitive perspective on the referent that is associated with the name is another crucial feature of the Fregean perspective, one intimately related to Frege's emphasis on thought.

Frege's outlook on the business of semantics thus eliminates semantical accounts like Mill's "pure denotation" view of proper names, recently championed by many of us. Millian accounts make the semantics of the two names the same, and so will not be able to explain what Frege took to be the very datum, that sentences like 'Hesperus = Phosphorus' express nontrivial thought contents. The Millian approach to names, moreover, fails to explain the speaker's cognitive fix on the referent. Even worse, that approach, at least as it's been recently developed, implies that the speaker need not have much of a cognitive fix, perhaps none at

all. Kripke, to mention one prominent example, takes it to be plain that one can refer by proper name even if one has very little information about the referent--not nearly enough to individuate it.[5] So much the worse, from Frege's point of view, for cognitively insensitive Millian accounts.

One might, though, approach the philosophical study of language in a radically different spirit, that suggested by Walker Percy's remarks. Let's focus for a moment not upon language vis-a-vis thought, but upon language vis-a-vis the realm of things language is used to talk about, or, even better, vis-a-vis our practices of talking about things.

The social practices that constitute natural language are, after all, pretty fascinating in and of themselves. Articulated speech is indeed distinctively human, the first thing that Percy's Martian notices about us. And thought is one of Percy's "large, vexing subjects," one that might better be approached a bit later--which is not to say that the two subjects are not, in the end, intimately related. My semanticist thus fixes his gaze upon language as a social, institutional arrangement, and upon speakers as participants in a social practice.

Speaking, it occurs to him, like other kinds of practical mastery, does not presuppose theoretical understanding of the practice. We are indeed fortunate--God, so to speak, has been good to us--that articulable insight is not necessary, for it is extremely difficult to attain. Indeed, speakers, and other practitioners, may well find their own practices theoretically impenetrable. Adequate theoretical characterizations of one's practices will typically not be available to introspection. Nor will competent practitioners typically be able even to select some correct characterization from a list of fairly plausible candidates.[6]

The semanticist thus sees himself as engaging in an anthropological study of the institutional arrangements that constitute natural language.[7] His charge, more specifically, is to provide an account of the semantics of our linguistic practices. Which features of the total communication situation do our practices count as determining the references of proper names? What, as our practices go, links up a particular name (or utterance) with a particular referent? This is the sort of question in which he is interested.[8]

Frege's sense-reference account might be seen as providing an answer to this latter question. Contemporary anti-Fregeans have argued that Frege's is not a good answer. It fails to accurately reflect the character of our practices. Perfectly competent speakers often fail to have available the sort of information required of them by Frege's account. They often lack anything like purely qualitative individuating beliefs about the referents of the names that they use. The beliefs that they do have, moreover, often correctly apply to individuals other than the referents of the relevant names, and so on.

Frege, moreover--and this is a point of importance for distinguishing the two conceptions of semantics--does not put forth his sense-reference account as an answer to our anthropological semanticist's question: "What, according to actual linguistic practice, determines the reference of proper names?" Frege's picture provides, inter alia, an answer to this question, but this is not his focus at the beginning of "On Sense and Reference."[9] His primary concern is with explaining the contribution of names to thought contents. If we use 'semantics' in the second, and non-Fregean way, we can say that Frege's interest wasn't primarily semantical.

One with a Fregean conception of semantics, on the other hand, might well wonder about the very relevance to semantics--in his sense--of Millian-style accounts of names. The thesis that the reference of a name depends upon, as Donnellan and Kripke urge, a historical chain of communication, even if this thesis formulates some yet-to-be-classified kind of truth about our practices with proper names, fails to answer the specifically "semantic" questions about the contribution of names to thought contents, and about the cognitive fix involved in the use of names. If, as we are sometimes told, a theory of meaning is a theory of understanding, then it is far from clear that Mill, or the Donnellan-Kripke approach, tells us anything about meaning.

Mill's contemporary sympathizers have indeed often been attacked for the alleged cognitive insensitivity of their view. Millians have not been conscious of deep differences between their conception of semantics and Frege's, and so they have often been embarrassed by the apparent failure of their semantics to yield illumination of the sort demanded by Frege. Alternatively, they have twisted and turned to show that <u>their</u> semantic apparatus can be pressed into cognitive service.[10]

The anthropological conception of semantics yields a natural response on behalf of the Millian. The aim of the anthropological semanticist is not, after all, to solve Frege's problems. Nor does the anthropological semanticist presume that his work will yield such solutions. It is not at all obvious that elucidating the social reference-determining conditions will explain the cognitive dimension, for example, the informativeness of 'Hesperus = Phosphorus'. The explanation of the latter might, for example, turn upon, in Putnam's terms, what's in the head of the speaker. Reference, on the other hand--at least if the Millian is correct--has little to do with the head of the speaker. The anthropological semanticist, on the other hand, need not assume that his work will be of no help in illuminating the cognitive dimension. He can adopt, as they say, a "wait and see" attitude.

Philosophic debates in which adversaries argue at cross purposes, as in the present case, are typically fueled by deep, unarticulated differences. My suggestion has been that contrary to the appearances, we should not think of the two approaches as engaged in a single explanatory project. Indeed, their explanatory projects, while displaying considerable overlap, differ substantially. This difference in explanatory project, the difference in conception of the semantic enterprise, does not, however, exhaust the deep, unarticulated differences of which I spoke. That their semantic projects sharply diverge is itself a symptom of a much deeper divide between Fregeans and anti-Fregeans. My central aims here are to call attention to differences at the level of broad philosophic outlook, and to draw some implications for the area of intersection of philosophy of language and philosophy of mind in which Frege and his followers have been so interested.

The anti-Fregean view, it turns out, is far from cognitively insensitive. That view, seen in the context of the broad outlook to be proposed here, does provide a most natural way of thinking about the cognitive dimension. Mill's remarks on names, and those of Donnellan and Kripke as well, do indeed fail to provide for the sort of account of the cognitive dimension that Frege sought. Their not providing for such an account is indeed a virtue, for a Frege-style account, I will argue, presupposes a Cartesian perspective that we have reason to reject.

2. FREGE'S CARTESIANISM

Frege, like his recent critics, never does formulate--or even gesture towards--a comprehensive philosophical outlook. His semantical work, at the same time, is grounded in strong intuitions about intentionality, the contents of thought, and related matters in metaphysics, epistemology, and the philosophy of mind. There is, I submit, a big picture lurking in the wings. I see in Frege's work the deep influence of the Cartesian tradition. I have in mind here not so much specific Cartesian doctrines, as a tendency of mind, a way of approaching the philosophy of language and the philosophy of mind. Frege's sense-reference perspective, his emphasis on the connections between language and objective thought contents accessible to the mind, rather than on, say, the connections between language--thought of as a public, social institution--and the world, bespeaks this Cartesian influence.[11]

Frege might well seem, however, a most unlikely neo-Cartesian. Frege himself, as Michael Dummett emphasizes, has played a crucial role in the 20th century anti-Cartesian

revolution. Frege's own revolutionary contribution, as Dummett notes, consisted in making the philosophical study of meaning, rather than skepticism and the theory of knowledge, the starting point in philosophy. Frege, moreover, emphasized what we might call "the publicity of thought content," the idea that the thoughts we express with language are not in principle private to the minds of individual thinkers, but are in the public, albeit a non-physical, domain.

Consider, however, the Fregean semantic perspective vis-a-vis the Cartesian "mirror-of-nature" tradition in the philosophy of mind. That tradition, it is often noted, sees the mind as set against nature, as the repository of images and conceptual representations of things. Pieces of language become meaningful by being associated with the conceptual representations. Leaving aside the question of images, and the probably related Fregean "ideas," isn't this picture at least a very close relative of Frege's?

One difference, already noted, is Frege's anti-psychologistic platonism, his insistence that senses do not reside in the mind, but rather in a third, objective realm. Still, there is for Frege a realm of representations, distinct from the things represented and accessible to the mind, and linguistic expressions become meaningful only by being associated with these representations.[12]

Frege's making the representations abstract and therefore public entities may obscure, moreover, an important individualistic strain in his view. The reference of a proper name depends, for Frege, not upon anything like the role of the name in the public language, but rather upon the individual's associating a particular sense with the name.[13,14]

Frege's view shares other characteristic features of a Cartesian orientation. It is, Frege tells us, the representations, senses, and not words, that refer in the primary instance.[15] The reference of words is thus derivative from the reference of senses.[16] Proponents of a Cartesian orientation also characteristically emphasize the clarity and distinctness of the representations, and make mathematical concepts the paradigm, and again, Frege is no exception.

So much for Frege's Cartesian perspective on individual terms and the conceptual representations with which they are associated. The same themes reappear--perhaps more strikingly--when we consider Frege's treatment of language at the level of whole sentences. Just as the vitality--to use Wittgenstein's metaphor--of individual expressions derives from their association with senses, so the vitality of whole sentences derives from their association with sentential senses. Just as the senses of singular terms, rather than the terms themselves, are the things that refer in the most basic sense, so sentential senses--the thought contents--are

the primary bearers of truth and falsity. Fregean thoughts, like their constituent senses, are well-defined and eternally existing. They constitute, Frege tells us, the "common treasure of mankind."

Frege, although his focus is directed towards Plato's heaven and not towards social practice, would acknowledge the platitude that natural language is a social, institutional arrangement. That certain sentences get correlated with certain thought contents is, he would surely agree, an artifact of human institutional arrangements. Frege would insist, however, that one's thinking a certain thought content is no matter of human convention, institutional arrangement, or anything of the like. It is a matter of one's mind grasping an objectively existing content. More important, then, at least in a sense more important, than the fact that sentences express such "thoughts" is the fact that by uttering sentences we assert them, we give voice to the thought contents that we are thinking. The traditional Fregean account of the "propositional attitudes," for example the idea that belief consists in a relation between a person and a thought content, emerges directly.

3. A SOCIAL, NATURALISTIC ALTERNATIVE

Frege, we might say, puts forth a thought-driven[17] picture of language. Language, if we overlook its imperfections, is thought externalized. Frege's conception contrasts dramatically with the one I want to develop, the one I see rationalizing the work of Frege's recent critics. My picture shares much with, and owes a great deal to, that of Wittgenstein.[18] Wittgenstein, although some Fregeans are fond of claiming him for their own, gives voice to a radically different perspective, one less representationalist, and arguably more naturalistic. I don't want here to engage in Wittgenstein exegesis, an even trickier business than the question of how best to read Frege. So let me just sketch my alternative.

The approach I have in mind, in stark contrast to the Cartesian tradition, denies that pieces of language become meaningful by being associated with representations, mental or objective. It is here that the connections between Wittgenstein and contemporary anti-Fregeans emerge most clearly. Consider Putnam's slogan, slightly adapted: Meaning ain't in, nor is it available to, the head. Indeed, a central lesson of the Philosophical Investigations, at least as I read it, is that there is much less available to the head than one might have supposed, and further that whatever is intellectually available is less relevant to philosophers' questions about language (and even thought) than one might have supposed.

If the vitality of linguistic expressions is not a function of associated representations, of what is it a function? The broadly Wittgensteinian answer is that the significance of a piece of language is a function of its embeddedness in social, linguistic practice. The problem for those of us--virtually everybody--brought up Cartesian is to make this more concrete, to somehow allow us to get the feel for how meaningfulness could be a function of anything other than representations.

The Donnellan-Kripke historical chain picture--whether or not it provides the last word on its subject matter[19]--can be pressed into service here as suggesting a model of how significance might depend upon social practice, and not upon representations. An introductory philosophy student, quite ignorant about Aristotle and his accomplishments, asks, "Who was Aristotle? Was he the one who believed that everything was water?" The name 'Aristotle' as it occurs in the student's questions, surmises, and assertions, makes reference to Aristotle, our Aristotle, in virtue of--as the Donnellan-Kripke sketch goes--a historical chain of communication that stretches back to something like an original bap-tism. Notice that the Donnellan-Kripke account gives the name a role in the public language; it functions as part of a public, name-using practice. The name, as uttered on these occasions, has a conventional referent.[20] The name connects to the referent, then, in virtue of a communal practice of using this name as a name for him, and not in virtue of the speaker's conceptual associations.

Wittgenstein, in the service of a social practice picture, sometimes appears to urge that we drop talk of "meaning" in favor of talk of "use." I don't know that we need follow this advice strictly, but there is surely something to be said for the idea. Talk of "meaning" tends, for one thing, to suggest the very representationalist picture we are at pains to supplant. It tends to conjure up images of "grasping meanings," when there are--think about names from a Millian perspective--no meanings to grasp. And thinking about linguistic competence in terms of grasping meanings encourages us to think about competence as involving theoretical knowledge, to think in terms of knowing that as opposed to the more appropriate knowing how.

It is natural enough, moreover, to speak of "meaning" both in connection with communal linguistic practice and in connection with individual speaker's conceptual associations.[21] So meaning-talk, instead of helping us keep these topics distinct, encourages conflating them. Keeping them distinct is, of course, absolutely crucial from the point of view taken here.[22]

The moral I want to draw is not that we need banish talk of meaning, but that we handle it with care. Wittgenstein himself at times appears to urge not that we drop talk of

meaning in favor of talk of use, but that we identify meaning with use. We want to be careful, though, not to suggest that there isn't anything more to meaning, in any of its manifestations, than communal linguistic practice. We might settle for the more modest methodological exhortation that insofar as we do talk of meaning, we give pride of place to the social, specifically to communal practice, rather than to individual, or even community-wide, representations. Even when we turn to the Fregean's favorite questions about individual cognition--and we ought not do this too quickly, so the methodological sermon continues--our prior study of meaning as use will be focal. It is to court disaster to look first toward what is available to the individual consciousness for the clarification of virtually anything that comes under the rubric "meaning."

Crucial to the outlook that I am recommending, then, is its rejection of Frege's thought-driven conception of language.[23] One implication of the latter conception, an implication noted above, is that it is the conceptual representations rather than their linguistic embodiments, that, in the first instance, refer. The real action, as it were, takes place at a good distance from our social practices. Such a conception makes it natural to suppose that the first step towards understanding how words refer is to understand how thoughts do so.[24] Nothing could be farther from the truth according to our new picture. What we semanticists study is not thought, but our social practices of talking about things. Indeed, it becomes tempting, although it is no doubt too simple, to construe silent thought on the model of internal utterance.

So far we have the bare bones of the more socially sensitive, naturalistic picture that I want to recommend. I will soon turn to implications for the area of intersection of the philosophy of language and the philosophy of mind to which Fregeans have riveted our attention. First, however, I want to more fully sketch my picture. The additional features of my view that I will mention are important to the overall perspective, but they do not figure directly in the account of the cognitive dimension that I will offer. I thus want to mention and motivate them here, but a full discussion will not be possible.

1) Clarity and distinctness.

Frege attributes to the third realm entities that he takes to stand behind language, entities like senses and thought contents, an extreme, perhaps even absolute, refinement; they are necessarily clear and distinct. Think here of Frege's comment, for which he took some chiding from Wittgenstein,[25] that a concept without boundaries is no concept at all.

Frege, of course, is not alone here. There is a deep tendency in the representationalist tradition to attribute such purity to the representations, a tendency that has consequences for one's conception of language. The ways in which the conception of language may be affected are various. Philosophers have sometimes seen language, or at least its more "respectable" parts, as itself possessing a kind of clarity and distinctness--as being associated, for example, with clear criteria that specify necessary and sufficient conditions of application. Alternatively, language may be seen as a mere dim reflection of the pristine realm, and the messiness of language attributed to our all-too-human ways of getting at the clear and distinct concepts.[26] Either way, the background conception of perfectly refined representations plays a dominating role.

Rejecting the representationalist picture may open the door to a different way of thinking about linguistic practice. It is here that we anti-Fregeans have most to learn from Wittgenstein. A truly social, anti-representationalist picture will not merely reject the ontology of objective or mental concepts. It is not even enough to embrace the idea that meaningfulness is to be cashed out ultimately in terms of linguistic practice. One might go this far, but remain in the grip of a picture of practice and its governing rules (or RULES) that derives from the rejected Cartesian perspective. One might well presuppose, and see semantics as the attempt to uncover--as indeed we anti-Fregeans have--a kind of rigidity on the part of the phenomena, a fixedness that the phenomena may in fact fail to exhibit.

A detailed look at actual practice is out of the question here, but it will stand us in good stead to remind ourselves that our practices with words do not evolve from the attempt to capture in words, or communicate to others, pre-existent concepts that, almost by definition, possess the required refinement.

In the beginning--if the reader will indulge me one more time--there were the primitive brutes, bumping into each other and grunting, by way of indicating to their fellows salient features of the environment. Linguistic practice, on this impressionistic picture, gets more articulated, more refined, as suits the practical, social, and, eventually, intellectual needs of the brutes and their successors. The crucial point is that whatever precision, articulation, refinement does evolve is a result of pressures of the sorts mentioned, and not a result of the desire to capture in words some absolutely precise Cartesian concepts. The precision achieved is thus never "absolute," whatever that might mean, nor is there any absolute standard--like the Cartesian concepts--by which we might assess the precision of usage.

To the extent one thinks that such a sketch roughly represents the way things really go, to that extent one will be skeptical of philosophers' tendency to impute clarity and

distinctness to usage, or to usage-when-it-is-up-to-snuff. And to that extent, one will be sympathetic even to Wittgenstein's more radical "lack-of-regimentation" claims.

Consider, for example, the putative "family resemblance" phenomenon. Reflection upon actual linguistic practice with many general terms, 'game' for example, fails to reveal--urges Wittgenstein--what the traditional picture led us to expect: a set of features common to all games, features that are individually necessary and jointly sufficient for something to be a game. Given our new picture, Wittgenstein's claims don't seem outlandish. Why indeed can't there be terms the utility of which don't depend upon there being something substantive shared by the things to which the term applies? Might there well not be utility to having a term that collects a range of things that are roughly similar to one another, things that fail to share any single feature, but that share a kind of family resemblance?[27,28]

Consider a related "lack of refinement" phenomenon, vagueness, the fact that, for example, there are no sharp boundaries separating games from non-games. The Cartesian can try to account for vagueness in any number of ways,[29] but, to be sure this phenomenon does not fit like hand-in-glove with the Cartesian picture, and something will have to be said.

Far from being a source of pressure to our more naturalistic, social account, vagueness is entirely to be expected. Remember, we don't start with pre-existent, sharply demarcated concepts, the common treasure of personkind.[30] Our practices with words are only as refined as they are, and there is no external standard (like how well they capture our conceptual representations) by which to measure them. If there are cases that in practice rarely occur, for example, borderline cases of the applicability of a term, then it is likely that even a master of the term will not be able to say that the term either clearly does, or clearly does not, apply. This inability reflects not a lack of mastery, but rather reflects the fact that, as Wittgenstein says, the borders have not yet been drawn.[31]

An important component of the anti-representationalist picture is thus its expectation that usage will turn out to be considerably less regimented than we have supposed. This is not to say that we can expect Wittgenstein's family resemblance picture to provide a generally applicable model. The primitive brutes and their successors, after all, can become attuned to relatively stable aspects of their natural environments--for example, the water that they drink and bathe in--and come to have terms that apply in an at least somewhat, and perhaps dramatically, less open-ended way. Even pieces of language that seem more deeply institutional than do natural kind terms like 'water' may presumably vary widely in the

degree of regimentation they exhibit. Perhaps we should expect a continuum here. The point, though, is that we cannot simply proceed as we have, taking Kaplan's:

> The reference of the first-person pronoun is the agent of the context

as the model of what the semanticist should aim to uncover.[32]

2) Propositional content.

Propositions, it is often noted, have been wanted as the bearers of truth, and as the "objects of propositional attitudes." Frege's representationalist picture makes it natural to let the sentence-level representations, the Fregean thoughts, play these roles. What, though, if we reject representationalism in favor of the kind of perspective I am advocating? What becomes of propositions?

The topic is, however, gigantic. I can only sketch what I take to be the natural response, that a truly social and naturalistic conception will want to do without propositions. I will briefly mention two sorts of considerations that seem to me to militate against propositions.

a) Naturalism.

Kaplan has recently objected to the Platonistic conception of the individuation of words. We suppose, he argues, that the distinction between word tokens and abstract types is the basis of the individuation of words. Not so! What makes your utterance of 'Aristotle' and mine two occurrences of the same word is not the supposed fact that both occurrences stand in a relation to some abstract stereotype that they instantiate, or are members of, an abstract type that inhabits Frege's third realm. The worldly occurrences need to be linked in some more naturalistic way; their being occurrences of the same word must be a function of our social, linguistic interactions.[33]

I want to reject, in this same spirit, the notion that thought, belief, and assertion, for example, consist in relations to abstract entities. The anti-Fregeans' "singular propositions" may appear to be more innocuous than Fregean thoughts, for singular propositions are abstract entities that have been, so to speak, brought down to earth. Among their constituents, after all, are things like you and me. Even such propositions, however, seem to me objectionable from a naturalistic point of view. Had we anti-Fregeans not started with

Fregean thoughts and then made the appropriate amendments--replacing Frege's propositional constituents, senses, with referents--would it have seemed natural to construe thought, belief, and assertion as involving relations between minds (or even persons) and abstract entities? The very idea that thought, et al, involves such relations may well be a legacy of the Fregean/Cartesian picture.

b) The messiness of linguistic practice.

How does the propositions picture--explicated in terms either of Fregean thoughts or singular propositions--comport with that other implication of our social orientation, the fact that usage often fails to be sharply bounded, that usage is only as clear as it needs be? Assume, for a moment, that Wittgenstein was correct, and that 'game' is a family resemblance term. What proposition is expressed by 'That is a game'? What, specifically, are we to make of the predicate constituent? The idea that the predicate constituent is the property of being a game surely doesn't comport well with our "family resemblance" account.

My question is whether the apparatus of propositions is compatible in spirit with the social orientation. There is no question that it can be made compatible. One might insist that the proposition does contain the property of being a game (or the sense of 'game'), it's just a fuzzy property (or sense), or something of the like. Surely we can hang onto the notion of a proposition, if we want to. The question is whether the most natural way to work out a socially sensitive conception of language involves the notion of a proposition.

These remarks raise many questions, of course, questions about how, without propositions, we are to do the work traditionally assigned to them. Are we to try to do without truth bearers? If not, what will play that role? How are we to construe belief, if not as involving a relation to a proposition? I cannot, of course, begin to deal with these questions here, but I will do so elsewhere.[34]

4. INTENTIONALITY: THE MISSING COGNITIVE FIX

I turn now to the problems that have seemed to make life so difficult for anti-Fregeans. Let's begin with what may appear to provide the anti-Fregean's most severe headache, the Cartesian intuition concerning intentionality, the problem of the missing cognitive fix. The Cartesian idea that reference requires mental discrimination of a referent initially looks unassailable. Indeed, I have heard it said that this alone disqualifies the anti-Fregean's semantical views. The Cartesian intentionality intuition takes on a very different look, however, when reconsidered from the vantage point of our more social, naturalistic picture.

If we look at our actual practices, as Wittgenstein urged, rather than think about what they must be like, the "cognitive fix" requirement immediately begins to look suspicious, perhaps just plain wrong. People often simply don't have much of a fix on the things to which they refer. For one thing, as has been pointed out time and again, the beliefs that a speaker has about the referent of a name that he is using may be very far off the mark, and yet his reference is not affected.[35] A philosophy student may mistakenly associate with 'Aristotle' the properties of having taught Plato and having died of hemlock poisoning, and yet his utterances of the name, say on an exam, count as references to Aristotle, our Aristotle.

There are many cases, moreover, in which a competent speaker doesn't begin to possess the sort of information about his referent that would single out that referent, that would distinguish the latter from many other things. Felipe Alou, I know, was a major-league baseball player. I don't know much else about him, surely not enough to individuate him in any serious way from many others, and yet I can use his name to say things about him. Similarly, as Kripke points out, all that many people know about Cicero is that he was a Roman orator.[36] Consider also Kripke's Gell-Mann and Feynman example in which a speaker competent with two names associates precisely the same (meager) information with each. Such a speaker refers to Gell-Mann when he uses the latter's name, and to Feynman when he utters 'Feynman', despite the fact that the only distinctive thing he knows about either of them is that each is a leading theoretical physicist. Putnam makes the same point with respect to the natural kind terms 'elm' and 'beech'.

Reference in the absence of an accurate cognitive fix looks miraculous, I submit, only to the Cartesian, or the residual Cartesian strain in us. If pieces of language refer only in virtue of their being associated with representations, then it is miraculous that someone should refer to something in the absence of an appropriate representation. This sense of miraculousness fades fast, however, when we bring the conception of a public language into sharp focus, a conception suggested by the sorts of examples mentioned above. What connects the student's utterance to Aristotle is not the student's cognitive fix on the Aristotle. What connects utterance to referent is rather the fact that the student is using a linguistic device that, as our social practices go, refers to Aristotle. Linguistic expressions, as parts of a public practice, attain a kind of life of their own. One who uses a proper name participates in an institutionalized practice, and refers to the name's conventional referent.[37] Indeed, so far from their being an epistemological requirement of the sort supposed by the traditional picture, it rather seems that one of the crucial functions of proper names is to allow us to bridge great cognitive gulfs. The public language thus makes it possible for us to speak about

things even when our beliefs about them are very scanty, confused, even badly mistaken. The examples that seem to show that reference does not require anything like a discriminating conception should not, then, seem astounding, or indeed at all surprising, at least not on our social picture.[38]

One with Cartesian intuitions might admit that underscoring the social and institutional character of natural language is the best way for the anti-Fregean to proceed:

> Emphasizing that proper names are part of a public, institutional practice might well seem to make sense of the idea that a speaker need not have much of a cognitive fix on the things about which he speaks. The effect of the anti-Fregean proposal, though, is to make speech and thought radically discontinuous--for such a cognitive fix is surely indispensible to thought--and such a radical discontinuity is just not acceptable. If, in the Aristotle-Socrates case above, for example, it is clear that the descriptions the speaker would offer really do take us to Socrates, then he surely was thinking about Socrates. If, moreover, a speaker uses a name in the absence of a cognitive fix, then he really can't be thinking about anyone.

So much in philosophy depends upon which phenomena one takes to be fundamental, where one starts. The anti-Fregean focus has admittedly not been on thought, but on language, public language. The Cartesian, believing as he does that this is the wrong place to begin, might well conclude that notwithstanding the apparent counterexamples drawn from actual communicative practice, linguistic reference, unless it is to be divorced from thought, must require discriminating knowledge.

Alternatively, if one with Cartesian intuitions is impressed enough with the social and institutional character of natural language and with the anti-Fregeans' counterexamples, he might be willing to endorse the alleged discontinuity between thought and speech.[39] "I'll give you speech," we might imagine him saying, "but thought is quite another thing." The idea is that the correct interpretation of speech is perhaps, in the final analysis, in the public domain. It is a matter of the conventions of the linguistic community, and really not a matter of what's in the head of the speaker. What one thinks, on the other hand, is very much a matter of what's in (or available to) the head of the thinker. An utterance of 'Aristotle wrote the Ethics', say in a philosophy class, counts as a reference to Aristotle, but if the speaker takes Aristotle to be the teacher of Plato, etc., his thought is directed upon Socrates. What about one whose

beliefs about Aristotle are so indefinite that they fail to discriminate anyone? Perhaps such a speaker fails to be thinking about anyone.[40]

Emerging here again is the deep difference between a broadly Cartesian orientation, and the more social, naturalistic view. It is no accident, no mere oversight, that anti-Fregeans have tended to begin with the study of public practices of communication, practices that we tend to see as, so to speak, relatively out in the open. Thought seems to us, or at least to me, a much more difficult and elusive topic, one with which we might do better had we some grip on our public communicative practices.

It thus makes good sense that the Cartesian would worry that we anti-Fregeans have distanced speech from thought in an extreme way. My worry, on the other hand, is that the Cartesian, on the basis of his philosophical picture of thought, either denies what seems plain about speech (for example, that reference does not require a cognitive fix), or else grants the latter, but insists on distancing thought from speech. I don't believe that there is any such radical discontinuity between thought and speech, or that the approach taken here suggests such a discontinuity. What seems dubious to me is what the Cartesian takes to be so obvious, the idea that if we restrict our attention to the question of about whom the speakers are thinking, it is clear that the background descriptions provide the decisive answer.

Let's begin with examples in which speakers fail to have any sort of real cognitive fix, examples in which the background descriptions fail to individuate. Someone says, "Cicero was a Roman orator," and can't identify Cicero much further. It seems very far-fetched, indeed altogether ad hoc, to suppose that such a perfectly competent and sincere speaker who fails to believe very much about Cicero, ipso facto fails to be thinking about the latter. Surely, in the example above, I was thinking about Felipe Alou. The phenomenon of reference in the absence of individuating information is so pervasive that the supposition in question would deny thought content to an extremely wide range of sincere utterances produced by reflective people. This surely seems like the proverbial philosopher's view, as opposed to what seems plain to just about everyone.[41] Thinking about something, it would seem, no more requires a cognitive fix than does speaking about something.

Let's turn to the case of the speaker who has "mistaken beliefs," whose background descriptions fit not the referent of the uttered name, but rather someone else. Consider the Aristotle-Socrates case above. There are, no doubt, examples of this sort with respect to which it will be perfectly natural to say that the speaker was thinking about the denotation of the background descriptions. The question is whether this is necessarily so, whether the simple fact that the background descriptions take us to Socrates itself establishes that the

speaker was thinking about Socrates. It seems pretty clear, at least if we take our cue from our ordinary judgments, that the background descriptions do not play any such decisive role. We would ordinarily say, after all, in many such cases, that the speaker expressed a mistaken belief, even a mistaken thought, about Aristotle.[42]

Let's turn from our ordinary judgments, and get philosophical. The Fregean, in making the background descriptions decisive, gives a kind of cognitive priority to descriptions over names. This is natural enough, given the Fregean outlook, including the cognitive fix requirement, modes of presentation that are supposed to capture the cognitive perspective, and so on. The question is, however, whether we ought to accept this inegalitarian treatment of names vis-a-vis descriptions.

The situation, after all, is that the speaker actually uttered a name that is, as our practices go, Aristotle's name. It's true that in answer to a question about whom he was speaking he would have given a description that fit Socrates, but how does that make it the case that he was thinking of Socrates? Why not say instead that he was thinking about the person named by the name that he used, that is Aristotle, and the background descriptions merely reveal his (in this case false) beliefs about that person. In any case, the uttered name takes us to one person, the to-be-uttered-if-asked descriptions to another. What, other than the disputed Cartesian picture, makes it so obvious that we should favor the latter?

My point here, as already indicated, is not that we ought always to give priority to the uttered name over the background descriptions, or that, more generally, whatever singular term is uttered should furnish the key to the referent-in-thought. Sometimes, we ought indeed to privilege unuttered, background terms. One might, for example, utter the name 'Jones' as a mere slip of the tongue, while thinking about, and intending to say something about, Smith. Alternatively, one might mistakenly take 'Brown' to be the name of Harris, and, thinking about and intending to say something about Harris, one might use the name 'Brown'. So a name other than the uttered name may deserve priority, and so may a background description. Someone might, for example, be thinking about "the most ugly, and nasty, professional wrestler, whoever that is." Thinking that the person in question is none other than Brutus Beefcake, the speaker may make a remark mentioning the latter by name. If B.B. does not really fit the description, however, there may well be circumstances in which it would be appropriate to say that the speaker was really thinking of "the most ugly, and nasty, professional wrestler, whoever that is," or even that he was thinking about the Iron Sheik, if the latter is indeed uglier and nastier than any other.

We should not, then, expect a simple formula in answer to the question of how, in general, we are to determine which item it was about whom someone was thinking.[43] My point here was not to provide such an answer, one that favors, say, uttered names over background descriptions. It was merely to dispel the illusion that at least cognitively--if not semantically--names must be backed up by individuating concepts, and that the question of about whom someone is thinking when he utters a name is to be resolved by reference to that background concept. Whatever we do, in the end, with the thorny problem of reference in thought, it is far from clear that the Cartesian spirited Fregean idea, the contention that the descriptions-to-be-uttered-if-asked must be decisive, has much merit.[44]

I will conclude this section with some remarks on the implications of my view for another topic that deserves book-length treatment, that of silent thought. It is sometimes supposed that the Cartesian intentionality intuition has a kind of obvious plausibility when it comes to silent thought episodes; that somehow silent thought, as opposed to overt speech, is a most natural candidate for the Cartesian picture. Consider again someone who, although ignorant of Cicero's accomplishments (say other than being a Roman orator), uses the name pretty much as we all do. We are ordinarily willing to ascribe thoughts about Cicero to such a person when he says things like "I know who Cicero was. He was a Roman orator." Isn't it equally clear that he is in a position to have silent thoughts about Cicero? Surely it's not the verbalization that makes thought about Cicero possible.

Being a participant in a name using practice, specifically, being competent with 'Cicero', our speaker is in a position to use the name not only in overt speech episodes, but also in silent thought. Do names, then, actually occur in silent thought episodes? Are there at least some such episodes that amount to internal utterance? My point does not depend on positive answers to these questions. Whether or not his silent thought that Cicero was an orator amounts to his silently rehearsing this sentence--indeed however we understand silent thought episodes--his competence with the name, his participation in the practice, puts him in a position to have the thought that he would express, were he to put it into words, as "Cicero was an orator." Not only does the reference of an utterance not depend upon one's cognitive fix, the reference of one's silent thought similarly does not depend upon "what's in the head." This will, of course, seem preposterous from a Cartesian point of view.

5. HOW PUZZLING IS FREGE'S PUZZLE?

Frege's discussion of cognitive significance, at the beginning of "On Sense and Reference," is focused upon his famous puzzle about informative identity sentences. How, Frege wants to know, are we to explain the difference in "cognitive value" between the trivial 'Hesperus is Hesperus' and the informative 'Hesperus is Phosphorus', that fact that these sentences formulate different thoughts?

Frege's focus on identity-sentences is not altogether salutary, for contrary to its suggestion, the fundamental problem about the cognitive dimension of language with which Frege was centrally concerned has nothing special to do with identity. Frege's fundamental problem was that of accounting for the fact that a mere change of one co-referring name for another can affect a change, indeed a very significant change, in the thought content of a sentence. Frege might well have avoided identity, with all its attendant perplexities, and have asked for the explanation of the difference in cognitive value between 'Hesperus is a planet' and the corresponding "Phosphorus" sentence.[45]

Frege's discussion--let's focus on the two sentences just mentioned--draws attention to what I'll call "Frege's data," to cognitive phenomena of undeniable importance: One might understand both sentences, for example, but be willing to assert only one of them, even emphatically deny the other. Alternatively, one might find, say, the "Hesperus" sentence old hat, but the "Phosphorus" sentence highly informative. Finally, one might behave quite differently depending upon which of these sentences he accepts.

Frege's data are both uncontroversial and uncontroversially important, but the lessons Frege would have us learn from them are far from uncontroversial. The most notorious lesson, quite obviously controversial, is Frege's sense-reference approach to semantics. There is, however, a more subtle, prior message that Frege takes the cognitive phenomena to convey, a putative implication that can be made to seem almost like a datum itself. Notice that in formulating Frege's puzzle in the first two paragraphs of this section, I gloss "difference in cognitive value," as "difference in thoughts expressed." Frege's contention that the two sentences express different thoughts, distinct propositional contents--a natural enough contention given Frege's thought-oriented approach--is far from uncontroversial.

One might, for example, insist, in the spirit of the Russell-Kaplan singular propositions picture, that 'Hesperus is a planet' and 'Phosphorus is a planet' express the same proposition. Alternatively, one might, in the spirit of the naturalistic approach I've been advocating, try to make do without propositions, without unified things that are, as Strawson once put it, the upshots of assertive utterances. Frege's quasi-datum is surely contestable. What we cannot contest, however, and what I want to explain, are what I've dubbed "Frege's

data," the cognitive phenomena that, for Frege, made it plain that different thought contents were indeed expressed by the respective sentences.

Let's keep in mind that our project is not to make good on the alleged cognitive failures of the anti-Fregean semantic approach. Having made the distinction between semantics, on the anthropological conception, and the study of cognitive significance, the anti-Fregean ought not to be embarrassed that, say, Mill's remarks on names (or those of Donnellan and Kripke) do not immediately address Frege's data. At the same time, the output of anthropological semantics ought to cohere with a more general account of language and thought, one that must address Frege's data. How, then, might one approach the cognitive phenomena if one takes a broadly Millian approach to the semantics of proper names?

It is striking that even those who have led the revolt against the Fregean orientation have approached the explanation of the cognitive phenomena in way more suited to the Fregean, representationalist picture. To the representationalist, the obvious and only way to explain differences in the cognitive roles of expressions is in terms of differences in associated representations. Kaplan, to mention a prominent example, tries to account for the difference in cognitive roles of indexical expressions, by resurrecting modes of presentation, not Fregean senses mind you, but more kosher "ways in which agents represent the references of their terms."[46]

The appeal of the representationalist picture, here as before, is a function of the fact that, as Wittgenstein says, we are its captives. It is difficult to so much as conceive an alternative, even in bare outlines. If 'Hesperus is a planet' differs cognitively for an agent from the corresponding "Phosphorus" sentence, doesn't this have to be because he is thinking of the referent in two different ways, because he is employing two different cognitive perspectives. If someone finds 'Hesperus = Phosphorus' informative, doesn't this have to be because he associates a different way of thinking (or mode of presentation or cognitive perspective) with the left hand side of the equation than he does with the right hand side? How else might we begin to explain the obvious cognitive differences?

I have argued elsewhere against the Kaplan-Perry approach to the cognitive significance of indexicals.[47] While I stressed there the Fregean flavor of that approach,[48] I was not sufficiently focused upon what I now see as, especially in Kaplan's case, the most salient similarity with Frege, Kaplan's representationalism. He, no less than Frege, explains cognitive differences between expressions as differences in their associated modes of presentation.[49] Here I want to urge that we abandon representationalism even in the study of

the cognitive significance phenomena. Modes of presentation, no matter how liberalized and attenuated, remain spiritual descendants of the Fregean approach. Reflection on some of the anti-Fregean discussions of proper names, moreover, should convince at least the discussants that no such representationalist approach, no matter how benign its representationalism, has any future.

I have in mind here Kripke's Gell-Mann-Feynman case, and Putnam's Elm-Beech story. The original point of these examples was to show that reference does not depend upon what's in the head, upon the information that the speaker associates with the expressions.[50] Don't these examples indicate, no less forcefully, that cognitive significance doesn't depend upon the associated information? 'Gell-Mann' and 'Feynman', after all, can play cognitively inequivalent roles for a speaker despite the fact that the speaker's associated "conceptual files" are identical.

We can make the same point--that cognitive significance is not a matter of associated information--with names that, unlike 'Gell-Mann' and 'Feynman', co-refer. Someone might acquire the names 'Cicero' and 'Tully', associating with them precisely the same information, say "a famous Roman." Still the names may differ in "cognitive value." It may never strike the speaker that only one person may be in question, and so he may react very differently to sentences that contain one name, that to those that contain the other. The anti-Fregean explanation of the cognitive difference between 'Cicero' and 'Tully', then, given our own examples, better not rely upon necessary differences in associated information, that is upon different modes of presentation.[51]

My proposal, then, is that we forget modes of presentation, and take a fresh look at the data to which Frege drew our attention. I urged in the last section that the Cartesian intentionality intuition--remember how unassailable it seemed at first--takes on a very different look when considered from the vantage point of our more social, naturalistic picture. The same can be said for the highly-plausible-if-you've-been-brought-up-on-Frege idea that to explain a difference in the cognitive roles of expressions one must appeal to a difference in cognitive perspectives.

Let's begin with the reflection that the more epistemology one builds into linguistic competence with names, that is, the more of a cognitive fix one requires, the more it will seem that Frege's data present not merely interesting and important phenomena to be explained, but a prima facie problem, a puzzle. Why is this? The thesis that linguistic competence with names requires mental apprehension of their referents induces a tension between two names co-referring, and their being cognitively inequivalent. If in using each of the two names one

must be in cognitive touch with their single referent, how can this identity of reference have escaped notice?

Indeed, if one raises the epistemic stakes enough, it will be impossible to have co-referring names that differ cognitively. Imagine, to take a fanciful example, that we required that a name user be omniscient about the referent. It would then be impossible to be competent with two co-referring names without realizing that only one referent was in question. Co-referring names could then not differ in cognitive significance.

Let's go to the other extreme. Although for present purposes we can consider this another fanciful example, anti-Fregeans have sometimes suggested a "no-epistemology" picture of linguistic competence. One might, on this view, possess radically mistaken beliefs about the referent of a name, or virtually no beliefs at all, and still be in a position to use the name as a name for its socially determined referent. Smith, on the periphery of a conversation between mathematicians in which the name 'Joan' is used as a name for a theorem, mistakenly takes Joan to be a woman. Alternatively, Smith comes away completely unsure of who or what Joan is. In either of these cases, on the no-epistemology view, one may still be in a position to say things about the referent, that is the theorem, by using the name. One might, for example, speculate about Joan's properties, or ask who or what Joan is.

If one thus doesn't need to know virtually anything about the referent, it is very easy to see how one could pick up two co-referring names, and not know that they had a single referent. The no-epistemology theorist, since he doesn't think that competence requires mental apprehension of the referent, will thus not see Frege's data as presenting a serious and difficult problem, a real puzzle. Indeed, the explanation of the fact that 'Cicero' and 'Tully' might play different cognitive roles--and not much of an explanation is really needed--would involve simply pointing out that competence with two names does not put one in a position to know whether or not the names co-refer. How could it, given that competence requires no knowledge of the referent?

Frege advanced a view intermediate between "omniscience" and "no-epistemology," that a name user need attach to the name a purely qualitative concept that he takes to single out a referent. This is, of course, far from requiring omniscience--much farther, say, than Russell's direct acquaintance requirement[52]--and it allows for a cognitive difference between co-referring names. Like the omniscience view, however, it demands a substantive cognitive fix--something intellectually available to the speaker must mentally focus him on the referent. A consequence is that, compared to the no-epistemology view, a more substantive explanation of two co-referring names differing cognitively is required. If one is really

mentally focused on the same thing twice, why doesn't he know it? Frege's view yields a natural answer, of course. One might not know that a single thing is in question because his focus is not direct, so to speak, as it was for Russell, but is mediated by a concept. If he is focused upon the same thing twice, but by means of different concepts, he well may not realize that the same thing is in question.

We are now in a position to see how the perspective I've been outlining in this paper yields a distinctively non-Fregean approach to the cognitive phenomena. While I have not plumbed the depths of how little need be in the head in order to use a name--I have not subscribed to the no-epistemology view--the use of a name, on my account, emphatically does not involve a substantial cognitive fix, the mental apprehension of a referent. Indeed, one of the functions of names is to allow a speaker (or thinker) to bridge great cognitive gaps, to allow one to speak about things in the absence of anything like individuating conceptions. A consequence is that, just as on the no-epistemology view, the cognitive phenomena no longer have the air of paradox. The use of a name doesn't require mental apprehension of its referent, and so there is no puzzle, no special problem, about how a speaker might be competent with co-referring names and yet not know that they co-refer. Given how little one needs to know (or even believe) about the referent to be competent with a name, there is no presumption that a speaker will know of two co-referring names in his vocabulary, that they co-refer.

I have been emphasizing the fact that the more social outlook dispels any sense of paradox concerning Frege's data. What seems even more important is that we now have a new form of explanation of Frege's data, one radically different from that suggested by the traditional representationalist account. The powerful grip of the latter led us to suppose that the only way to explain a cognitive difference was in terms of a difference in mode of presentation. And anti-Fregeans, laboring under this supposition, have been raking the leaves, as it were, to somehow retrieve such representational differences. Notice that cognitive perspectives, modes of presentation, have no role in our new form of explanation. We don't look into the speaker's head and find two different conceptual files in terms of which we can now see why 'Cicero' and 'Tully' play different cognitive roles for him. We rather reflect upon the fact that given how little need be in his head, his mere competence with the names puts him in no position to decide the question of whether or not these names co-refer. Indeed, as noted above, were we to look inside his head, we might find identical conceptual files for each of two cognitively distinct names. We might, of course, find different conceptual files, say "being a famous Roman orator" associated with 'Cicero', and

"being a famous Roman politician" with 'Tully'. Such a difference, however, doesn't affect our explanation of what makes it possible for him to wonder whether Cicero was Tully. Such wonder is not rendered more intelligible by the difference in conceptual files. A competent speaker, given how little he need know or even believe about the references of names, might well raise the question even if both files had included merely "is a famous Roman."[53]

I began this essay with the distinction between two conceptions of semantics, Fregean and anthropological. The attention of the anthropological semanticist, I argued, is not focused upon the cognitive dimension that, under Frege's influence, has seized center stage. If it turns out that the anthropological semanticist's work fails to provide much help in the explication of the cognitive dimension, so be it. Much to our surprise, however, the anti-Fregean semantical approach, at least when embedded in the sort of outlook I've been recommending, yields a most natural approach to the cognitive dimension. Central to this approach is the outright rejection, argued for in Section 4 above, of the Cartesian intentionality intuition. To put the point in a more positive way, linguistic contact with things--reference, that is--does not presuppose epistemic contact with them. Underscoring this deep lesson of the anti-Fregean revolution leads, as we have just seen, to a radically non-Fregean account of the Fregean's favorite topic, the cognitive significance of language.[54]

ENDNOTES

[1]In The Message in the Bottle (New York, 1954).

[2]I borrow the phrase from Tyler Burge, "Sinning Against Frege," Philosophical Review 88 (July, 1979): 398-442. The quotation is from p. 398.

[3]P. 458, Truth and Other Enigmas (London, 1978).

[4]Russell, giving voice to this intuition, maintains that in order to be genuinely thinking about an object, or making a judgment about it, one must know which thing is in question. The "cognitive fix" requirement can be understood in a number of ways, some requiring an extremely strong cognitive relation to the referent,

some requiring a more modest relation. Russell himself was quite a fanatic about intentionality (in the sense of "aboutness"). He required, or at least there was a strong tendency in his thought to require, that to really be thinking about an object, one must be directly acquainted with it. Otherwise one would not know which thing was in question, even if one possessed a definite description that denoted the object. Frege maintained a weaker requirement, that one possess an individuating sense. Weaker still is a tendency in, for example, Keith Donnellan's thought, according to which some special sort of causal connection to a thing is enough to establish a cognitive fix. See the latter's "Rigid Designators and the Contingent A Priori" in Contemporary Perspectives in the Philosophy of Language, ed. P. French, T. Uehling, and H. Wettstein (University of Minnesota Press, 1979), pp.45-60.

[5]Indeed, argues Kripke, typical speakers may not know any more about Cicero than that he was "a Roman orator," hardly individuating knowledge, and yet they are still perfectly competent with the name.

[6]The point I am making about the typical inaccessibility of the "rules" that characterize our practices is perhaps easy to see for the case of proper names, where just about everyone seems confused about the matter. The point, however, is quite generally applicable. Consider, for example, the kind of example in which one might well suppose, and it has indeed been supposed, that the rules are much closer to consciousness. In the case of the first-person pronoun, for example, typical speakers may have a better rough idea of the semantic character of our practices than they do with proper names. This is not to say, however, that they can discern an adequate general characterization--as opposed to a rough idea--by introspection, or even that they can select such an adequate characterization from a list of subtly different candidates. Consider Kaplan's candidate rule: the reference of the first person pronoun is the agent of the context. Notice that "agent of the context" is a technical term for Kaplan. For technical reasons having to do with contexts in which no one is speaking, Kaplan doesn't understand 'the agent' to mean the same as 'the speaker'. The typical competent speaker, I submit, will not find Kaplan's "agent" idea the obvious one. See also pp. 202-203 of my paper "Has Semantics Rested On A Mistake," The Journal of Philosophy 83 (April 1986): 185-209, for further discussion.

[7]It is indeed tempting, following the suggestions of both Walker Percy and Kaplan in his 1982 Pacific APA response to John Searle, to characterize the semanticist as a Martian anthropologist. Don't look into the speaker's head, Kaplan advised, for an account of our practices, but import an alien who has the advantage of distance from our practices. Making the anthropological semanticist a Martian--that is, one who is not a

participant in our, or perhaps any, linguistic practices--raises its own problems that, for the present, I'd rather avoid.

[8]My anthropological semanticist is not looking for anything like an "analysis" of the notion of "reference." He, and I--following Kripke in Naming and Necessity--take this notion to be a kind of primitive (for the time being). Ultimately, I believe, we must say something more substantive about this fundamental notion, but such a study should not be thought of as preliminary to the study described in the text, nor have anti-Fregeans yet had virtually anything to say about it (excluding for the moment the minority who have been interested in the physicalistic reduction of the notion of "reference," and who, unlike Kripke himself, claim to see in Kripke's work the makings of such a reduction). A tentative suggestion: If we take seriously the idea that natural language is an institutional arrangement, it would seem natural to see the notion of reference as an "institutional notion," not any more reducible to something physical or psychological than is, say, the notion of "ownership" in some legal system. I find Searle's remarks on institutional facts suggestive here. (See Speech Acts, Cambridge University Press, 1969.) Perhaps it is an "institutional fact" that a certain term refers to something, a fact comparable to the fact that someone owns something, or that someone stole third base. I will pursue this theme elsewhere.

[9]I owe this point to Joseph Almog.

[10]See "Has Semantics Rested On A Mistake?," for a criticism of various attempts, most notably that of David Kaplan and John Perry.

[11]The widespread feeling that the Fregean conception of semantics is inevitable--that semantics cannot be divorced from questions about thought and about cognitive significance--owes much, I believe, to a lingering Cartesian influence. This is not to say that contemporary neo-Fregeans are all fundamentally, or equally, Cartesian, or that they all exhibit the influence of that tradition in the same respects. They, under a number of anti-Cartesian influences--most notably that of Wittgenstein--depart in various and sundry ways both from the letter of Frege's law, and the Cartesian spirit that I see as inspiring it. One can, however, see in such contemporaries the strong influence of the Cartesian picture, or so it seems to me.

[12]My reading of Frege makes him an arch-representationalist, and emphasizes the distance between his picture of language and thought, and that of someone like the later Wittgenstein. I think that this is in line with a naive, straightforward reading of the main line of the Fregean texts, but this is, of course, controversial. In any case many philosophers have expressed agreement with the philosophical views of

"my" Frege, and we can thus speak of the "Fregean tradition," even if, contrary to my view, Frege never did maintain this sort of outlook. Kaplan remarks that when he presented a similar reading of Frege at Oxford, the response was that first, Frege never held any such thing, and second, if he did he would have been correct.

[13]Similarly, the thought content of a sentence that contains indexical expressions depends upon which sense the speaker attaches to the indexical. In the case of indexicals, however, it may appear that Frege is no more individualistic than anyone else. Doesn't the reference of a demonstrative, e.g., depend upon something quite individual? Even here, I believe that a more social picture is available. The reference of a demonstrative, I argue in "How To Bridge the Gap Between Meaning and Reference," Synthese 68 (January 1984): 63-84, depends not upon the individual's preferred descriptions, nor more generally upon his intentions to refer, but rather upon socially available cues, typically--but not exclusively--pointing gestures and things of the sort.

[14]I am speaking here of Frege's own view. One Neo-Fregean variation consists in socializing Frege's view, and attempting to retrieve the sense of a name not from the individual's associations but from a kind of social poll. Such a view would be continuous with the representationalist aspect of the Cartesian heritage, but would depart from its individualism. See footnote 35 below.

[15]"The regular connexion between a sign, its sense, and its reference is of such a kind that to the sign there corresponds a definite sense and to that in turn [italics added] a definite reference, . . ." From "On Sense and Reference," in Translations from the Philosophical Writings of Gottlob Frege, ed. P. Geach and M. Black (Blackwell, Oxford, 1966).

[16]Indeed, as Joseph Almog pointed out to me, Frege may be seen as offering a reductive analysis of the reference of terms, reducing the latter to the satisfaction of descriptively articulated conditions. Josef Stern offered the complementary observation that to speak of linguistic reference is not really to speak of the same relation as the "reference" of a sense.

[17]Having made the distinction, crucial to Frege's account, between the psychological process of thinking and its objective content, I will not always be careful to observe it, at least where no there is no danger of confusion. I thus take not only Frege's view, but also views according to which thought contents are mental, to be "thought-driven." I want to emphasize how much all such Cartesian-spirited views have in common, despite differences about the ontological status of the contents.

[18]The seminal work of Strawson should also be mentioned in this connection.

[19]As anything more than a picture which provides direction to our thinking, it is surely inadequate. The sketch it provides, moreover, may well be questioned, even by the anti-Fregeans. Kaplan, in "Demonstratives," and more recently Joseph Almog in "Semantical Anthropology," in P. French, T. Uehling, and H. Wettstein, eds., Midwest Studies in Philosophy, vol. IX (University of Minnesota Press, 1984), pp.479-490, suggest that although historical chains need to be brought into the total picture of our practice with names, the chains are not to be brought into the semantics, per se. That is, contrary to the suggestion of Donnellan's and Kripke's original remarks, the historical chains do not, strictly speaking, determine reference. Kripke himself recently suggested a similar view in conversation.

[20]See note 37 below for a brief discussion of the so-called "ambiguity" of proper names.

[21]'Conceptual' here is not intended to invoke anything like Fregean senses, or Cartesian concepts. What I have in mind, for example, is the fact that I associate being a philosopher with the name 'Bertrand Russell'.

[22]Kaplan has remarked that talk of linguistic meaning, even descriptive meaning, seems more at home when we turn our attention from proper names to, for example, indexicals. Even here, however, talk of "meaning" has probably done more harm than good, again encouraging representationalist tendencies, and leading us away from the proper emphasis on the use of language as a kind of practical mastery. Kaplan's account of indexicals (in "Demonstratives"), ground breaking as it was, had a strong representationalist flavor, a point to which I'll return in the final section below.

[23]See Chapter 2, "Russell and More Frege," of my forthcoming book, Has Semantics Rested Upon A Mistake?, for a more detailed look at Frege's representationalism. Russell's position on this question, as noted and explored there, is complicated.

[24]It is interesting that one who looks for illumination on this apparently fundamental question fails to get much help from, say, Frege.

[25]See Section 71 of the Philosophical Investigations.

[26]Think here about the tendency to see an important task of philosophy as "explicating" sloppy ordinary talk and replacing it with more precise, scientifically acceptable forms of speech.

[27]Perhaps you will think: But how could someone ever learn to apply a general term, if not by somehow picking up, even if not totally consciously, which features count as the, so to speak, essential ones? This question, however, presupposes a "definition-based" picture of concept acquisition, as opposed to what we might call a "paradigm-based" picture. Having been exposed to a certain number of cases, and been perhaps corrected on a number of occasions on the application of the term, one gets the feel for what is to count as a genuine application of the term, somewhat like the way one gets the feel for how to serve in tennis. The topic of definition-based, as opposed to paradigm-based, pictures of concept acquisition deserves more attention than it has received in the philosophic literature. For an interesting discussion see Chapter 5 of Stephen Stich's From Folk Psychology to Cognitive Science (MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1983).

[28]I am merely scratching the surface here. As Stephen Stich points out, there may be various kinds of cases in which the traditional picture of predicates-and-properties fails, and there may be very different reasons why it fails, not all having to do with family resemblances. See his paper, "Are Belief Predicates Systematically Ambiguous?," in Belief, ed. R. J. Bogdan (Clarendon Press, 1986). Nor is this notion of family resemblance sufficiently clear. For example, is Wittgenstein advancing what has come to be known as a "cluster theory," or is his point about family resemblance terms, as I suspect, a more radical one?

[29]He might, for example, modify his picture of concepts so that the concepts themselves--or the properties--can somehow be vague. Alternatively, he might attribute vagueness only to language and not to concepts, and go on to lament the great gap between the two. Finally, he might understand the "master's" inability to decide borderline cases as a lack of total, theoretical mastery of the relevant non-vague expression.

[30]This last word seems just right, not only because it avoids the masculine form, but because it applies to such unlikely things as angels (if there are any). Fregean thoughts are the common treasure of all rational beings. Again, the real action, as noted above, takes place at a great remove from social practice.

[31]These Wittgensteinian reflections suggest a more fundamental criticism of Fregeanism than that typically urged by the anti-Fregeans, that there can be no Fregean sense of terms like 'game'. The sense of this term, for one thing, was supposed to consist in a specification of those features, common to all games, that are necessary and sufficient for the application of the term. Wittgenstein's point, though, is that there are no such common features. Games, moreover--and this emphasizes from another side why there cannot be a

sense that has the class of games as its extension--do not constitute a determinate kind, the sort of thing that might be determined by a Fregean sense. Games rather constitute loose, open-ended assortment.

[32]Another Wittgensteinian theme to be pursued elsewhere: It has been often assumed that there is a single notion, "reference," that provides the master key to the connection between words and things. But it seems far from obvious that the semantics of predicates is best understood in terms of the notion of reference. That is, it isn't obvious--perhaps especially in light of the Wittgensteinian discussion of "is a game"--that the final semantical word on predicates is that they refer to properties. Nor is it even obvious that indexicals like 'now' refer to times. (What are times?) The core of Kaplan's idea about 'now' was that the truth-values of utterances that contain 'now' depend not upon anything like a Fregean sense that has a time as reference, but simply upon a feature of the context of utterance, namely, when the sentence was uttered. This need not incline us to say that 'now' refers to the time of utterance.

[33]Kaplan's positive suggestion is to link them in terms of the Donnellan-Kripke chains of communication.

[34]In "Bringing Belief Down to Earth," a chapter in my forthcoming book, Has Semantics Rested On A Mistake?, based on talks given at a number of institutions, I attempt to develop an account of belief that is sensitive to the points made here.

[35]Here, as elsewhere throughout this paper, it is "semantic reference," the conventional reference of the name, as opposed to the "speaker's reference," roughly the individual that the speaker has in mind, that is under discussion, unless otherwise indicated. For the distinction between semantic reference and speaker's reference see Kripke's paper, "Speaker's Reference and Semantic Reference," in Contemporary Perspectives in the Philosophy of Language, pp.6-27.

[36]Fregeans sometimes appeal to the fact that we also know that he was called "Cicero." I find this difficult to get a grip on--and this meta-linguistic move has, for me at least, the flavor of an ad hoc response to save the theory--but it is far from clear, in any case, that this sort of move will provide much help for the Fregean. For one thing, there may have been other Roman orators with the same name, so that even if we grant this additional knowledge to the competent speaker, this will not, in some cases at least, provide an individuating description. The meta-linguistic move, moreover, would need careful elaboration. Cicero, after all, wasn't called "Cicero" by his fellows. That's our name for him. Is the idea then that he is called "Cicero" by people in our community? And if each of us means by 'Cicero', "the one called 'Cicero' by us," do we run afoul of the sort of circularity that Kripke mentions? See Naming and Necessity, esp. pp. 68-73.

[37]More accurately, proper names, as used on particular occasions, have conventional referents. The name 'Aristotle' can be used to refer to any one of the people so-called. On particular occasions of use, however, only one of these will be the conventional referent. This fact about our practices will make life difficult for the anthropological semanticist. He will want to inquire as to what subtle factors determine which individual called "Aristotle" is in question on particular occasions. It is sometimes suggested that this so-called "ambiguity" of names is evidence for the Fregean picture. It is far from obvious, however, that the answer to the semantical anthropologist's question will pertain to the beliefs of the speaker. It is very far from obvious that such considerations should convince us that speakers need to have individuating conceptions of their referents. Perhaps their beliefs can be far off the mark, but something very different makes it the case that it is this Aristotle that is in question, perhaps some features of the context, or perhaps something about the historical chain of communication. Or perhaps, to allude to the more radical Wittgensteinian tack suggested at the end of Section 3 above, there is no one simple formula, a theory that will neatly apply to every case.

[38]Taking seriously that proper names are elements of the public language does not, on the other hand, entail that the references of names does not depend upon the properties that individual speaker's associate with the name. Nor does the public-language picture entail that reference surely doesn't require a cognitive fix. Perhaps a practice might evolve in which the references of certain sorts of linguistic expressions were dependent solely upon the properties that the speaker associates with the expression. I think that although we cannot rule out this possibility a priori, it is not at all surprising, given the public-language picture, that names do not function in this way.

[39]The general approach discussed in this paragraph, although not all of the details, was endorsed by John McDowell (in conversation) and by Gareth Evans in The Varieties of Reference.
Evans writes,

> The abandonment of the principle of identification [the "cognitive fix" requirement] at the level of saying is a trivial consequence of the distinction between what one says and what thought one intends to express. Its abandonment at the level of belief or thought would be an extremely significant move. What has happened is that the former has been mistaken for the latter. (P. 76, ftn. 18)

[40]Another Fregean variation involves insisting that reference does require individuating knowledge, but not on the part of the individual speaker or thinker. Kripke, in Naming and Necessity, discusses a

socialized description theory of names, an attempt to defeat anti-Fregean criticisms by socializing Frege's approach. One might, in this spirit, try to retrieve the sense of a name not from the individual speaker, but somehow from the linguistic community. Such an approach would be more socially sensitive than Frege's, but it would still over-intellectualize language and thought, at least from the point of view taken here. The distinction that needs emphasis is that between an approach that makes reference depend upon the beliefs of the community, and one that makes it depend only upon the community's practice. Couldn't it be, for example, that our current beliefs about a historical individual have become all fouled up, but that the continuity of usage secures reference nevertheless? Our beliefs about him are, in such a case, mistaken, but there remains an individual about whom we are talking, and about whom we are mistaken.

[41]One might, of course, insist that it can't be that speakers are so cognitively impoverished, that contrary to what the Kripke-Putnam examples suggest, we somehow must have available some individuating description. If the Fregean can make good on such an insistence, and do so in a natural way--a tall order--then these counterexamples lose their force. Evans and McDowell, impressed by the Cartesian intuition, but also by the social character of language and by the anti-Fregean counterexamples, grant that we often don't have such information when we use, for example, historical names. They thus insist that in such cases, speakers, although their words refer, and their sentences have truth values, fail to express thought.

[42]Again, the Fregean can insist that if the speaker really has a mistaken belief that is about Aristotle, then the descriptions must fit the latter. One way to make this work would be to come up with descriptions other than the obvious ones, and argue that these are really available to the speaker. I am again skeptical about the prospects for a natural-seeming answer along these lines, but I do not here explore the matter further.

[43]Indeed, it may be that in many cases, there is no one thing thought about. Even some of the cases briefly described in the last paragraph may be more appropriately described as cases in which the agent is thinking to some extent of one person, and to some extent of another. I discuss this question in more detail in "How to Bridge the Gap Between Meaning and Reference." Cf. Kripke, "Speaker Reference and Semantic Reference."

[44]My own view, elaborated in "Bringing Belief Down to Earth," is that ascription of reference in thought, like ascription of belief, depends upon subtleties involving not only the situation of the thinker, but also the situation of the reporter, the one who is ascribing the reference-in-thought or the belief. In other words,

"about whom he was thinking" depends not only upon considerations having to do with the thinker, but also upon what is relevant or important to the discussion in which the reporter is engaged. Quine, in Word and Object, emphasized this sort of context-sensitivity of "attitude reports," and I discuss this in "Bringing Belief Down to Earth." My view is thus doubly anti-Cartesian. First, I certainly don't think that the question of reference in thought is to be resolved by looking to the speaker's concepts. Second, and more radically, I think that there are factors that, on the more traditional picture, ought to have nothing to do with the question of reference in thought, that are really extremely germane, the "pragmatic" factors mentioned above.

[45]Focusing the discussion on the identity case may well induce a solution that fails to apply to the general case. Frege's meta-linguistic Begriffsschrift account is a case in point.

[46]John Perry, especially in "Frege on Demonstratives," Philosophical Review 83 (1974): 3-32, embraced a similar view. The Kaplan-Perry idea was to retrieve modes of presentation from the "characters" of the indexicals, that is, from the rules that determine their references. 'I' and 'he' have very different characters, and this is so even when the expressions are used to refer to the same thing (and thus induce the same propositional constituent on the Kaplan singular propositions picture). This difference in character means, according to Perry and Kaplan, that 'I' and 'he' take us to their single referent (in the case we are imagining) in different ways, by means of different cognitive perspectives. 'I' presents me as (roughly) "the speaker," and this "mode of presentation" is, of course, very different than that associated with 'he'. The two sentences, 'I am about to be attacked' and 'He is about to be attacked' thus differ in cognitive significance. They can express the same proposition, but, even when they do so, each presents that proposition in a distinctive way, by means of a distinctive cognitive perspective. Notice that the Kaplan-Perry modes of presentation, unlike Fregean senses,

a) determine a reference only relative to a context of utterance,

and

b) do not enter into the propositions expressed.

[47]See "Has Semantics Rested On A Mistake?"

[48]Kaplan, following Frege, wanted his semantical apparatus to yield an explanation of the cognitive significance phenomena. Kaplan's "characters," like Fregean senses, 1) are in the head, 2) determine reference (although only relative to a context), and 3) explain cognitive significance.

[49]Note, in this connection, that Kaplan's approach to indexicals, while it rejects Frege's version of the cognitive fix requirement, does not reject the requirement. What is needed, according to Kaplan, is a context-relative sort of fix. Relative to a context in which I am speaking, the Kaplanian character of 'I' provides an individuating concept of me.

[50]See page 19 above for a brief discussion of these examples.

[51]My point here is that a mode-of-presentation type account of the cognitive dimension is very strongly out of step with the anti-Fregean approach. This doesn't mean, of course, that one couldn't try to make the mode-of-presentation type analysis work. Indeed, given the dominant sense that there can be no other way to explain cognitive differences between expressions, it is not surprising that one sees anti-Fregeans searching for some way, compatible with the anti-Fregean approach to semantics, to make it work. One hears in discussion, for example, the idea that the conceptual files in the Cicero-Tully case are distinct, for the speaker associates "being called 'Cicero'" with the name 'Cicero', and "being called 'Tully'" with 'Tully'. Note first that this is just the sort of move that anti-Fregeans fight vigorously when it is used in defense of a Fregean approach to semantics. Note second, however, that it seems plausible to suppose that there might be examples in which the same name is in question. One might pick up the name "Paderewski" in two different contexts with the same associated information, e.g. " a famous Polish musician." The speaker may have forgotten where he picked up the names, but he may well remember that there were two such occasions and that he assumed that two different people were in question, and he may begin to wonder whether there are indeed two different people, or whether Paderewski is none other than Paderewski.

There are many other ways to try to work out such a Frege-inspired approach to cognitive significance. My point here is that the spirit of the anti-Fregean outlook should strongly discourage the very attempt. Cf. Kaplan's remarks in "Dthat," in Contemporary Perspectives in the Philosophy of Language, on the attempt to find a way to make Fregean semantics work:

> I don't deny that on a phenomenon by phenomenon basis we can (in some sense) keep stretching Frege's brilliant insights to cover. With a little ingenuity we can do that. But we shouldn't.

[52]Russell required, in effect, that the name user have the referent smack up against his mind. He concluded that co-referring names, used concurrently, could not differ cognitively--if they were really names, that is. If two expressions look like names, but clearly differ cognitively, 'Cicero' and 'Tully' for example, this shows,

concluded Russell, that they were not really functioning as names, but were definite descriptions disguised.

[53]The form of explanation I am employing applies to cases that involve indexicals as well. The approach favored by Kaplan and Perry individuated cognitive perspectives by linguistic meanings. A problem for that approach, fatal I have argued, is presented by cases in which the same indexical, with the same linguistic meaning, plays different cognitive roles. How, for example, can we explain the fact that one might react very differently to two utterances of 'That is the battleship Enterprise'? One might, I suppose, look to the visual perspectives--in the case of perceptual demonstratives, for a way of discriminating the cognitive perspectives. Such a speaker may, however, be faced with qualitatively identical scenes, and may still wonder whether the same ship is in question. We could, at this point, try stretching a bit further to recover a difference in cognitive perspective. The natural explanation, I submit, bypasses the need for such stretching. The speaker's knowledge, or beliefs, about the relevant referents is incomplete enough so that he cannot decide the question of whether there is one thing in question or two. The properties he takes the referent of 'that' to possess in the first context, and those he takes the referent of 'that' to possess in the second, neither conclusively indicate that a single thing is in question, nor that two are. The relevant properties can be different (for example, if the scenes look very different) as they will be in many cases, or they can be the same.

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