

ABSTRACT

The Nature of Commonsense Psychological Explanation

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This thesis is concerned with two kinds of ‘singular’ psychological phenomena. The first is the commonsense psychological explanation of action directed upon particular things and stuffs. The second is the nature of (visual) perceptual demonstrative thought. The two topics are brought together in an account of psychological explanation I call ‘*de re* psychological explanation’. The primary aim of the thesis is to articulate and defend this account. The main thesis I seek to establish is that an adequate psychological explanation of an agent’s action upon an object requires a relational or *de re* ascription of thought that (1) relates the agent to the object and (2) makes reference to a perceptual demonstrative mode of presentation of the object. This thesis is defended in two stages. In the first chapter I argue for the first half of the thesis, that relational ascriptions are necessary in any explanation of an action involving an object. In the fourth chapter I argue for the second half, that it is necessary that these relational ascriptions make reference to a perceptual demonstrative mode of presentation of the object acted on. The second half of the thesis involves the notion of a perceptual demonstrative mode of presentation. This necessitates an account of the nature of perceptual demonstrative thoughts, which is undertaken in chapters two and three. In the second chapter I explore two prominent theories of perceptual demonstrative thought. In the third chapter I sketch a new account—‘property-dependent externalism’—and argue that it is more adequate than the others. In chapter four, I return to *de re* explanation and develop it further into a covering-law account of psychological explanation. The rest of the thesis is given over to defending the elaborated covering-law account against two objections. I draw the claws of the first objection in the second half of the fourth chapter and answer the second objection in the final chapter.



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INTRODUCTION

As philosophers know all too well, many things that appear unproblematic from the perspective of common sense are often philosophically perplexing. One place where this truism is evident is in the attempt to arrive at a philosophical understanding of how we are able in everyday life, by and large, with admirable ease, to explain and predict the actions of our fellow creatures.

Consider, for example, the following situation. Roxanne has in front of her a dish and a basket, which have very similar shapes, and which she believes to be of unequal value. We ask her to guess which one is the more valuable. Since she is allowed both to look at the items and to touch them, but not to do both at the same time, she is blindfolded while examining the items tactually. Although she is able to discriminate the items from each other easily by sight and by touch, when she is blindfolded she comes to mistake the dish for the basket. This is because the painted surface of the basket is a *trompe l'oeil* that produces the illusion of the basket's having a mildly bumpy texture when in fact it is smooth. The dish is actually bumpy but, again owing to a *trompe l'oeil*, looks relatively smooth. After giving the items a thorough visual and tactual examination Roxanne announces 'I think the basket is the more valuable; it both looks and feels to be the more valuable item; the dish is definitely not the more valuable item'. We tell her that we do not want her merely to *say* which item is more valuable but also to choose the item she thinks is the more valuable by picking it up *when she is blindfolded*. Fortunately, she is happy to indulge us.

From the standpoint of common sense, there is nothing particularly puzzling here, as is shown by the fact that we know perfectly well that despite what she *says* Roxanne will pick up the *dish*. The problem arises when we try to apply philosophical theories about thought ascription and psychological explanation to situations such as Roxanne's. Cases

such as Roxanne's appear to belie such philosophical theories. For example, according to a widely accepted philosophical view, we explain and predict what people do on the basis of *notional* ascriptions of thoughts. So, for example, to oversimplify harmlessly, if we know that S intends to ϕ the F, and believes that the F is the G, then we can expect S to ϕ the G. The intention and belief here must be ascribed notionally because predicting and explaining what S is likely to do is a matter of being able to see things from S's point of view and this is what notional ascriptions do. The problem with this is that if S has a mistaken view of things, seeing things from S's point of view will not enable us to explain or predict what S will do. Take Roxanne, for example. Does knowing that she intends to choose the more valuable item and that she believes that the more valuable item is the basket allow us to predict that she will choose the basket? No. For she removes the dish, even though the aforementioned notional ascriptions are true of her while she is doing so. However, even though she actually removed the dish, what she *tried* to do was remove the basket. The notional ascriptions tell us what Roxanne will *try* to do but not necessarily what she *will do*. How is it then that we know what she will do? How, philosophically speaking, do we know she will actually remove the dish?

The answer to this question may seem so obvious to anyone versed in philosophical theories of thought ascription as to cast doubt on the very idea that there is any problem here in the first place. Surely what is needed is simply a *relational* or *de re* ascription that relates Roxanne to the dish, namely, that she believes, *of the dish*, that it is the more valuable. The suggestion is that what enables us to predict that Roxanne will remove the dish is the notional ascription that she intends to remove the more valuable item together with the relational ascription that it is the dish that is believed by her to be the more valuable item. This certainly seems to be a step in right direction. Notice first, however, that we have already moved some distance from the view that commonsense psychological explanation is a matter of describing things from the point of view of the agent whose behaviour we are trying to predict (or explain). For the relational ascription that Roxanne believes, of the

dish, that it is the more valuable, does not report things from her point of view; rather, it reports things from our point of view.

It certainly seems that what is doing the work in our prediction that Roxanne will remove the dish is a piece of information to which we are privy and to which she is not: namely, that, unbeknownst to her, the dish is believed by her to be the more valuable item. But as soon as we dissociate a belief ascription from Roxanne's conception of the world and train it upon our conception of reality, as we do when we make the aforementioned relational ascription, we run up against the fact that Roxanne has inconsistent beliefs. For, from our perspective, she not only believes of the dish that it is the more valuable but, by parity of reasoning, she also believes of the basket that it is the more valuable. If the one relational ascription is true then so is the other. Moreover, as soon as we shift to the relational style of ascription, it appears that we must allow that Roxanne also believes of the dish that it is *not* the more valuable and believes of the basket that it is *not* the more valuable. All these relational ascriptions appear to stand and fall together; if any one is correct, then all are. But this now appears to undermine the suggestion that we are able to predict Roxanne's removal of the dish (when blindfolded) partly on the basis of the relational ascription that she believes of the dish that it is the most valuable. The problem is obvious: since the basket is also believed by her to be the more valuable item, how can her belief, of the dish, that it is the more valuable item, explain her removing the dish rather than the basket? The difficulty here is in fact twofold: for how can Roxanne's belief of the dish, that it is the more valuable item explain her removal of the dish if, given her intention to remove the more valuable item, she also believes of the dish that it is *not* the more valuable item? It appears that neither notional nor relational ascriptions provide the materials for a prediction (and explanation) of Roxanne's behaviour. Yet, as commonsense psychologists, we appear able to predict her behaviour with relative ease.

Of course, we have yet to consider other philosophical theories about explanation and thought ascription. Indeed, restricting ourselves to the aforementioned notional and

relational ascriptions is like tying one hand behind our backs. Surely we need, and are allowed, more resources than these. This is certainly true. Nevertheless, as I shall try to show, it is more difficult than one might initially think to apply these other theories to situations like Roxanne's.

Roxanne's case is, of course, just one among many philosophically puzzling cases. Many of the others have entered the philosophical lore: the Babylonians and Venus, Oedipus and Jocasta, Ralph and Orcutt, to mention just a few. These more familiar cases involve a subject who mistakenly thinks there are two objects he is thinking about, when in fact there is only one, and so ends up attributing *two inconsistent properties* to a *single* object. In Roxanne's case, precisely the opposite is true: unbeknownst to her, she attributes, inconsistently, a *single uniquely instantiated property* to *two* different objects. The problem, which I present in much greater detail in the chapters that follow, is to square our philosophical theory of psychological explanation and thought ascription with the indisputable fact that in all these cases we are able to predict and explain the subjects' behaviour upon the objects in question.

The account of psychological explanation that I develop in this thesis is in part an attempt toward solving this problem. In the first chapter I sketch the beginnings of the theory of psychological explanation that I favour. This theory involves an account of the notorious distinction between notional and relational thought ascriptions, and a distinction between two kinds of psychological explananda: *tryings* and *doings*. Roughly, tryings are *intentional actions* and doings are *actions simpliciter*. I argue that notional ascriptions explain tryings and relational ascriptions explain doings. The literature on psychological explanation has tended to focus almost exclusively on the explanation of tryings, though under the more familiar rubric of *the rationalisation of intentional action*. Though there are unresolved problems surrounding the notion of rationalising intentional actions, this kind of psychological explanation is fairly well understood and does not receive significant attention here. I am primarily interested in how the latter kind of psychological explanation works,

the explanation of doings, which I argue is not a form of rationalisation. The main thesis I seek to establish is that an explanation of a doing involving an object requires a relational ascription of thought in which reference is made to a perceptual demonstrative mode of presentation of the object. This thesis is defended in two stages. In the first chapter I argue for the first half of the thesis, that relational ascriptions are necessary in any explanation of a doing involving an object. In the fourth chapter I argue for the second half, that it is necessary that these relational ascriptions make reference to perceptual demonstrative modes of presentation of the object acted on.

Since the second half of the thesis involves the notion of a perceptual demonstrative mode of presentation this necessitates an account of the nature of perceptual demonstrative thoughts. This is undertaken in chapters two and three. In the second chapter I explore two prominent theories of perceptual demonstrative thought: the ‘object-dependent’ theory championed by Gareth Evans and John McDowell and the ‘predicational’ theory defended by Tyler Burge. In the third chapter I argue that these theories are not entirely satisfactory and I defend a new account of the nature of perceptual demonstrative thought: ‘property-dependent externalism’. This account is based on a naive realist theory of perceptual experience and combines elements from both the object-dependent and predicational views but departs from them in significant ways. Very roughly speaking, according to the object-dependent theory the content of a perceptual demonstrative thought cannot remain constant across possibilities in which different objects are presented to the subject and across possibilities in which no object is presented to the subject. According to the predicational theory, the content of such thoughts can remain constant across both these possibilities. In contrast to both these theories, the property-dependent view considers the difference between the ‘duplicate’ possibility and the ‘empty’ possibility to be extremely important, maintaining that the content of a perceptual demonstrative thought cannot remain constant across the empty situation but can remain constant across the duplicate situation. This theory is then carried into chapter four where the second half of the aforementioned thesis is

argued for and *de re* explanation is further developed into a covering-law account of psychological explanation. The rest the thesis is given over to defending the covering-law account of *de re* psychological explanation developed in chapter four against two *prima facie* powerful objections. The first is the objection that we have already encountered with Roxanne above, namely, that since the relational idiom allows the ascription, to a subject, of inconsistent beliefs about an object, such ascriptions cannot explain the subject's action upon that object. In the latter half of chapter four I try to answer this objection. The second objection is that relational ascriptions ascribe highly relational properties to individuals; since these relational properties cannot affect the causal powers of the individuals that have them, relational ascriptions are unfit to figure in the psychological explanation of an individual's behaviour in so far as psychological explanation is a form of causal explanation. In the final chapter I answer this second objection.

I

FROM QUANTIFYING IN TO *DE RE* EXPLANATION

In this first chapter I sketch the outlines of the account of psychological explanation that I shall bring to bear on the problem of how the psychological explanation of action upon objects works. Since the account pivots on a certain view of thought ascription I begin by explaining that view. This necessitates an investigation of some familiar territory in the philosophy of language and logic, which takes up the first half of the chapter. In second half, I turn directly to the topic of psychological explanation and apply the results of this investigation.

1. The background: Quine on quantifiers and propositional attitudes

1.1 Logic

In his classic 1956 paper ‘Quantifiers and Propositional Attitudes’ (Q&PA), Quine introduced the now familiar distinction between what he at that time called the *relational* sense and the *notional* sense of certain propositional attitude attributions involving such psychological verbs as ‘wishing’, ‘wanting’ and ‘believing’.¹ Quine’s stated concern in the paper is primarily *logical*—not epistemological. As he says at the end of section three, ‘my concern is, of course, with a special technical aspect of the propositional attitudes: the problem of quantifying in’ (p. 191). The overall theme of Q&PA is how to symbolise two readings of ambiguous natural language sentences containing psychological verbs—such as

¹ See also chapters four and five of *Word and Object* (Quine, 1960) and Quine 1979.

‘I want a sloop’ and ‘Ralph believes that someone is a spy’—using an extensional and first-order logic in which the quantifiers receive their standard objectual interpretation. The latter sentence, for example, could mean either ‘Ralph believes there are spies’ or ‘There is someone whom Ralph believes to be a spy’.² Underlying these two readings—the notional and the relational, respectively—there is supposed to be a clear and sensible epistemological distinction between merely believing in spies and having an actual suspect in mind. We shall soon see that this way of viewing the ambiguity is not in fact obligatory; for while there is certainly a scope distinction here it is not necessarily indicative of an epistemological distinction. Postponing this thought for the moment, however, and continuing along these lines, we are prompted to wonder: Does elementary logic contain the resources for representing these two readings?

Prima facie, it seems as if the matter can be resolved *à la* Russell simply by attending to the scope of quantifiers. Thus, the vernacular ambiguity of ‘Ralph believes that someone is a spy’ is treated as a *syntactical* ambiguity between readings that differ in the permutations of their quantifiers and psychological verbs:

(1) Ralph believes that $(\exists x)(x \text{ is a spy})$

(2) $(\exists x)(\text{Ralph believes that } x \text{ is a spy})$.

Quine notes that the formalization of the relational sense (2) involves ‘quantifying into a propositional attitude idiom from outside’ and this, alas, he claims, ‘is a dubious business, as may be seen from the following example’ (p.185). The example is, of course, the famous story of Ralph who has seen a suspicious character in a brown hat whom he thinks is a spy. Ralph has also seen a grey haired man at the beach whom he thinks is a pillar of the community and who is known to him as Bernard J. Ortcutt. Unbeknownst to Ralph,

² I must say that the first reading of the sentence does not come naturally and so the ambiguity charge is rather strained here. There are clearer cases. I will, however, continue to use the example because it is so

Ortcutt is both pillar and spy. Given this identity, Quine then asks whether we can say of this *man*, Bernard J. Orcutt, that Ralph believes him to be a spy. If we answer affirmatively then we must accept conjunctions of the following type:

(LTD) *w* sincerely denies ‘...’ and believes that ...

in which the blanks are filled by the same sentence. This is because Ralph sincerely and understandingly denies that the sentence ‘Ortcutt is a spy’ is true yet at the same time believes Orcutt, under the guise of the guy in the brown hat, to be a spy. Now, the language-thought disparity (LTD) conjunctive schema raises deep questions about the relation between language and thought. For example: Are LTD conjunctions objectionable? If so, in what sense? Are the situations that LTD conjunctions describe impossible? If so, what is the modal status of their impossibility? If we accept, with Quine, a ban on LTD conjunctions, is this because of what we *mean* by ‘belief’, ‘assent’, and ‘sincere denial’? Or is it rather that such a ban describes a *contingent* feature of human psychology, in the sense that there could be other minds for which a ban on LTD conjunctions did not apply? We must leave these questions moot and simply note the essential, yet rarely noticed, role that disallowing LTD conjunctions plays in Quine’s argument. Following this line of thought—that LTD conjunctions are to be barred—we end up countenancing the truth of the following:

(3) Ralph believes that the man in the brown hat is a spy

(4) Ralph does not believe that the man seen at the beach is a spy

and thus acquiescing in the *referential opacity* of the context ‘believes that ...’. To say that ‘believes that’ creates a referentially opaque context is to say that substitution of

well-known and conveniently gives rise to issues that will concern us.

coreferential singular terms into it is not a valid transformation. A *referentially transparent* context is one in which the substitution of coreferential singular terms is a valid transformation. Since, for present purposes, nothing turns on the distinction between names and definite descriptions, I shall ignore the difference between what Geach calls Shakespearean contexts, in which proper names are interchangeable *salva veritate*, and contexts in which a wider interchangeability (*salva veritate*) of singular terms obtains.³ Quine takes substitution of coreferential singular terms *salva veritate* as the test for whether a singular-term-taking position is purely referential, that is, that an occurrence of a singular term in it functions simply to introduce an object for predication. Moreover, he assumes that (3) and (4) describe a relation between Ralph and Orcutt only if the singular-term taking positions in the complement clauses ('the man in the brown hat' and 'the man seen at the beach') are purely referential. Since they are not purely referential, because substitution *salva veritate* fails, he concludes that (3) and (4) 'cease to affirm any relationship between Ralph and any man at all' (p. 185). It follows from this that 'It then becomes improper to quantify as in [(2)]' (pp. 185-6). Since substitution and quantification go hand-in-hand, 'Yet we are scarcely prepared to sacrifice the relational constructions' (p. 186), due to the perfectly sensible epistemological phenomenon underlying them, we are stuck with the problem of how to render formally the epistemologically indispensable relational readings.⁴

Describing things a little more formally, what Quine may have in mind in asking, of the man B.J. Orcutt, whether Ralph believes that he is a spy, is whether the following is true:

³ Geach 1972, p. 140. The contexts are labelled Shakespearean after Shakespeare's 'a rose by any other name would smell as sweet'.

⁴ I should add that Quine's criterion for referential opacity shifts between failure of referential transparency and the illegitimacy of quantifying in. See Kaplan 1986 and Quine 1986a for discussion of the matter. I follow Forbes (1996) and take Quine as arguing from the failure of substitutivity in attitude ascriptions to the illegitimacy of quantifying into them.

(5) $(\lambda x)(\text{Ralph believes that } x \text{ is a spy})\text{Ortcutt}$.

(5) says that Ortcutt has the property of being such that Ralph believes that he is a spy (more on the lambda notation below). Presumably, from Quine's point of view, (5) is true if and only if the open sentence

(OSa) Ralph believe that x is a spy

is true under the assignment of Ortcutt as value for the variable ' x '; in other words, (5) is true if and only if Ortcutt satisfies (OSa).⁵ The problem, as Quine sees it, is that there is no satisfactory answer to the question whether Ortcutt satisfies (OSa). For, when the variable is replaced by 'the man in the brown hat', the resulting closed sentence is true; but when the variable is replaced by 'the man at the beach' or by 'Ortcutt' the resulting sentence is false (given the ban on LTD conjunctions, of course). Whether or not Ortcutt has the property of being such that Ralph believes that he is a spy seems to depend on how Ralph conceives of Ortcutt. So, it seems impossible to evaluate (OSa) under the assignment of *Ortcutt himself* to the variable. Objectual quantification into the referentially opaque context 'Ralph believes that ...' thus appears incoherent. How, then, are we to express the fact that Ralph believes someone is a spy construed relationally?

Some comments on this argument are in order. The move from the failure of substitution to the non-affirmation of any relationship between Ralph and any man appears to be a *non sequitur*. Failure of substitution into a subsentential position does not necessarily indicate that the containing sentence ceases to affirm *any* relationship *at all* between person (e.g., Ralph) and object (e.g., Ortcutt). That occurrences of singular terms within psychological contexts can serve both to relate the thinker to an object and characterise how he thinks of that object has been pointed out by a number of philosophers.

⁶ So Quine's well-known thesis that 'a position that resists substitutivity of identity cannot meaningfully be quantified' (1986a, p. 291), as applied to attitude ascriptions, cannot be defended on the grounds that the substitution-resistant position within a sentence indicates that that sentence does not affirm a relationship between a person and an object. However, there are other good reasons for thinking that there is a tension in the case of attitude ascription between failure of substitution and quantifying in, even if one rejects the view that only 'purely referential' singular term-taking positions indicate a genuine relation between the referent of the singular term in question and the subject of the attitude ascription. As Graeme Forbes (1996) has recently argued, 'the cautious version of [Quine's thesis] claims only that there is a certain range of cases of substitution failure that involve a mechanism incompatible with quantifying in' and that 'The puzzle is that although attitude ascriptions seem on general grounds to belong to this range ... we have the particular example of [(2)] to indicate otherwise' (p. 338).⁷

Forbes's idea is that the explanation of why substitution fails in attitude ascriptions involves a mechanism that prevents the substitution-resistant position from being occupied by an expression functioning as a bound variable because an expression in that position must perform another incompatible function. He argues that pure quotation and what he calls 'logophor' clearly support the cautious version of Quine's thesis and that something similar is true of propositional attitude ascriptions. He goes on to argue persuasively that an expression occupying the subject position in the proposition that is the complement clause of an attitude ascription ('Ralph believes ... is a spy') cannot function as a bound variable because that function conflicts with the other function that an expression in that position has that explains substitution failure. The argument begins by assuming that, on the face of

⁵ Salmon 1995.

⁶ Discussion of and references to this 'double duty' view of singular terms can be found in Burge 1977.

⁷ Quine's argument for the thesis has been criticised by Kaplan (1986) and Neale (1990) as invalid. The alleged fallacy, the details of which we need not go into here, is apparently induced by Quine's subtle shift from speaking of *occurrences* of singular terms to speaking of singular-term *positions* or *contexts*. However, it seems to me that Salmon (1995) and Forbes (1996) are right in thinking that Quine's (1986a)

it, propositional attitude verbs stand for a two-place relation between a thinker and a proposition. According to Forbes, the ascription

(F) Ralph believes Ortcutt is a spy

describes a state of affairs whose constituents are Ralph, the binary relation of believing, and the proposition that Ortcutt is a spy. It is plausible to suppose further that it is part of the semantics of (F) that each semantic primitive in its complement clause contributes a propositional constituent to the proposition figuring in the state of affairs described by (F). The important further assumption is that what explains substitution failure in the likes of (F) is that coreferential singular terms can make different contributions to the proposition, so that the contributions are not simply the ordinary referents of the singular terms—but the singular terms still refer to their referents as they ordinarily do.⁸ Now, turning back to the problem of quantifying in, we note that the quantifier in

(2) $(\exists x)(\text{Ralph believes that } x \text{ is a spy})$

is a standard one binding a variable in the position of ‘Ortcutt’ in (F) only if, when an assignment to the variable ‘x’ in (2) is made, the open sentence

(OSb) Ralph believes x is a spy

describes a state of affairs with the same structure as (F), that is, one involving Ralph, the believing relation, and a proposition. The problem, according to Forbes, is with the third

reply to this charge of Kaplan’s, in which he claims the argument is valid when formulated in terms of positions throughout, is correct.

item of the state of affairs described by (F): the proposition. For there does not seem to be anything for the variable 'x' in

(OSc) x is a spy

to contribute to the complete proposition determined by (OSc), relative to the assignment in question, that is consistent with the proposed explanation for substitution failure, which requires constituents in the subject position of (OSc) to be, as Forbes puts it, 'many-one related to the thing the proposition is about' (p. 345). For example, the most obvious candidate for the contribution made by the variable 'x' to the complete proposition determined by (OSc), and that is a constituent of the state of affairs described by (F), is the variable's assignment itself. Since the object assigned to the variable cannot be many-one related to itself, this is not a possible option. Forbes canvases various other candidates and finds them all wanting. The conclusion is that it is very plausible that even if we reject Quine's view that (F) describes a relation between Ralph and Ortcutt only if the singular-term taking position in the complement clause ('Ortcutt') is purely referential, quantifying into a substitution-resistant position is still highly problematic.

I am in agreement with Forbes (and Quine) that the problem of quantifying in cannot be dissolved by reinterpreting the quantifier in a nonstandard way, such as substitutionally, for the quantifier in (2) and its kin are to all appearances perfectly standard and on all fours with the quantifier in 'Something is in the cellar'. The problem, then, is to explain how the quantifier in the likes of (2) can be standard consistent with the explanation of substitution failure. Forbes's solution differs from Quine's fairly substantially in its details, since he is working with a broadly Frege-style theory of propositions. However, the central core of their solutions, which I accept, is the same: both essentially involve providing

⁸ Thus abandoning Frege's (1892) 'reference-shift hypothesis' for explaining substitution failure and thereby recovering 'pre-Fregean semantic innocence' (Davidson, 1984, p. 108) according to which words in attitude contexts refer to the same things they do outside such contexts.

logical forms for attitude ascriptions in which the singular term in the subject position of the complement clause is moved outside the substitution-resistant position and into a purely referential position where it is open to both substitution and quantification. Since it is only this general style of proposal that is relevant to our purposes I shall focus on Quine's much simpler account.

Kaplan describes Quine's resolution of the puzzle as rejecting Russell's analysis in terms of syntactical ambiguity and concluding that there is a *lexical* ambiguity in the propositional verbs themselves (1986, p. 132). Quine's proposal is regularly described as one that posits a semantical ambiguity where Russell proposed a syntactical one.⁹ According to this interpretation, there is a relational *sense* of 'wishing that' and 'believing that' that permits both substitution and quantification and a notional *sense* that permits neither and 'The two senses differ in logical syntax and cannot be transformed into one another by moving quantifiers around' (Kaplan, loc. cit.). This is the standard interpretation of Quine's distinction and though there is some truth in it, describing Quine's treatment of the distinction in this way is misleading. Quine does not view 'believes' as lexically ambiguous in the same way that 'mold' or 'habit' are; there is more uniformity in his treatment than that. For no sooner has he suggested that we resolve the problem of quantifying in by positing two different senses of belief than he rejects the idea, offering instead a 'more suggestive treatment' (Q&PA, p. 186) that operates with a *single* sense of belief that is defined by the rejection of LTD conjunctions. Rather than lexically ambiguous, Quine treats the psychological verbs as *multigrade* predicates, not only capable of taking a variable number of arguments—like '... are parallel' or '... are colleagues'—but also capable of taking arguments of different kinds, namely, people, objects, and 'intensions' (i.e., properties, relations, and propositions). 'Believes', then, always takes a subject and an intension as arguments and it is the intensions only that are always referentially opaque, that is, that admit neither substitution nor quantification. The notional

⁹ E.g., Richard 1990, p. 129 and Stich 1983, p. 112.

sense of ‘believing’, then, is treated as a dyadic predicate relating the believer and a proposition—for example, ‘Ralph believes that Ortcutt is a spy’ (which, given the story, is false). The relational sense is treated as a triadic, tetradic, or higher degree predicate relating a believer to a property or relation and an object, where the singular term referring to the object is in referential position and so open to substitution and quantification. So, for example, we have ‘Ortcutt is believed by Ralph to be a spy’, or slightly more formally:

(6) Believes(Ralph, $\lambda y(y \text{ is a spy})$, Ortcutt)

in which ‘ $\lambda y(y \text{ is a spy})$ ’ is the notation of intensional abstraction. The lambda sign together with the initial variable outside the parentheses is a variable-binding operator that attaches to an open sentence binding the free variable inside. Whereas quantifiers attach to open sentences to form sentences, intensional abstraction operators attach to open sentences to form singular terms that name intensions, that is, that name properties and relations. Just as propositions are the abstract objects that are the meanings of closed sentences, so properties and relations are the abstract objects that are the meanings of open sentences. It is toward such abstract objects that, along with particular spatio-temporal objects, thinkers can bear relations. The notation of intensional abstraction is a way of referring to such abstract objects. So, the lambda-term ‘ $\lambda y(y \text{ is a spy})$ ’ names the property, or as Quine would say, the ‘attribute’ of spyhood to which, along with Ortcutt, Ralph is related. (2), then, comes out as:

(7) $(\exists x)[\text{Believes}(\text{Ralph}, \lambda y(y \text{ is a spy}), x)]$.

The notional sense of ‘believing’, then, is treated as the limiting case of the relational sense, that is, as a dyadic predicate relating the believer and a proposition. So ‘Ralph believes that Ortcutt is a spy’ comes out as:

(8) Believes (Ralph, that Orcutt is a spy),

which, given the story, is false; and (2) comes out as:

(9) Believes (Ralph, that $(\exists x)[x \text{ is a spy}]$) (true).

Quine sums up his technical solution to the problem of providing ‘for those indispensable relational statements of belief’ (p. 189), given the referential opacity of belief contexts, thus: ‘the notation of intensions, of degree one and higher, is in effect a device for inking a boundary between referential and non-referential occurrences of terms’ (ibid.). As we shall see, it is this idea of a ‘boundary’, rather than that of an epistemological phenomenon, that is the key to things.

Since (6) has the form $Rt_1t_2t_3$ in which each t_i is substitutable and quantifiable it is easy to see that (7) can be inferred from (6). Strictly speaking, however, Quine’s proposal does not quite work as can be seen more readily from another example he uses:

(10) $(\exists x)[x \text{ is a lion} \ \& \ \text{Strives (Ernest, } \lambda z(\text{Ernest finds } z), x)]$

which, with some serious Quinean paraphrasing, is the logical form of the relational reading of ‘Ernest is hunting lions’. For familiar reasons (10) will not do as a rendering of Ernest’s activities as a sportsman in Africa (Perry, 1993). The problem is that Ernest may not know that his name is ‘Ernest’ or indeed anything at all about himself captureable uniquely in descriptive terms (he may have amnesia). So t_2 is not really substitutable because $\lambda z(\text{Ernest finds } z)$ denotes the same attribute as $\lambda z(x \text{ finds } z)$ for all $x=\text{Ernest}$. What we need quite generally, then, in the second argument place of the relation is not a singular term for an intension but one for a way of thinking of an intension, in the case of (10), Ernest’s way

of thinking of the intension $\lambda z(\text{Ernest finds } z)$. This in turn requires that we have a way of representing a perspectival first-person ‘ego concept’ telling us that Ernest is thinking about himself *as himself*, as ‘I’. So, for example, a first shot at taking this into account might be:

$$(10^*) (\exists x)[x \text{ is a lion} \ \& \ \text{Strives}(\text{Ernest}, \lambda z(\text{he}^* \text{ finds } z), x)]$$

where ‘he*’ is a Castañeda-style ‘quasi-indicator’ representing the way Ralph thinks of himself and ‘ $\lambda z(\text{he}^* \text{ finds } z)$ ’ becomes a term for Ernest’s overall way of thinking of the intension in question. We can read (10*) as saying something to the effect that some lions are such that Ernest strives that he-himself find them. Nothing that concerns us, however, turns on issues about such ‘*de se* attitudes’ (Lewis, 1979) and ‘essential indexicals’ (Perry, 1993) so I shall leave moot the question of how best to regiment in logical form ways of thinking of intensions. I shall continue to use the style of (10), however, while recognising that what should fill the second argument place is really a term for a way of thinking of an intension. The important point for our purposes is the fact that the singular term designating the object of thought has been moved out of the term for the (way of thinking of the) intension and into a lone position where it is open to both substitution and quantification.

As is well known, Quine, of course, does not rest content with an analysis that appeals to intensions, which he famously views as ‘creatures of darkness’ owing primarily to the obscurity of their individuation. Such entities are to be shunned. So Quine replaces attributes and propositions with predicates and sentences named by quotation marks. So, for example, the notional and relational readings of ‘Ralph believes Ortcutt is a spy’ become:

(N) Ralph believes ‘Ortcutt is a spy’ (false)

(R) Ralph believes ‘is a spy’ of Ortcutt (true)

respectively, in which Ralph is said to have an attitude toward, on the one hand, a sentence and, on the other, a predicate and a person. Referential opacity is then treated as analogous to direct quotation in which substitutivity is seen simply as a confusion of use with mention. That is, we cannot substitute, say, ‘the man at the beach’ for ‘Ortcutt’ in (N) because (N) makes no reference to a *person*, Ortcutt, to whom we might refer with a different singular term. What (N) makes reference to is a *linguistic entity*, namely, the *word* ‘Ortcutt’. Since ‘“the man at the beach”’ refers to the words ‘the man at the beach’ and not to the word ‘Ortcutt’ it is obviously not intersubstitutable with ‘“Ortcutt”’, which refers to the word ‘Ortcutt’ (and not to the man Ortcutt). The same goes for the occurrence of ‘“spy”’ in (R): it refers, not to the property of spyhood, but to the word ‘spy’. Substitutivity within quotation is a failure to recognise that quotation marks refer to or name the words that they enclose and not the objects that the enclosed words refer to. Referential opacity is thus explained away along quotational lines. The quotational mass is then resolved into what Quine calls ‘spelling’: a Tarskian structural description of the sentence or predicate to which the subject is related consisting of a string of names of each letter joined by the concatenation symbol. I shall not pause to consider the plausibility of all this since it is not directly related to our concerns. Indeed, I think Quine’s sententialist theory of belief is very implausible but I do not have anything new to add to criticisms of it.¹⁰ So in what follows I shall simply stick with the vocabulary of intensions, speaking freely of properties and propositions even when discussing Quine’s views, while noting here that Quine himself officially abjures such notions.

¹⁰ See Salmon 1995.

1.2 Psychology

Shifting now from logical peculiarities to psychological peculiarities, it is clear from what Quine says in Q&PA that the notional sense of belief is intended to correspond to the way that a believer conceives of the object of his belief. We know from Quine's story about Ralph and Ortcutt that although Ortcutt = the man in the brown hat = the man at the beach, Ralph is unaware of this fact so that if queried he would accept the truth of the sentence:

(11) The man in the brown hat is a spy

but deny the truth of:

(12) The man at the beach is a spy

if he understood them. It is Ralph's different attitudes towards these two sentences, together with the ban on LTD conjunctions, that determines the truth of the notional attribution to Ralph of the belief that the man in the brown hat is a spy and the falsity of the notional attribution to him of belief that the man at the beach is a spy. A singular term falling within the scope of 'believes' construed notionally—that is, in Quine's parlance, falling within the boundary marked by the name of the intension—does not merely introduce an object for predication, and so it does not occupy a referential position; rather it has the role of giving the way the believer, or more generally, the 'attitudinist' (as Quine calls him), thinks of the object. The way the attitudinist thinks of the object is determined by which sentences about the object he will accept, deny, and remain agnostic about, in accordance with the ban on LTD situations.¹¹ Since on the relational reading the singular

¹¹ This linguistic criterion of notional belief ascription is present in Q&PA but it is more explicit in *Word and Object*; see especially pp. 145, 148 of Quine 1960.

term referring to Ortcutt falls outside the scope of 'believes', its sole function is to introduce an object for predication and so it does not give the way Ralph thinks of Ortcutt.

On the relational reading, Ralph has, in a sense, inconsistent beliefs, for the following relational ascriptions are true:

(13) Ortcutt is believed by Ralph to be a spy

(14) Ortcutt is believed by Ralph not to be a spy.

(13) and (14) are, as Quine puts it in Q&PA, 'near-contraries'. This is not to charge Ralph with irrationality, however, for given Quine's story about Ralph's cognitive life *vis-à-vis* Ortcutt, his predicament makes perfect epistemological sense and is entirely rational. In light of this we should not look on (13) and (14) as implying:

(15) Ortcutt is believed by Ralph to be a spy and not to be a spy.

For Ralph does not believe Ortcutt, or anyone else for that matter, to have the property of being and not being a spy. Consider now the simultaneous truth of the following notional ascriptions:

(16) Ralph believes that Ortcutt is a spy

(17) Ralph believes that Ortcutt is not a spy.

Whereas (13) and (14) do not imply (15), it is arguable that (16) and (17) do imply, or at least strongly suggest:

(18) Ralph believes that Ortcutt is a spy and is not a spy

The reason why (16) and (17) imply (18) is that it is arguable that quite generally *S*'s believing that *a* is *F* and *S*'s believing that *a* is *G* imply that *S* believes that *a* is *F* and *G*. The reason for this is that it is a necessary condition for the truth of the notional ascriptions: *S* believes that *a* is *F* and *S* believes that *a* is *G* that *S* accept (understandingly) the sentences 'a is F' and 'a is G'. This is enshrined in the ban on LTD conjunctions (which, as we shall see in detail in chapter 2, is equivalent to a Fregean philosophical principle about the connection between thought and language brought to attention most explicitly by Kripke, 1979). Now, if *S* accepts—or is disposed to accept—the sentences 'a is F' and 'a is G' then it is hard to see how *S* could fail to accept—or fail to be disposed to accept—the sentence 'a is F and G', after due consideration of it, so long as *S* understands both occurrences of 'a' as referring to the same thing and is a competent speaker of the language (understands, for example, what 'and' means). Indeed, it is arguable that it is criterial for being a competent speaker of English that one accept 'a is F and G' when one accepts 'a is F' and 'a is G'—at least when one is paying attention and the sentences are not too long and complicated. Of course, it is also criterial for being a competent speaker of English that one not accept sentences that are simple formal contradictions when one understands them to be so. Since, according to the ban on LTD conjunctions, it is necessary for the truth of (18) that Ralph accept the sentence:

(19) Orcutt is a spy and is not a spy

it appears that we must say that Ralph is not a competent speaker of English. It is pretty clear that Ralph cannot be said to understand (19) as we do and accept it; for understanding what (19) says is, at least in part, to realise that it cannot (literally) be true. So it appears that we can have no grounds on which to claim that (18) is true. This fact drives home the point we are converging on: notional ascriptions, unlike relational ascriptions, are subject to the basic principles of logic and rationality. I cannot enunciate exhaustively the principles

jointly constituting the so-called ‘assumption of rationality’ governing the notional ascription of beliefs; the principles are the matter of a great debate that I cannot pause to enter. However, we can, I think, safely assume that the principles include the *basic* logical rules of consistency such as conjunction introduction and elimination, modus ponens, and non-contradiction. There is nothing particularly mysterious about the ‘assumption of rationality’ governing notional ascriptions of belief; for the assumption derives from the fact that speaking logically is part of what it is to speak competently. As Quine says, ‘we learn logic in learning language’ (1986b, p. 100). Since the only notional ascriptions that can be true of an individual are those that correspond to the sentences he accepts *qua* competent speaker of a language, and since being a competent speaker of a language means by and large abiding by the basic rules of logic, the only notional ascriptions that can be true of an individual are those that conform to the basic rules of logic. At least there should be no more mystery here than there is mystery in what is involved in being a competent speaker of a language. Whatever the exact relation between logic and the grammar of natural languages, it cannot be denied that competent speakers of a language for the most part speak logically and it is this fact from which the assumption of rationality governing the notional ascription of beliefs derives.

Notice that the claim that notional ascriptions are governed by principles of rationality does not conflict with the stories about Pierre and Peter told by Kripke (1979). Suppose we accept that Peter (to take the second story) believes that Paderewski had musical talent and believes that Paderewski did not have musical talent. This does not indicate that Peter is irrational in the way that Ralph would be irrational if he believed that Ortcutt is a spy and that Ortcutt is not a spy. Kripke is, of course, at pains to point this out; for heaven forbid a ‘leading philosopher and logician’ (p. 122) should have contradictory beliefs! Peter’s notionally ascribed beliefs about Paderewski are, no less than Ralph’s notionally ascribed beliefs about Ortcutt, governed by principles of rationality. That is, if Peter conscientiously considers the fact that he believes each of the sentences ‘Paderewski

had musical talent' and 'Paderewski did not have musical talent' to be true he should, if we are to credit him with being a competent speaker of English, also believe the sentence 'Paderewski had musical talent and Paderewski did not have musical talent' to be true. For surely any competent speaker of English who accepts $\lceil P \rceil$ and accepts $\lceil Q \rceil$ also accepts $\lceil P \ \& \ Q \rceil$ (so long as he gives the matter adequate consideration). But, of course, Peter accepts the sentence 'Paderewski had musical talent and Paderewski did not have musical talent' because he is equivocating on one of the major terms. Since Peter takes the two occurrences of 'Paderewski' to refer to different men he does not understand the sentence 'Paderewski had musical talent and Paderewski did not have musical talent' to have the logical form $\lceil P \ \& \ \sim P \rceil$. If he did, and he accepted the sentence, then we would conclude that he is an incompetent or deviant speaker of English, for no competent speaker of a language accepts obvious contradictory sentences. Peter understands the sentence to have the logical form $\lceil P \ \& \ Q \rceil$ and that is why he accepts it; there is nothing irrational about that. On one way of continuing Kripke's story, then, we have Peter believing that Paderewski had musical talent and Paderewski did not have musical talent. Again, it is part of Kripke's story that there is nothing irrational about this. After all, Peter does not believe that Paderewski had and did not have musical talent, for he would not accept the obviously contradictory sentence 'Paderewski had and did not have musical talent'. In the case of Ralph and (16) and (17), however, there is no difference between his believing Ortcutt is a spy and Ortcutt is not a spy and his believing Ortcutt is and is not a spy. Kripke's examples of Peter and Pierre are not, then, counter-examples to the claim that notional ascriptions are governed by principles of rationality.

Pulling together the various threads of thought highlighted so vividly by Quine, we can say that relational (or transparent) belief reports are linked with the legitimacy of substitution and quantification.¹² Notional (or opaque) belief reports are linked with the

¹² In *Word and Object* (1960), Quine speaks of transparent and opaque reports and in recent writings (1979, 1992, 1995a, 1995b) of *de re* and *de dicto* reports.

absence of these phenomena: substitution and quantification both fail. On the positive side, notional/opaque attributions of belief relate the believer to a proposition which contains as constituents elements that figure in the psychology of the believer in the sense that such elements are involved in the way that the believer conceives of things. Of utmost importance is the fact that notional belief reports are constrained by principles of rationality while relational belief reports are not. (13) and (14), for example, though they are ‘near-contraries, do not make Ralph out to be irrational in the way that (16) and (17) arguably do. This is because notional ascriptions are, and relational ascriptions are not, linked to what sentences a subject who is a competent speaker of the language in question will accept. Since an attentive and competent speaker of a language cannot, by definition, understand and accept (simple) contradictory sentences, there can be no grounds for claiming that (16) and (17) are true. This is the sense in which notional ascriptions are, and relational are not, swayed to the constraints of reason.

1.3 Interlude: A note on ‘*de re*’ and ‘*de dicto*’

The subsequent development of the philosophical theory of the two styles of propositional attitude attribution has involved a subtle pulling apart and recombining of the elements Quine bound together, a development often motivated by psychological, as opposed to logical or semantical, concerns. This development is bound up with a third pair of terms that are often invoked in the literature on propositional attitude attribution: ‘*de re*’ and ‘*de dicto*’. With the entry—or rather, re-entry—of this pair of medieval terms on the philosophical scene things become extremely complicated and confusing partly due to the fact that some philosophers use this pair of terms interchangeably with Quine’s two pairs while others do not and among those who do not there is still no uniformity of meaning.

(To make matters worse, some authors use the terms ‘oblique’ and ‘non-oblique’ or ‘direct’ and ‘indirect’, stemming from Frege’s terms ‘*gerade*’ and ‘*ungerade*’.) The extreme disarray surrounding ‘*de re*’ and ‘*de dicto*’ has led one recent author to describe the situation as ‘a disgusting mess’ almost prompting him to proclaim a total moratorium on the use of the terms ‘backed by the death penalty’ (Lycan, 1985, p. 161). Mixed up in this confusion over jargon is the substantive philosophical issue of whether there are two different kinds of *thoughts* or simply two different kinds of thought *ascriptions*. As I just mentioned there are those who assimilate the *de re/de dicto* distinction to Quine’s relational/notional distinction. Within this camp there are those who take the distinction to mark different kinds of beliefs¹³ and those who think there is only one kind of belief describable in two different ways.¹⁴ Then there are those who think that the *de re/de dicto* distinction is quite different from Quine’s distinction. And again, within this group of theorists, there are those who think that the distinction marks different kinds of beliefs¹⁵ and those who do not.¹⁶ If the *de re/de dicto* distinction is taken as different from the relational/notional one then questions naturally arise as to what the relation is between the two and especially what are the various possible combinations of the concepts and their philosophical significance.¹⁷

It is impossible to characterise precisely what the distinction between *de re* and *de dicto thought* is in an untendentious way, for any attempt at precision inevitably brings in its wake controversial theoretical positions. As a rough indication of what the difference is supposed to be, we can say that a *de re* thought is a thought that is *strongly* about a particular object in the sense that the object is related to the thinker via some kind of special relation of acquaintance in part determined by the contextual relations that it bears to the

¹³ E.g., Baker 1982.

¹⁴ E.g., Blackburn 1984.

¹⁵ E.g., Burge 1977, Bach 1982, 1987.

¹⁶ E.g., Dennett 1982, Searle 1983, Brandom 1994.

¹⁷ A lucid presentation of one way of looking at the various possible combinations of the distinctions—with the wide scope/narrow scope and referential/attributive distinctions considered as well—can be found in Recanati 1993, chapter 20.

thinker (such as causation in the case of perception, for example). A *de dicto* thought is a thought that may be *weakly* about an object in the sense that the belief is about the object that satisfies the individual concept exercised in the thought by the thinker.¹⁸ *De dicto* beliefs can be ‘weakly’ about objects because all that the objects have to do, as it were, to qualify as being thought about is satisfy the individual concept the thinker is entertaining; such thoughts would have been about different objects if different objects had satisfied the individual concept. *De re* thoughts are often held to be more demanding than *de dicto* thoughts. Some theorists require the thinker to be causally related to the object of his thought if he is to have a *de re* thought about that object; while others require the even stronger epistemic condition that the subject of a *de re* thought be *acquainted* with the object, to use Russell’s (1910-11, 1912) phrase, or *en rapport* with the object, to use Kaplan’s (1968-69) phrase; that is, they require the thinker in some sense to *know who* or *know which object* it is that they have in mind. Then there are those *de re* theorists who hold the thesis that the object of a *de re* thought is *essentially* about its object in the sense that if the object is surreptitiously switched with a phenomenologically indistinguishable one (or if a different but phenomenologically indistinguishable object had been there in the first place) then the subject would be having a different *de re* thought (Evans, 1982; McDowell, 1984, 1986).

So much for a cursory review of the kinds of positions found in the literature. The view I shall adopt, to which I shall turn shortly, is one according to which there are indeed different kinds of thoughts—different states of mind—and these different kinds of thoughts can be reported by relational ascriptions or by notional ascriptions. Since we shall be discussing and quoting from a number of different authors who use their own preferred pair of terms it is simply not possible to stick to using a single pair of terms. So I hereby declare that I shall use the ‘notional’/‘relational’ pair of terms synonymously with the ‘opaque’/‘transparent’ and the ‘*de dicto*’/‘*de re*’ pairs *when applied to thought ascriptions*

¹⁸ The useful terms ‘strong aboutness’ and ‘weak aboutness’ come from Dennett 1982.

in accordance with the Quinean account of their logical form in the following sense: the first term of each pair indicates that the ascription, or component therein, that it modifies contains a position or context that is substitution- and quantification-resistant; the second term of each pair indicates that the ascription, or component therein, contains a position that is open to substitution and quantification. Just which positions these are will be clear from how the ascriptions are phrased. For our purposes, whether the singular term in question is a name or a pronoun or a definite description, and if the latter, whether it is being used referentially or attributively, are of no consequence, whatever independent interest such questions may have. When speaking of those thoughts with strong aboutness, from the trio of pairs I shall use only '*de re*' since this seems to capture best the phenomenon in question. So I shall speak of, for example, relational/*de re*/transparent ascriptions of *de re* beliefs and notional/*de dicto*/opaque ascriptions of *de re* beliefs. Those thoughts that are not *de re* will be described as descriptive or general thoughts or, when discussing Tyler Burge's work in particular (II.3.1), as *de dicto* thoughts. So, for example, I might speak of the *de re* ascription of non-*de re* beliefs, or the relational ascription of general or descriptive beliefs or, again, when discussing Burge's work, of the *de re* ascription of *de dicto* beliefs. Given the bewildering proliferation of jargon in this area, this way of proceeding is simply unavoidable. The context should make clear how the terms are being used. I now return to some unfinished business which cropped up in the earlier discussion of Quine: the relation between the logical and the epistemological issues surrounding notional and relational attributions. This will then take us directly into a preliminary discussion of the relation between attitude ascription and psychological explanation.

2. *Relationality is in the eye of the ascriber*

In this section I will argue that two quite different phenomena have been associated with relational readings of attitude ascriptions and that conflation of them is the source of the alleged epistemological problems surrounding ‘knowing who’ someone is. The remedy is to keep these phenomena separate. It will become evident why what at first may seem like a digression into issues of logic and language is necessary to our ultimate aim of a proper characterisation of the nature of psychological explanation. So bear with me during what may be an all too familiar tour through what some may consider a moribund landscape. Some novelties will emerge at the end of the tour.

2.1 More logic: exportation

Our starting point is an important aspect of the logic of attitude ascriptions that was not mentioned in the earlier discussion of Quine. In Q&PA, Quine conjectured that the so-called ‘exportation’ of singular terms that leads from the ascription of a dyadic relation of belief between a believer and a proposition to a triadic (or higher) relation between a believer, an intension (or way of thinking of an intension), and an object ‘should doubtless be viewed in general as implicative’ (p. 188). That is to say, from:

(8) Believes (Ralph, that Ortcutt is a spy)

we should be able to infer:

(6) Believes (Ralph, $\lambda y(y \text{ is a spy}), \text{Ortcutt})$

in which the singular term 'Ortcutt' is moved into referential position and from which, in turn, we can existentially generalise, arriving at:

$$(7) (\exists x)[\text{Believes}(\text{Ralph}, \lambda y(y \text{ is a spy}), x)].$$

Keeping these logical manoeuvres in mind, recall that Quine's logical distinction between the notional and the relational readings of 'Ralph believes that someone is a spy' was originally supposed to be indicative of the 'vast' distinction between merely believing in spies and 'having a suspect in mind'. Thus the relational sense of Ralph's believing someone to be a spy is described by Quine as imparting 'urgent information', as 'portentous', as Ralph's 'spotting a suspect', whereas Ralph's notional belief that someone is a spy imparts 'information too banal to be worth imparting'.¹⁹ Kaplan (1968-69, p. 378) concurred with this underlying epistemological dichotomy, describing Ralph's relational belief as expressing a fact which would interest the F.B.I.; meaning by this that the F.B.I. would be interested in interviewing Ralph. Kaplan and others, however, soon went on to point out that if the relational sense is seen in this light, and exportation is taken as a valid transformation, we can deduce Ralph's portentous relational belief from a notional belief of his that is quite banal. For in virtue of believing that no two spies are the same height, Ralph surely believes that the shortest spy is a spy. So the following ascription, which I shall render in the vernacular, is true:

(18) Ralph believes the shortest spy is a spy,

which, upon exportation, leads to:

(19) The shortest spy is believed by Ralph to be a spy;

Existentially generalising (19) we arrive at (7), which, of course, is supposed to be read in an epistemologically strong sense in which Ralph has his man. This is objectionable on the grounds that, as Kaplan was to put it in his earlier commentary on Q&PA, ‘we would not expect the interest of [the F.B.I.] to be piqued by Ralph’s conviction that no two spies share a size’ (1968-69, p. 378). Indeed not.

2.2 Eschewing epistemology

In my opinion, the correct response to this problem is to realise that two quite different phenomena are bound up with relational ascriptions.²⁰ On the one hand, there are no restrictions on exportation: the subject of the ascription need not be able to identify in any interesting sense the object of his belief. On this view, relational ascriptions may indeed report thoughts with nothing more than weak aboutness.²¹ On the other hand, relational ascriptions may, as Kaplan (1968-69, 1989b) and Burge (1977a) say they must, report thoughts with strong aboutness, *de re* thoughts, the subject of which can in some sense identify the object of his thought, if only by way of a brief perceptual contact issuing in an utterance of ‘I’m thinking about that thing’. Before giving an account of just what a relational ascription of a non-*de re* thought amounts to, I need to motivate the separation of the phenomena of relational ascription from that of singular thought.

To this end, we take our cue from Wittgenstein: ‘The first step is the one that altogether escapes notice’.²² In our case, the first step is Quine’s strong epistemological reading of the distinction between relational and notional ascriptions, which Kaplan and most of the subsequent literature have followed him in. Quine has another interpretation of

¹⁹ The quotations are from 1960, p. 148; 1979, p. 272; 1992, p. 70.; and 1995a, p. 96.

²⁰ Cf. Chisholm 1981, Devitt 1996.

²¹ Sosa 1970 defends such an account, which Chisholm 1981 has labelled ‘latitudinarianism’.

the distinction, however, which is better because it is clearer, simpler and cuts more cleanly than the epistemological interpretation. Unfortunately, the two interpretations are run together by Quine. Pulling them apart is the solution to the problem and will play an essential role in our investigation into psychological explanation. So let us, patient reader, turn back to Quine's original discussion.

Q&PA opens with consideration of the following:

(20) $(\exists x)(x \text{ is a lion} \ \& \ \text{Ernest is hunting } x)$

(21) $(\exists x)(x \text{ is a sloop} \ \& \ \text{I want } x).$

(20) and (21) are in what Forbes (1990, p. 346)) calls their *pseudo-forms* as opposed to their *logical forms*. Pseudo-forms result from straightforward translation of the vernacular into first-order notation. Logical forms, however, when they do not simply coincide with pseudo-forms, employ theoretical apparatus imported to account for a range of semantic data about the type of sentences in question. Quine's multigrade treatment of the likes of (20) and (21) puts them in their logical forms. Since we are starting from scratch, as it were, we begin with pseudo-forms; we shall shift to logical forms when necessary. The force of (21), Quine says, is to the effect that 'there is some individual lion (or several) which Ernest is hunting; stray circus property, for example' and (20) 'is suitable insofar as there may be said to be a certain sloop that I want' (p. 183). These are the relational readings of, respectively, 'Ernest is hunting lions' and 'I want a sloop', in contrast to their notional readings:

(22) Ernest strives that $(\exists x)(x \text{ is a lion} \ \& \ \text{Ernest finds } x)$

(23) I wish that $(\exists x)(x \text{ is a sloop} \ \& \ \text{I have } x)$

²² *Philosophical Investigations*, §308.

in which the latter reports my seeking mere relief from slooplessness, as Quine puts it, and the former, Ernest's activities as a sportsman in Africa. So the first phenomenon associated with relational ascriptions is *ontological commitment*. Notional ascriptions, in contrast, are not ontologically committing. The second phenomenon it is that Ernest and I have particular objects in mind, that is, we *know which* sloops and lions we want. These two phenomena have been unwarrantedly welded together.

For nothing in the relational readings (20) and (21) indicates one way or the other whether Ernest *knows which* lions he is hunting, or that I *know which* sloop it is that I want, in some suitably strong epistemic sense according to which Ernest and I can be said to be *acquainted* with those objects. It is fully consistent with these relational readings that neither of us has ever been within a hundred miles of any lions or sloops. Maybe Ernest is a freelance animal bounty hunter who has been hired by a circus to catch their escaped lions. Then (20) would capture accurately Ernest's activity although he may not yet know nearly enough about those lions to pique the interest of the circus section of the F.B.I.. A thinker's underlying epistemic relation to the object of his thought is not a reliable guide to whether a relational ascription is appropriate. The key to things lies with the first of the two phenomena: ontological commitment, in particular, with *the ascriber's* ontological commitments. Recall that in Q&PA Quine describes his account of the logical form of the relational enterprise as a way of 'inking a boundary between referential and non-referential occurrences of terms' (p. 189). Putting this together with the idea that notional attributions give the way the attitudinist thinks of things, we set ourselves on the right track. Although, to this day, Quine persists in the strong epistemological interpretation of relational—or what he now calls *de re*—attributions, the aforementioned 'boundary' that appears in Q&PA is given a more metaphysical bent in his latest writings. Here he is, in his recent *Pursuit of Truth*, speaking of his original quotational treatment of referential opacity:

we must beware of quantifying into [content clauses of propositional attitude], for the values of the variable of our outlying quantifier are the things of our real world, and might not fit the

attitudinist's ontology. ... the inverted commas mark an opaque interface between two ontologies, two worlds: that of the man in the attitude, however, benighted, and that of our responsible ascriber of the attitude.

The interface is sometimes breached. Like an actor stepping out of his part and speaking for himself, the ascriber is heard to say of the real people of his world that

(1) There are some whom Ralph believes to be spies,

not just that

(2) Ralph believes ' $\exists x(x \text{ is a spy})$ '.

... In affirming (1) we dissociate Ralph's suspicions from the world as he conceives it and train them upon the denizens of our real world. ...

Propositional attitudes *de re* presuppose a relation of intention, between thoughts and things intended, for which I conceive of no adequate guidelines. (1992, pp. 69-70)

With this I believe we have come to the very heart of the matter. The essence of the relational idiom is simply that it reports an intentional psychological relation between the thinker and what the *ascriber* takes the thinker's object of thought to be—and the ascriber can describe the object of the thinker's thought in any terms he likes, be they specific, general, or whatever. The difference, then, between, notional and relational attributions is a matter of *ontological perspective*: when we use the former we empathise with our subject (as Quine says) by pretending to adopt his ontology; when we use the latter we stick to our own ontology, giving what we take to be the thinker's object of thought. When, in giving a notional ascription, we pretend to adopt the attitudinist's ontology, we do two things: we act as if there were an object for the attitudinist's belief to be about and we describe that object from the attitudinist's perspective. In a relational ascription we revert to our own ontology in the sense that if we have reason to believe that there is no object for the attitudinist's thought to be about, we forego the possibility of a relational ascription; and if there is such an object, we describe the object from our point of view, which may involve attributing properties to it that the attitudinist is not aware that it possesses. So the idea of an 'ontological perspective' is meant to cover the existence and non-existence of things and their properties. As I shall shortly argue, whether we, as ascribers, have reason to believe that a relational attribution holds true of an individual will very often depend on whether we

need to invoke such an attribution to explain that individual's behaviour. Moreover, I shall argue (in chapter 4) that it is how the explanandum of a relational or *de re* psychological explanation of behaviour is described that determines how the object of a subject's thought is described in the relational ascription that forms part of the explanans.

Once the two different phenomena of perspectival ascription and strong aboutness are clearly separated it does not take much thought to see that they are not coextensive. There is simply no good reason to think that every time we specify the object of a subject's thought from our point of view, we are committed to saying that that subject has a belief that is strongly about the object. Suppose Ralph thinks of something purely descriptively; suppose he thinks that the man whom T.S. Eliot's poem 'Mr. Apollinax' is about is a propounder of logicism (because, say, he has overheard the tail end of a conversation in a pub). So long as we believe that that poem is indeed about an actual person, we can report Ralph's thought by saying that he believes, of the man whom T.S. Eliot's poem 'Mr. Apollinax' is about, that he is a propounder of logicism; and if we have reason to think that the man whom T.S. Eliot's poem 'Mr. Apollinax' is about is Bertrand Russell, we can report Ralph as believing, of Russell, that he is a propounder of logicism. Here we are saying whom we take the object of Ralph's belief to be. Nothing in this ascription need commit us to the claim that Ralph's thought is strongly about Russell; that, for example, he knows who Russell is, is acquainted with him, can identify him, or anything of the sort. When we specify the object of a person's thought from our point of view, it is a further question whether that person's thought is strongly about its object. Of course, if we do truly ascribe to a subject a thought that is strongly about its object, then it follows that a relational ascription relating the subject to the object, as described from our point of view, is true of the individual. So, an ascription of a thought with strong aboutness entails a relational ascription but the latter does not entail the former.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that by separating ontological and epistemological issues in this way—by treating the relational idiom as simply reporting

from the ascriber's point of view what the object of the attitudinist's thought is—we do not altogether banish the idea of *knowing who* from the relational idiom. On the contrary. If the ascriber wishes to convey the information that the attitudinist does in fact know who the object of his thought is, he can build this information into the ascription too. Thus, we might want to say:

$$(24) (\exists y)\{y=(\text{the } x)(x \text{ is shortest spy}) \ \& \ [\lambda w(R(w, \text{Ralph}))]y\}.$$

' $\lambda w(R(w, \text{Ralph}))$ ' is the relational property, whatever exactly that is, of being known by Ralph and the second conjunct of (24) says that y , that is, the shortest spy, satisfies this property. So the whole of (24) says that there is something that is identical to the shortest spy and that thing has the relational property of being known by Ralph; or, more simply, that the shortest spy is such that Ralph knows who he is. In (24), we, *as ascribers*, say of (what we take to be) some existing thing, y , which we describe in general terms as being the shortest spy, that it has the property of being known by Ralph. So we can agree that there is a special class of *thoughts*—*de re* thoughts—in which the thinker is intimately related to the object of his thought, in the sense that he knows who or what the object of his thought is, without also holding that a relational belief report necessarily reports such a thought. A relational attribution *may* report such a *de re* thought—as (24) in fact does—but it need not.²³ Indeed, as we shall see in chapter 4, it is very plausible to think that relational ascriptions of *de re* thoughts, that is, thoughts in which the thinker stands in an intimate knowing-who relation to the object of this thought, plays a special role in the psychological explanation of action upon objects.

²³ McDowell (1984) remarks that 'it is not obvious that any belief that is attributable in the *de re* way has a *de re* content' and that 'Uncontaminated by philosophy, we are quite casual about 'exportation' in cases of the 'shortest spy' sort' (p. 291). Indeed, as I think the examples canvassed above show (and there are many more in Dennett 1982), a stronger conclusion is warranted, namely, that definitely not all relational or *de re* attributions are attributions of *de re* thoughts (though this is not obvious). We are, indeed, often very casual about exportation.

The basic point is that we can build in as much detail as we want about the object of Ralph's belief; we can attribute to that object as many properties as we think it has and which we find useful given our purposes. For example, if our interests include explaining and predicting Ralph's behaviour *vis-à-vis* the object in question then we will attribute to that object certain relational properties involving Ralph's psychological states; such as being known by him, being believed by him to possess a certain property, etc.. If any of the properties that we attribute to the object, such as being the first sloop built in Yarmouth, Ralph also attributes to the object, and, for example, it is clear that an explanation of Ralph's behaviour *vis-à-vis* the object in question demands reference to this fact, then these properties can be allowed to pass through the ontological border from our world to his by being plugged into the intensional component of the relational ascription. We might have reason to say, using the somewhat stilted vernacular,

(25) Ralph wishes, of the first sloop built in Yarmouth, *as the first sloop built in Yarmouth*, that he himself had it.

Similarly, returning to the earlier example, notice that in (24) are not we told how Ralph thinks of *y*. If we have reason to believe he thinks of *y* as both the shortest spy and as his wife—if, for example, he calls the F.B.I. on his wife—then we can build this information into the intensional component of the ascription; indeed, it may be necessary to do so if we want to explain Ralph's behaviour *vis-à-vis* his wife. If our explanandum is, say, Ralph's action of following his wife then part of our explanans ought to include the statement that Ralph's wife, or that the shortest spy, or however we as ascribers wish to describe the object, is thought of by Ralph as possessing both the properties of wifeness and spyhood. That is to say, Ralph thinks of his wife, as his wife, that she is a spy; or, in other words, there is something that is thought of by Ralph as being both his wife and a spy—and this, together with Ralph's blind patriotism, explains why he is following his wife. (We shall

return to these kinds of *de re* explanations below and more details of their nature will be revealed in the chapters that follow.)

With all this behind us, we can now turn to a discussion of the significance of the fact that the indispensability of the relational idiom is due not to any epistemological phenomenon in need of formal rendition. I shall now argue that the indispensability of the relational idiom is due to certain psychological explanatory interests.

3. Notional and relational ascriptions and the explanation of action

In this section I argue for the thesis that notional ascriptions of thoughts are required to explain *intentional actions* whereas relational ascriptions are required to explain *actions simpliciter*.²⁴ Various philosophical theories of mind and action have suffered because their proponents have missed this latter type of psychological explanation; and it is this type of explanation—*de re* explanation, as I call it—wherein the real significance of relational ascriptions lies. In the course of elaborating and defending the thesis new light is cast upon a familiar debate between internalists and externalists over the ‘causal powers’ of mental states (chapter 5). Though much ink has been spilled in attempts to resolve this debate, I do not believe that a satisfactory resolution has yet been found and I offer what I think is the proper resolution. This section is a preliminary account of the idea, in light of the foregoing discussion of the logic and psychology of attitude attribution, which aims to convey the general thrust of the position. The details will emerge (in chapter 4) in response to a seemingly powerful objection to the very idea of *de re* explanation, which turns on considerations of rationality that we have already briefly touched on above.

²⁴ The original inspiration for this idea came from Terrance Tomkow’s lectures ‘Against Representation’ which he gave at Dalhousie University in 1992. Robert Brandom arrived at a similar idea independently; see *Making it Explicit* (1994, chapter 8, § III).

3.1 Action and intentional action; or, doings and tryings

There is a familiar distinction between actions and intentional actions. As Davidson (1980) has argued persuasively, following G.E.M. Anscombe's lead, while it makes sense to speak of a subclass of events that are actions it does not make sense to speak of a subclass of actions that are intentional actions. A full-blown intentional action is not an event distinct from an action that is not intentional; rather, to say of such an action that it is intentional is to say that there is some description of it under which it is intentional.²⁵ Abelard's action of marrying Heloise and his action of marrying the niece of the man who would instigate his castration are the same event; what we have are two different descriptions of one and the same event, the latter a description under which Abelard's action is intentional, the former a description under which it is not intentional. We may want to explain Abelard's action under a description under which it is intentional or we may want to explain Abelard's action under a description under which it is not intentional. In the former case, the explanandum sentence might be: Abelard's marrying of Heloise; in the latter it might be: Abelard's marrying of the niece of the man who would later instigate his castration. A natural way to describe the difference between action and intentional action is to say that the former is what an agent is *doing* while the latter is what the agent is *trying* to do. Picturing ourselves at the wedding ceremony we can imagine saying that what Abelard is *trying* to do is *marry Heloise* and that one of the things he *does*, unbeknown to him, is *marry the niece of the man who will later instigate his castration*. Abelard's marrying Heloise is an intentional action because it is something he is trying to do; his marrying the niece of the man who will later instigate his castration is not an intentional action because it is not something he is trying to do (though he did it all the same). To avoid unnecessary circumlocutions and

²⁵ I set aside the issue of whether it is true that *all* actions are intentional under some description; hence the qualification 'full-blown'. I am not concerned with so-called 'sub-intentional' actions, such as tapping one's foot, humming or crying.

general prolixity I shall speak of the psychological explanation of *tryings*, by which I shall simply mean a psychological explanation of an agent's action under a description that is necessarily one under which the action is intentional. And I shall speak of psychological explanations of *doings*, by which I shall mean the psychological explanation of an agent's action under a description that is not necessarily one under which the action is intentional.

3.2 Psychological explanation and perspective

The main thesis of the above discussion of relational and notional ascriptions is that the former describe the object of the subject's thought from the ascriber's point of view whereas the latter describe it from the subject's point of view. (In the special case of self ascriptions, of course, the distinction collapses since the ascriber is the ascribee.) The notional ascription that Ralph believes that the man in the brown hat is a spy specifies things from Ralph's point of view; he would, after all, give the nod to the sentence 'The man in the brown hat is a spy'. The relational ascription that Orcutt (or the man at the beach) is believed by Ralph to be a spy specifies things from the point of view of the ascriber; though the relational ascription is true Ralph would not assent to the sentences 'Orcutt is a spy' or 'The man at the beach is a spy'. A psychological explanation of an agent's intentional action, a trying, is an explanation whose point is to show that the action was reasonable from the agent's point of view. Davidson calls these ubiquitous explanations *rationalisations*. In order so to rationalise a trying we need to specify the agent's beliefs, desires, and intentions in a way that the agent would acknowledge as what he believes, desires, or intends. Since it is notional ascriptions that specify things from the agent's point of view, that is, in a way that the agent would acknowledge as the way he is thinking of things, it is notional ascriptions that are required to rationalise intentional actions or tryings. Why is Oedipus marrying Jocasta? Because he wants to accept the gratitude of the Thebans for

solving the riddle of the Sphinx and believes that by marrying Jocasta he will achieve that end. Davidson (1971a) has done much to emphasise that our tryings have consequences, of which we may or may not be aware, and because of this can be redescribed in terms of those consequences—even if those consequences are unintended. Since Jocasta is Oedipus's mother, his trying can be described as his marrying his mother. So marrying his mother is something that Oedipus does; it is an action of his and not merely a bunch of involuntary movements of his body and larynx. A psychological explanation for an action that is not intentional, a doing, is not an explanation whose point is to show that the action was reasonable from the agent's point of view. Indeed, since Oedipus does not have any reasons for marrying his mother (on the contrary!) the kind of psychological explanation that we give of Oedipus's marrying his mother cannot be a rationalising one. Rather, the point of such an explanation is to explain what actually happened from a non-Oedipal perspective; to explain why Oedipus's trying had the unintended consequence (as described from our perspective *qua* explainers or ascribers) that it did. Why did Oedipus marry his mother? Because he wanted to please the Thebans and believed, of his mother, that marrying her would please the Thebans. Since the point of a psychological explanation of an agent's doing is to explain what actually happened as described from the point of view of the ascriber—that is, what was done according to the ascriber whether or not the thing done under that description was intended by the agent—the explanans for such an explanation must include a relational ascription linking the agent's thoughts to the unintended consequence that is the explanandum. What explains Oedipus's marrying his mother is in part the tragic fact that he believed, of his mother, that marrying her would please the Thebans.

Since the singular term designating the object acted upon in the statement of a trying occurs in non-referential position inside the scope of the agent's attitude, we can say that tryings are the behavioural counterparts to notional ascriptions of thoughts; whereas, since the singular term designating the object acted upon in a statement of a doing occurs in

referential position outside the scope of the agent's attitude, we can say that doings are the behavioural counterparts to relational ascriptions of thoughts. It is because rationalisations of tryings must give the way agents' conceive of things that they must employ notional ascriptions. Since a doing is not necessarily something an agent intends to do but is rather a consequence of what an agent tries to do, as that is described by the ascriber, its explanation must involve relational ascriptions.

Suppose that Ralph subsequently meets Ortcutt at a party and recognises him as that grey haired man he saw once at the beach and who is vaguely known to him as a pillar of the community. Suppose further that Ralph, being the patriot he is, never turns down the chance to shake hands with those whom he thinks are pillars of the community and would never knowingly shake the hand of any spy and, moreover, that Ortcutt is not a pillar of the community but is in fact a spy. Imagine Ralph sees Ortcutt in the corner and thinks to himself 'That's Bernard J. Ortcutt, pillar of the community, the grey haired man I once saw at the beach. I'm going to go over and shake his hand'. Notionally speaking, Ralph wants to shake hands with Ortcutt the pillar. We know that Ortcutt is also the man in the brown hat whom Ralph saw skulking suspiciously. Suppose we also think that Ralph is right to think that this guy, whom we know is Ortcutt, is a spy. Then, from our point of view, we might say that, relationally speaking, the spy is in the corner in such that Ralph wants to shake hands with him. So there is Ralph shaking Ortcutt's hand. What is he up to? Well, he is *trying* to shake hands with a pillar of the community but what he is actually *doing* is shaking hands with a spy. What explains the former fact? Why is Ralph trying to shake hands with a pillar of the community? Because he (notionally) wants to shake hands with a pillar of the community. Why, on the other hand, is Ralph the patriot shaking hands with a spy? Well, he (notionally) wants to shake hands with a pillar of the community and (relationally) believes, of a spy, that he is a pillar of the community.

Notice that the relational attribution is *essential*. We want to explain why Ralph unintentionally shook the hand of a spy; or less misleadingly, why his attempt to shake a

pillar's hand had the consequence that he shook a spy's hand. Since this action of Ralph's was unintentional we will not be able to advert to his way of looking at things, his 'notional world' as Dennett (1982) calls it; *eo ipso* we cannot advert to a notional ascription to explain what he in fact did.

To make the same point from a slightly different angle, suppose we want to *predict* what Ralph will try to do, on the one hand, and what he will in fact do, on the other. Regarding the former, if we think that Ralph (notionally) wants desperately to shake the hand of a pillar of the community then it is reasonable to think that Ralph will indeed try to do so. The generalisation at work here is simply the platitude that people try to do what they want to do when they think they can. If we have reason to think that, notionally speaking, Ralph thinks that Ortcutt is a pillar of the community then we have reason to predict that he will try to shake Ortcutt's hand. If we are able to specify Ralph's intentions in a way that he would acknowledge as his intentions we will be able to determine what he is likely to *try* to do. Suppose, though, we are interested in what Ralph will actually end up *doing*. Then Ralph's desire to shake the hand of a pillar of the community will not necessarily help us. For maybe there really is a pillar of the community at the party; the mayor, say. We know that Ralph will try to shake the hand of the pillar. Our question can be put like this: Will he succeed in this endeavour? Suppose the mayor and Ortcutt are over by the bar chatting and we see Ralph approaching with his hand out. Whose hand will he shake? Clearly we need to know which of the two he thinks is the pillar. If it is Ortcutt then we can predict that he will shake Ortcutt's hand. Or perhaps the situation is this. Ralph wants to shake hands with a pillar and believes Ortcutt is a pillar but it is the mayor that is mistakenly believed by Ralph to be Ortcutt. In this case, we predict that Ralph will shake the mayor's hand. If we are able to specify which object it is that Ralph's intentions are directed upon then we will be able to determine what he is likely to do whether or not that is what he tried to do. To explain or predict what Ralph will in fact do we need relational ascriptions.

4. *Summary*

In this chapter I have been concerned to introduce in a skeletal fashion a fairly simple account of the nature of commonsense psychological explanation. In the chapters that follow I shall articulate the skeleton by developing the account further and defending it against some objections. Along the way, I use the account in an effort to shed some light on some current problems in the philosophy of mind. Since this chapter has covered a lot of different ground it may help to lay all the main points out in one place. They are as follows.

(1) 'Believes' and the other psychological verbs are multigrade predicates that always take a subject and an intension as arguments. All positions in the name for the intension (whether it be a sentence naming a proposition or a lambda term naming a property or relation) are opaque, in the sense that they permit neither substitution of co-referring expressions (whether singular terms, predicates, or sentences) nor quantification from without.

(2) A notional ascription is a dyadic predication relating the believer and a proposition whose constituents mirror the psychology of the thinker in the sense of specifying the way the thinker conceives of things. All the terms occurring in the propositional complement clause of the ascription are in referentially opaque positions and are not open to substitution or quantification from without. The way the thinker conceives of things is determined by the sentences he accepts, rejects, and remains agnostic about. In particular, if a subject understandingly rejects a sentence then that sentence cannot be used to characterise his thoughts. Since which sentences a competent speaker accepts is, by and large, constrained by basic principles of logic and rationality, which notional ascriptions are true of an individual are likewise swayed to the constraints of reason. Since we are concerned with agents' actions upon material objects, one particular point to keep in mind is the fact that with notional ascriptions the object of a subject's thought—Ortcutt, for example—is always

described from the perspective of the subject (as that is determined by the sentences he accepts) and this is why singular-term taking positions in the complement clauses do not allow substitution or quantification.

(3) A relational ascription is a triadic, tetradic, or higher degree predication relating a believer to an intension and an object, property or sentence, where all expressions referring to these latter three items are in transparent position and so open to substitution of co-referring expressions and quantification. Since which relational ascriptions are true of an individual is not determined by which sentences he accepts, they are not bound by principles of logic and rationality. ‘Near contrary’ relational ascriptions can be true of an individual at the same time. Again, since we concerned exclusively with the psychological explanation of actions upon objects, the point to emphasise is that the object of thought in a relational ascription is described from the perspective of the ascriber and that is why the position taking the singular term referring to the object is open to substitution and quantification.

(4) Notional ascriptions are necessary in the psychological explanation of *tryings*, that is, in the explanation of actions under intentional descriptions.

(5) Relational ascriptions are required in the explanation of *doings*, that is, in the explanation of actions under descriptions under which they are not necessarily intentional.

(6) The notional explanation of tryings is a form of rationalisation in which the notional ascriptions give the agent’s reasons for his trying. The rationalising nature of notional explanations is a direct analogue of the fact that notional ascriptions are constrained by principles of rationality. The relational or *de re* explanation of doings is not a form of rationalisation; the relational ascriptions do not specify an agent’s reasons for his action.

The non-rationalising nature of *de re* explanation is directly linked to the fact that relational ascriptions are not constrained by principles of rationality.

(7) A relational ascription does not necessarily report the subject as having a thought with strong aboutness, a *de re* or singular thought, in which he stands in some kind of relation of acquaintance to the object of his thought—although it *may* report such a thought. Of course, the fact that a subject has a *de re* thought entails that there is a relational ascription that is true of him. The relation between thoughts with strong aboutness and relational ascriptions is one-way independent; the former entail the latter but not conversely. Even when it does report such a *de re* thought, however, there is always a place in the ascription where the object of thought is described from the perspective of the ascriber and hence there must be a place where a singular term referring to the object of thought is in purely referential position outside the scope of the psychological verb. The key to the relational idiom lies in the fact that by describing the object of thought from the ascriber's point of view we are able to explain what an agent *did* or predict what he will *do*, as that is described by the person seeking the explanation or prediction. It is in this sense that perspective, rather than epistemology, is the fundamental phenomenon underlying the relational idiom.²⁶ Nevertheless, as we shall see in detail in the fourth chapter, when we explain an agent's action (doing) upon an object it is plausible that this will also require attributing to him a type of *de re* thought about that object, namely, a demonstrative one.

(4) and (5) are the two main theses that form the central core of my account of psychological explanation. (4) is uncontroversial and indeed extremely familiar, though it may not have been expressed in quite this way before. Philosophers as diverse in their philosophical temperaments as Jerry Fodor and Donald Davidson both accept something

²⁶ Robert Brandom argues, *pace* Kaplan and Burge, that what I am calling the ontological perspective of relational ascriptions is more fundamental than their reporting strong aboutness even when they do report that. See Brandom 1984, *passim*, but especially chapter 8, §VI.1.

like the first of these claims. Davidson's (1980) writings on action and its explanation are perhaps *inter alia* the pre-eminent expression of this idea; and one of Fodor's (1980) famous arguments for 'methodological solipsism' turns essentially on the idea. (5), however, is not something that is widely accepted; not that it is disputed, on the contrary, it hardly figures at all in the literature on action explanation. There are various reasons for this. One of them may simply be that though philosophers of mind and action do recognise a category of actions we are calling doings (see especially Davidson, 1971a), they have not been very interested in the explanation of such actions; the focus tends to fall on rationalisation which, as we have seen, is inextricably tied to notional ascriptions. Relational ascriptions are left entirely out of the explanatory picture. The biggest obstacle, however, to granting relation ascriptions their rightful place in theorising about mind and action probably stems from thinking that relational ascriptions simply cannot fill the explanatory bill I have accorded them because they suffer from two insurmountable problems. First, they are susceptible to what Quine calls 'near-contraries' such as (13) and (14) above and near-contraries cause irredeemable incoherence in any purported explanation that employs them. Second, they describe highly relational properties of individuals that cannot be causally efficacious in the production of their behaviour; since psychological explanation is a species of causal explanation, relational ascriptions simply cannot figure in any psychological explanation of an agent's behaviour however described—the argument for their explanatory necessity in this chapter notwithstanding. Fodor's influential writings (especially 1978, 1980, 1987, 1991) are largely responsible for the view that these objections to *de re* explanation are decisive; though Davidson's repeated emphasis on the rationalising nature of psychological explanation certainly has not helped the case for *de re* explanation either. The two objections will be taken up in chapters 4 and 5, respectively, in the course of which the nature of *de re* explanation will be elaborated. Before we move to this, however, it is necessary to turn from thought ascription to thoughts themselves, for a key element in the account of *de re* explanation I am recommending involves the relational

ascription of *de re* thoughts . Chapters 2 and 3 take up the issue of the nature of that category of singular or *de re* thoughts known as perceptual demonstrative thoughts.

II

PERCEPTUAL DEMONSTRATIVE THOUGHT: PART 1

In the last chapter I set out an account of relational ascriptions and argued that, so understood, they are necessary to explain doings. This is the first element in the view of *de re* explanation I aim to develop and defend. The second element is that reference to a certain class of thoughts with strong aboutness, perceptual demonstrative thoughts, plays a special role in the explanation of doings. The thesis that reference to perceptual demonstrative thoughts plays an essential part in explaining an agent's action upon an object is not new; it has been argued for most explicitly and persuasively by Christopher Peacocke (1981) and was anticipated somewhat by Adam Morton (1975) and Tyler Burge (1977). This thesis needs to be combined with the thesis of the explanatory necessity of relational ascriptions; for, as I shall argue in the fourth chapter (§4.1), as theses about the explanation of action upon objects each of them is incomplete and in need of supplementation by the other. So they should be combined in the more complete thesis that *a relational ascription of thought, in which reference is made to a perceptual demonstrative mode of presentation of an object, is required in any adequate explanation of an agent's doing that involves that object*. Recall that in the last chapter I recommended that the issue of making sense of quantification into belief contexts should be separated from the issue of epistemic acquaintance, that the fundamental phenomenon underlying the relational idiom is the ontological perspective of the ascriber and not that the ascription reports a thought with strong aboutness in which the thinker is acquainted with the object of his thought. Nevertheless, I emphasised that this view allows one to make reference to thoughts with strong aboutness in relational ascriptions and that one may very well need to do so if a psychological explanation in which the relational ascription figures calls for it. The combined thesis will be defended in chapter 4 where the final pieces of the account of *de re* explanation are brought out.

Since the account of *de re* explanation involves perceptual demonstrative thoughts, something should be said about how they should be conceived. This chapter, then, introduces two prominent theories about the nature of perceptual demonstrative thoughts: the ‘predicative’ theory of Tyler Burge and the ‘object-dependent’ theory of John McDowell and Gareth Evans. I go on, in chapter 3, to argue that each theory contains an objectionable element that renders it ultimately unsatisfactory and sketch the account of perceptual demonstrative thought—‘property-dependent externalism’, as I call it—that I prefer, an account that draws on the insights of the two aforementioned theories but that departs from them in major ways. Although these two chapters are mainly devoted to the nature of perceptual demonstrative thoughts, the topic of psychological explanation is not far behind. For I shall argue at the end of this chapter that there has been some confusion in the literature about the link between psychological explanation and the doctrine of object-dependent demonstrative thought. In particular, I try to show that one cannot argue from considerations of psychological explanation to object-dependent thought; rather, the situation is that if one already accepts object-dependence then, from within that framework, reference to object-dependent thoughts may be necessary in the explanation of a certain kind of action. If one rejects object-dependence for reasons having little to do with psychological explanation, which I shall ultimately recommend in chapter 3, then one cannot be forced to accept the doctrine on grounds that appeal to psychological explanation, for a satisfactory account of psychological explanation can be given that does not appeal to the notion of object-dependence. I begin by surveying various theories of strong aboutness.

1. The varieties of strong aboutness

In the first chapter we saw that in Quine’s original introduction of the relational/notional distinction in Q&PA, and throughout his subsequent writings on the subject, right up to

his latest book, there are two central phenomena in play that are mingled together. On the one hand, the distinction is supposed to be that between thinking of an object in virtue of having that particular object in mind—in the sense of knowing which object it is one is thinking about, whatever exactly that amounts to—and thinking of an object in virtue of that object satisfying a certain condition that figures in the content of one's thought. *Prima facie*, this appears to be little more than a version of Russell's (1910-11, 1912-13) famous distinction between knowledge by acquaintance and knowledge by description, with the constraints on what kinds of objects can stand in the former relation suitably relaxed to include, *inter alia*, spies, lions, and sloops. On the other hand, the distinction is supposed to be that between specifying the object of thought from the thinker's point of view and specifying the object of thought from the ascriber's point of view, or as Quine picturesquely puts it, a way of marking a boundary between two different ontologies, that of the attitudinist 'however benighted' and that of the 'responsible' attributer.

The first of these distinctions applies to *ways of thinking* about things while the second applies to *ways of ascribing* thinking about things. The first distinction marks out the kind of *psychological state* a thinker is in; whether, for example, he has a *general* belief that, say, whoever is the shortest spy is a dwarf or a *specific* belief to the effect that Orcutt, or that man over there, is a dwarf. The second distinction is simply a matter of the relative scopes, *within an attribution*, of the singular term picking out the object of thought or action and the psychological verb: the former taking wide scope indicates that the object is being specified from the ascriber's point of view; the latter taking wide scope indicates that the object of thought is being specified from the subject's point of view. Of course, as we have seen, and as many have pointed out, a singular term specifying the object of thought may be doing 'double duty' by giving both the perspective of the attributer and the perspective of the attitudinist at the same time. Quine and many subsequent contributors to the literature on quantifying in have failed to separate clearly questions about the nature of thought, on the one hand, and questions about the nature of thought ascriptions, on the other. Of course, many such theorists

simply refuse to separate the questions, for their idea is precisely that a subject's having a thought with strong aboutness is a condition for the legitimacy of attributing the said thought to the subject in the relational style.¹ The two issues are obviously related: there must be some systematic correspondence between thought ascriptions and thoughts or else we could not truly report what people think. Still, thoughts are one thing and their ascription another.² Thus my recommendation, in the last chapter, that certain issues about thought—namely, whether the thinker is acquainted with the object of his thought—be separated from certain issues about thought ascription—namely, the legitimacy of quantifying in.

Among those who do separate the issue of quantification from the issue of acquaintance—though not in the way I have argued we should—there are those who hold that there is really only one way of thinking of things—namely, descriptively or universally—and two different ways of ascribing such a way of thinking.³ These philosophers think that weak aboutness is the only kind of aboutness there is. Then there are those philosophers who take strong aboutness seriously, holding that there is a special class of thoughts—singular thoughts—that are more intimately about their objects than thoughts with weak aboutness in the sense that these singular thoughts contain constituents that somehow put thinkers into more 'direct' or 'intimate' relations to the objects of their thoughts.⁴

The notion of acquaintance is, of course, open to many different interpretations. As we have seen, Quine sets the agenda by giving it an epistemological reading. Kaplan follows suit: to be acquainted with the object of one's thought is to know which object it is one is thinking about; it is, in Kaplan's (1968-69) terms, to be *en rapport* with it. One idea of Kaplan's about how to provide an account of being *en rapport* with the object of one's thought is to adopt 'a frankly inequalitarian attitude toward various ways

¹ Cf. Quine: "...the requirement that distinguishes de re from de dicto, namely knowing who or what ..." (1995, p. 258). As we shall see, this also appears to be Kaplan's and Burge's view.

² Cf. Devitt 1981.

³ E.g., Dennett 1982, Searle 1983, Blackburn 1984, Ludwig 1996.

⁴ E.g., Kaplan 1968-69, Burge 1977, Chisholm 1981, Evans 1982, Lycan 1985, McDowell 1986.

of specifying' objects.⁵ The idea is that there is a special class of canonical designators, what Kaplan calls 'standard names', that necessarily denote their objects due to linguistic convention, such as numerals and quotation marks. So, for example, although '9' and 'the number of planets' both pick out the same number, only the former does so necessarily and so only it puts Ralph *en rapport* with nine. Alas, Kaplan notes, there are limitations to this resort to standard names because 'Only abstract objects can have standard names, since only they (and not all of them) lack that element of contingency which makes the rest of us liable to failures of existence' (p. 380). Standard names are really only a detour on the way to the final idea that to have a belief that is strongly about an object is to believe a proposition in which occurs a singular term that represents, in a technical sense, that object. A term, α , *represents x to Ralph* if and only if (i) α denotes x, (ii) α is a name *of* x for Ralph, and (iii) α is vivid. α is a name *of* x if x figures significantly in the causal process leading to Ralph's acquisition of α just as a the subject of a picture (specifically, a photograph or a portrait of a single subject) is causally involved in its production. α 's vividness amounts to its being a 'conglomeration of images, names, and partial descriptions which Ralph employs to bring x before his mind' (p. 383); that is, α *resembles* x in the sense that a good photograph or portrait resembles its subject.⁶ Given that Kaplan is one of those who takes thoughts with strong aboutness to be the only thoughts legitimately reportable in the relational style, his theory of strong aboutness takes the form of analysing relational ascriptions of belief. In particular, he analyses relational ascriptions of belief as notional ascriptions, which are understood as involving existential quantifications over terms that 'represent' objects to believers. So the relational ascription that Ortcutt is believed by Ralph to be a spy is analysed as the following notional ascription:

$$\exists \alpha (R(\alpha, \text{Ortcutt}, \text{Ralph}) \ \& \ B(\text{Ralph}, \lceil \alpha \text{ is a spy} \rceil)$$

⁵ The phrase, which occurs at the beginning of §8 of 'Quantifying In' is actually Quine's, from his 'Reply to Professor Marcus', in Quine 1966.

in which ‘R’ stands for the representing relation and ‘B’ for a single believing relation that relates the believer to something like a Fregean proposition or thought.

Within this epistemic reading of acquaintance we can distinguish roughly between two types of cases depending on whether the object of thought is a particular spatio-temporal object, such as a person, or an abstract object, such as a number. Since my interest lies in the psychological explanation of action and behaviour, I shall be concerned solely with acquaintance with spatio-temporal objects and shall mostly set aside abstract objects except for a few comments here and there when the occasion arises. Kaplan’s ‘picture model’ of ‘spatio-temporal acquaintance’ involves both an epistemic element (‘vividness’ for short) and a causal element (‘of-ness’) and so sets the agenda for much subsequent discussion of strong aboutness. There are those who repudiate the causal element in favour of a pure epistemic treatment and those that do just the reverse. Each kind of theorist has, of course, his reasons for doing things his way. For example, if you think that you can have beliefs (or desires or fears or hopes) about things in the future that do not yet exist, and not just about future tense propositions—just as you might think you can draw a picture of (though obviously not photograph) the house you intend to build, to invoke Kaplan’s picture metaphor—then you will eschew the requirement that you be causally connected to the object of your belief.⁷ Sticking with such epistemic accounts for the moment, it should be noted that ‘knowing which’ or ‘knowing who’ is itself open to a variety of interpretations, depending on whether it is aligned with a kind of propositional knowledge—‘knowing that’—or a kind of practical knowledge—‘knowing how’. ‘Knowing that’ might be construed as having some important or relevant descriptive information about the object or information involving some salient identity claim. ‘Knowing-how’ theories emphasise the practical capacities of subjects: the subject is disposed to locate the object of his thought—by, say, directing his actions upon it or pointing to it—or to recognise it

⁶ We shall have to aside the tricky question of whether, and if so in what sense, various modern paintings—e.g., fauvist, expressionist, and cubist—‘resemble’ their subjects.

⁷ See, e.g., Sosa (1970, p. 889). In ‘Quantifying In’ Kaplan refused to countenance such an idea (§9) though he later came round to accepting it in ‘Dthat’ (1978).

on future occasions. As we shall see, Gareth Evans's pioneering work on perceptual demonstrative thought is of this knowing-how variety.

As an alternative to these various epistemological readings, acquaintance might be cashed out in altogether non-epistemic terms, such as simply bearing a certain causal connection to the object of one's thought even though there may be a clear sense in which one does not know who or what one is causally connected to. The paradigm here would be perception—e.g., glimpsing something that one took to be coloured red but could not identify or recognise or even say what kind of thing it was—though bearing a somewhat less direct causal connection to an object, such as a memorial or testimonial connection, might merit consideration. The intuition driving this type of theory is that epistemic requirements are simply too strong: in many cases it seems perfectly in order to say that a subject is thinking about a certain object that at some time in the past he had some contact with although he can cite no distinguishing traits of the object and cannot locate or even recognise it.⁸ A causal account has the opposite limitation of Kaplan's original idea of standard names: it is inapplicable to abstract objects since such objects are not part of the causal order. Burge's theory, which I will examine in detail below, takes indexicality or deixis to be the key to *de re* thought; this view is non-epistemic in the sense that the thinker need not know who or what he is thinking of in any interesting sense, and yet neither need he be causally connected to it (though he may be). The idea here is that the subject bears a contextual, 'not-purely-conceptual' relation to the object of his thought. Obviously, a combination of views may be adopted according to which the requisite type of acquaintance depends on what kind of object is in question.

It should be stressed, however, that in between weak aboutness construed as pure denotation and strong aboutness construed in any of the recently adumbrated ways, there may very well exist varying grades of 'medium' aboutness. Perhaps there is a way of thinking of things that is not purely denotational yet falls short of maximum strength aboutness. Kaplan (1989b), for example, suggests that learning a language, in particular acquiring names that are part of a continuous linguistic tradition, enables

⁸ See the discussion of the steel balls in §§4.1 and 4.6 of Evans, 1982.

people to entertain thoughts that would otherwise be inaccessible to them (p. 602f). It is clear that what he has in mind is some version of the historical-cum-causal chain view of the reference of proper names as opposed to the descriptivist view; yet he is also clear that this kind of ‘epistemologically enhancing vocabulary power’ (to paraphrase) does not suffice to put one *en rapport* with the object of one’s thought and so does not suffice for having a *de re* thought, that is, a thought with strong aboutness. However, since advocates of medium grade aboutness are rare, I shall, in order to facilitate a general discussion, continue to use Dennett’s handy term ‘strong aboutness’ as a neutral way of describing the kind of connection between thought and object that is more than the weak, purely denotational variety.⁹

I now turn to that kind of strong aboutness that is particularly relevant to issues surrounding the nature of psychological explanation: perceptual demonstrative thought.

2. The varieties of perceptual demonstrative thought

I shall examine Tyler Burge’s indexical theory of the nature of *de re* thought along with the causal-epistemic theory of Gareth Evans and John McDowell because they represent the most fully worked out polar views about *de re* thought relevant to my purposes.

These two poles are, respectively, *dual-component* theories and *unified* theories. As we shall see in detail below, dual-component theories factor *de re* thoughts into two components: a ‘purely psychological’ component which is supposed to exhaust the ‘mental content’ of the thought and a non-psychological component, namely, the object, if any, that the content is ‘about’, or perhaps the relation to the object. Unified theories take the content of a *de re* thought to involve the object of the thought itself and not be separable from it. Restricting ourselves to that subclass of singular or *de re* thoughts known as perceptual demonstrative thoughts, a theory of *de re* thoughts can be further

⁹ Lycan (1985) manages to find six different ‘grades of aboutness’ beginning with the purely denotational and ending with Russell’s unmediated acquaintance with sense data. Though Lycan’s

categorised by what it says about three things: the nature of the *content* of demonstrative thoughts, the *object-dependency* of demonstrative thoughts, and the *truth conditions* of demonstrative thoughts. These categories will help us delineate the logical space which singular thought theories inhabit.

Some singular thought theorists hold that the demonstrative content of a perceptual demonstrative thought, *That F is G*, is irreducibly demonstrative; others hold that the content is not so irreducible.¹⁰ These latter hold that the content of demonstrative thoughts can be given descriptively, along such lines as, for example, *The F in front of me now is G*.¹¹ Among those theorists who accept the irreducibility of demonstrative content, there are those who take demonstrative thoughts to be object-dependent—that is, those who take the object of thought to be involved essentially in the determination of the content of the thought—and those who do not.¹² Of course, those who reject the irreducibility of demonstrative content will not accept object-dependence; for since the content is given descriptively for these theorists, the object of thought will be whichever object satisfies the description. Then there is the issue of how the truth conditions of singular thoughts are to be given. For object-dependent theorists, the truth conditions for a singular demonstrative thought, *That F is G*, are singular, involving the very object thought about. This is because they hold the Fregean view that, quite generally, the content of a thought—its sense or mode of presentation—is given by its truth conditions. However, those theorists who accept the irreducibility of demonstrative content but reject object-dependence also give singular truth conditions for demonstrative thoughts—though, as we shall see, they reject the Fregean principle that content alone determines truth conditions. Those who reject the irreducibility of demonstrative content obviously give non-singular descriptive truth-conditions for

discussion is valuable, in my opinion it suffers from not clearly distinguishing between the nature of thoughts, on the one hand, and how they may be ascribed, on the other.

¹⁰ Examples of the former include: Evans 1982; McDowell 1984, 1986; Davies 1981; Bach 1982, 1987; Burge 1977, 1983, 1991; Segal 1989; Noonan 1986, 1991; Peacocke 1981; Reçanati 1993; McCulloch, 1989. Examples of the latter include: Schiffer 1978, Blackburn 1984.

¹¹ E.g., Schiffer 1978.

¹² Examples of the former include: Evans 1982; McDowell 1984, 1986; Davies 1981; McCulloch 1989; examples of the latter include: Burge 1982, 1983, 1991; Bach 1982, 1987; Segal 1989; Peacocke 1981; Noonan 1986, 1991; Reçanati 1993.

singular thoughts matching their descriptive content. Such theorists appear to accept the view that content is truth conditional. The Fregean link between content and truth-conditions is clearly playing an extremely important role here and will figure prominently throughout the discussion. The issues of the truth conditions and the truth values of singular thoughts are complex affairs, as can be seen from the fact that even singular thought theorists who agree on the irreducibility of demonstrative content disagree about both the truth-value and the truth conditions of ‘empty’ singular thoughts. The issues will be taken up below (in §3.3) and in the third chapter. With this brief sketch of the kinds of positions found in the literature behind us, I turn now to the details of the two theories most relevant to our purposes.

2.1 *De re* belief I: Burge

The key intuition motivating Burge (1977) is that ‘A *de re* belief is a belief whose correct ascription places the believer in an appropriate nonconceptual, contextual relation to the objects the belief is about’ whereas ‘a correct ascription of [a] *de dicto* belief identifies it purely by reference to a “content” all of whose semantically relevant components characterise elements in the believer’s conceptual repertoire’ (p. 246). The distinction between *de dicto* belief and *de re* belief is exclusive and exhaustive: *de dicto* beliefs are all and only those that are not *de re*. Though Burge is clearly sensitive to the distinction between thoughts and their ascription, in the sense that he allows that there can be *de re ascriptions* of *de dicto* attitudes (p. 346), his theory postulates a parallelism between what he calls the *epistemic* characterisation of *beliefs* and the *semantical* characterisation of belief *attributions*. The logical form of an attribution mirrors the epistemic or conceptual character of the thought attributed. Semantically speaking, *de dicto* attributions relate thinkers to complete propositions, that is, to entities that are true or false absolutely. *De re* attributions relate thinkers to objects and open sentences; such ascriptions are about ‘*predication broadly conceived*’ (p. 343), in the sense that

they have truth values only because a context of interpretation has provided a salient object for their predicative elements (open sentences) to be applied to.¹³

Burge's theory is in part built to accommodate the observation that in ascribing a *de re* belief to someone in ordinary language we may intend to relate the believer to an object but not at the same time license unlimited substitution of all the singular terms designating the object. For example, we may say 'Alfred believes that the man in the corner is a spy' intending our attribution to relate Alfred *de re* to the man to whom we refer with 'the man in the corner'; yet we may disallow substitution of terms denoting the man in the corner because we also intend to be giving the way Alfred thinks of the man in the corner, namely, as *the man in the corner* and not as, say, *the man at the beach*. As Burge puts it, 'the term "the man in the corner" may be doing double duty at the surface level—both characterising Alfred's conception and picking out the relevant *res*' (p. 341). At the surface level of ordinary language, then, it is evident that Quine's two criteria for relationality come apart: a belief report may pass the existential generalisation test but fail the substitutivity of identicals test. So, an attribution may be object-involving, in the sense of relating the believer to a spatio-temporal particular, and yet not relational because substitutivity fails.

To capture the aspects of surface grammar relevant to the distinction between *de dicto* belief and *de re* belief Burge proposes an account according to which the logical form of sentences ascribing each differs. Ortcutt's *de dicto* belief that someone is a spy is most appropriately reported by a *de dicto* ascription whose logical form is rendered in the following manner:

$$(1) B(\text{Ortcutt}, \ulcorner (\exists x)\text{Spy}(x) \urcorner).$$

Ralph's *de re* belief, of someone in particular, that he is a spy should be reported by a *de re* ascription whose logical form is:

¹³ This view of strong aboutness is adopted and elaborated in various different ways by Bach (1987) and

$$(2) (\exists x)(B(\text{Ralph}, \langle x \rangle, \ulcorner \text{Spy}(y) \urcorner))$$

and the *de re* ascription of Ralph's *de re* belief, of the man in the corner, that he is a spy comes out as:

$$(3) B(\text{Ralph}, \langle \text{the man in the corner} \rangle, \ulcorner \text{Spy}(y) \urcorner).$$

A *de re* ascription of a (*de re*) belief, such as (3), relates a believer to a *res* and an open sentence which contains concepts under which the believer thinks of the *res*. Though Burge does not say anything about 'B' here, I shall interpret it *à la* Quine as the multigrade predicate 'believes'. The singular term in the pointed brackets is in purely referential position and is open to substitution and existential generalisation—this captures the object-involvingness implicit in the surface grammar of *de re* attributions. The open sentence in the third argument place is intended to represent the intentional content of the thought and contains term that are not open to substitution—thus capturing the other aspect of surface grammar. The intentional content in the third argument place contains a primitive demonstrative component, indicated by the presence of the free variable in the open sentence that represents it, that is contextually applied by the ascriber to the *res* (which is designated by the singular term in the second argument place) that he takes the believer to be thinking of.

Notice that (2) and (3) do not say how Ralph is thinking of the man in the corner. The free variable 'y' in the open sentence $\ulcorner \text{Spy}(y) \urcorner$ is the representation of a 'pure demonstrative' such as 'this' or 'that'. Demonstratives with descriptive content, such as 'that man', are represented in the following way: $\ulcorner [y]\text{Man}(y) \urcorner$ where the square brackets indicate the scope of the demonstrative and do not bind the free variable. So if we also wish to attribute to Ralph the concept of a man in the corner we can do so in the following manner:

(4) B(Ralph, <the man in the corner>, $\lceil \text{Spy}([y](\text{Man}(y) \ \& \ C(y))) \rceil$)

which indicates that the object of Ralph's belief, the man in the corner, is presented to Ralph as the man in the corner—as he would be if Ralph happens to be looking at the guy. In such a case, the intentional content of Ralph's perceptual demonstrative belief includes the concept of a man in a corner.

The object of a Burgean *de re* thought, which is the proper topic for a *de re* ascription, is not determined entirely by the content of the thought: which object the thought is about is not simply a matter of which object satisfies or is denoted by the conceptual components of the thought; rather, the object that the thought is about is the object that the intentional content is applied to via an 'appropriate nonconceptual, contextual relation', namely, the token application, by the individual thinker at a time, of the demonstrative element in the content—which, in the paradigm case of perception, is successful due to the object causally impinging on the thinker's sense organs (cf. Geach, 1957, chapter 15). In his (1974b) Burge speaks of the intentional 'act of reference' of the subject and later (1983) calls this act an 'application'. The truth conditions for *de re* beliefs are, then, determined contextually: like predication the intentional content of a *de re* belief is *true of* or *false of* objects. A *de dicto* belief, however, is 'fully conceptualised' in the sense that everything that is relevant to determining which object the belief is about is contained in the intentional content of the thought itself—so it is altogether free of indexical elements. A *de dicto* belief is a relation between a believer and a closed sentence, and hence, the truth conditions for a *de dicto* belief are absolute: the content of the thought—a full proposition or *dictum*—is itself true or false independently of any context. On this view, a *de dicto* belief is simply any belief devoid of indexical elements. Burge is an exponent of the view, developed by many after Kaplan's 'Quantifying In' (1968-69), that indexicality is the key to *de re* thought.

To say, as I did three paragraphs back, that *de re* beliefs are ‘most appropriately’ ascribed by *de re* ascriptions, and *de dicto* beliefs by *de dicto* ascriptions, means that, to take the second case, only the logical form of *de dicto* ascriptions accurately mirrors the epistemic nature of *de dicto* beliefs; the same, *mutatis mutandis*, for *de re* beliefs and *de re* ascriptions. Though one can ascribe *de dicto* beliefs in the *de re* fashion, in which there are wide-scope purely referential occurrences of singular terms at the ‘surface level’ of ordinary grammar, these occurrences do not, according to Burge, mark any ‘epistemically interesting distinction’ (p. 146). Kaplan concurs and carries the thought further by adopting a dismissive attitude to what he calls the ‘*pseudo de re* form’ (1989a, p. 555n71), seeing *de re thought* as the fundamental phenomenon underlying relational ascriptions. The ‘*pseudo de re* form’ is apparently a kind of aberration unworthy of serious investigation. If what I have said in the last chapter, and go on to say in the rest of the thesis, is correct it would be a serious mistake to think that ‘the *pseudo de re* form of report poses [no] issues of sufficient theoretical interest to make it worth pursuing’ (ibid.).¹⁴ Such a blinkered view of the matter arises out of an excessive concern for pure thought ascription in isolation from any issues about how thought ascriptions figure in psychological explanation.¹⁵

So for Burge there are two requirements for a thought to be *de re*: it must contain a primitive demonstrative element in its content and must successfully refer to an object. It is essential to notice, for it will be important later, that these two requirements are, as Burge puts it ‘separable’ (1991, p. 208). That is to say, since thoughts are individuated in terms of their intentional contents, some demonstrative thoughts are not *de re* —namely, those suffering from reference failure—and some thoughts that are in fact *de re* are not *essentially de re*—for the demonstrative element in the content of some *de re* thoughts might have failed to refer to an object. As Burge puts it, ‘In my view, the

¹⁴ Robert Brandom’s *Making it Explicit* offers a sophisticated and comprehensive theory of intentionality and thought ascription that reverses the traditional order of interest by giving centre stage to the *pseudo de re* form of report, what Brandom calls ‘epistemically *weak de re* ascriptions’, instead of to *de re* ascriptions of *de re* thoughts, which he calls ‘epistemically *strong de re* ascriptions’. See chapter 8 of Brandom, 1994.

¹⁵ Adam Morton (1975) was, so far as I know, the first to connect the problem of quantifying into psychological contexts with psychological explanation. I discuss his views in the fourth chapter.

Intentional side of a belief is its only side. In many cases, in my view, a belief that is in fact *de re* might not have been successfully referential (could have failed to be *de re*) and still would have remained the same belief' (ibid., p. 209).¹⁶ In light of this it may seem misleading to describe Burge's view as a 'dual-component' view of thought since for him a thought, strictly speaking, consists only of one component, its 'Intentional side'. Nevertheless, I shall continue to speak of Burge's view, slightly inaccurately, as a species of the dual-component conception of singular thought in which such thoughts are 'broken up' into a purely psychological component and a non-psychological component. The justification for this is that I am interested in the features of his theory that it shares with those kindred theorists who do take the non-psychological component to be literally part of the thought.

Finally, it is important to notice that, for Burge, since what matters for the psychological explanation of a subject's behaviour is the 'Intentional side of a belief', whether the demonstrative element in the intentional content of a *de re* belief succeeds or fails to refer to an object is of no consequence to the psychological explanation of the subject's behaviour unless the presence or absence of the object impinges upon the subject's consciousness. As Burge (1982) explains,

individual entities referred to by transparently occurring expressions, and, more generally, entities (however referred to or characterised) *of* which a person holds his beliefs do not in general play a direct role in characterising the nature of the person's mental state or event. The difference between [identically appearing] apples 1 and 2 does not bear on Alfred's mind in any sense that would immediately affect explanations of Alfred's behaviour or assessment of the rationality of his mental activity. Identities of and differences among physical objects are crucial to these enterprises only in so far as those identities and differences affect Alfred's way of viewing such objects. Moreover, it seems unexceptionable to claim that the obliquely occurring expressions in propositional attitude attributions are critical for characterising a given person's mental state. Such occurrences are the stuff of which explanations of his actions and assessments of his rationality are made. (p. 99)

This is precisely where the distinction introduced in the first chapter between action and intentional action, that is, between what the agent is doing and what he is trying to do, is relevant. It seems clear that what Burge has in mind here is what Alfred is *trying* to do.

¹⁶ Burge is here expressing his agreement with Searle that 'all beliefs consist entirely in their Intentional content' (1983, p. 214). He disagrees with Searle in holding that Intentional content is not always sufficient to individuate the object of the belief. Cf. the opening pages of Burge, 1982.

He assumes that psychological explanation is inevitably rationalisation and entirely ignores the other type of psychological explanation, which is not a form of rationalisation, in which we explain what the agent actually did, such as his eating apple 2. As I have tried to shown in the first chapter, if this is our explanandum, the difference between apples 1 and 2 *is* relevant to an explanation of Alfred's behaviour. I return to this issue in §3.3 below.¹⁷

2.2 *De re* belief II: truth conditions

We have encountered Burge's use of the logician's concept of an 'open sentence' to explicate what he takes to be the core feature of *de re* thoughts: their irreducibly indexical character. We have seen how Burge connects up the notion of indexicality with the truth conditions of *de re* beliefs. Since the truth conditions of perceptual demonstrative thoughts will occupy us later, it is necessary to take a closer look at the relation between indexicality and truth conditions.

A good place to start is with the question: What are the truth conditions of an *empty* singular thought? Ralph, in the grip of an hallucination, thinks to himself *that flower is pretty*. What are we to say about the truth conditions of Ralph's hallucinatory thought? Does it have any? If so, what are they? We have seen that for Burge 'the Intentional side of a belief is its only side'; that is to say, the *res* of a *de re* belief is, as it were, *outside* the content of the belief in the sense that the *res* is the object that the incompletely interpreted demonstrative content, whose canonical representation in an ascription is an open sentence, is applied to by the thinker at a time. So, for Burge, content and truth conditions come apart in *de re* thoughts (and sentences). Indeed, that is precisely what sets them apart from *de dicto* thoughts (and sentences). The intentional content of a *de re* thought is not truth-conditional. *De re* thoughts 'receive'

¹⁷ I should perhaps point out that it is crucial to remember that Burge is still an externalist or 'anti-individualist' about thought in the sense that the *concepts* involved in the content of *de re* and *de dicto*

or are ‘assigned’ truth conditions only by way of a *successful contextual application*, in thought, by a thinker at a time, of the predicative demonstrative content to an object. In Burge’s (1974b) formal semantics for a language containing demonstratives the truth conditions of demonstrative sentences—and hence, of thoughts (see below)—are given by *conditionalised* biconditionals whose antecedents specify, among other things such as the speaker (or thinker) and the time of utterance (or thought), the value assigned to the free variable in the demonstrative element. To oversimplify, the basic schema of such conditionalised truth conditions is something like this:

(S) If u is an utterance of $\lceil Fa \rceil$ by person p at time t and p refers with the demonstrative term a in u to x , then (u is true with respect to p at t if and only if x is F).

If Ralph was actually seeing a flower rather than hallucinating one, and expressed his thought that it is pretty by saying ‘That is pretty’ then the following would have been an instance of the above schema:

If u is an utterance of ‘That is pretty’ by Ralph at 20/01/98/noon/GMT and Ralph refers with ‘That’ in ‘That is pretty’ to x , then (u is true with respect to Ralph at 20/01/98/noon/GMT if and only if x is pretty).

He is explicit that although the semantical rules ‘are defined on sentences, they apply *mutatis mutandis* to attitude contents’ (1983, p. 87). So only demonstrative constructions whose free variables are thus interpreted are assigned truth conditions. On this view, the truth conditions of thoughts involving basic atomic predications in which there is a failure of demonstrative reference, such as Ralph’s when he is hallucinating a flower, must remain conditional; and since the antecedents of such conditionalised biconditionals will be false the conditional statement of truth conditions will be vacuously true but no actual truth conditions will be assigned. Since no demonstrative reference is actually achieved, the consequent cannot be detached in order to derive any truth conditions. Since for Burge the truth of atomic predications is

thoughts are determined in part by the physical and social environment in which the subject is situated.

contingent upon a *successful* demonstrative application, unsuccessful applications, such as Ralph's 'That flower is pretty', will fail to be true. Since Burge adheres to bivalence, such simple singular predications are counted false. Since such atomic sentences involving nonreferring or 'irreferential' singular terms are counted false in virtue of being definitely not true, it follows again by bivalence that complex sentences formed from their negation, such as 'It is not true that that flower is pretty', perhaps said or thought by Ralph after he realises he has been hallucinating, come out true. Burge adopts a negative free logic in which there can occur irreferential singular terms—namely, bearerless names and empty demonstratives and indexicals—which has the appropriate restrictions on the rules of Universal Instantiation and Existential Generalisation.¹⁸ In short, then, *all* empty or unsuccessful atomic singular predications have (vacuous) conditional truth conditions and are counted false.¹⁹

To sum up, three important elements of Burge's theory of *de re* thought stand out. (1) *De re* thought contents contain an irreducibly indexical element (indicated by the presence of a free variable in the canonical representation of the logical form of their ascriptions) that is contextually applied by the thinker at a time. For Burge *all* thoughts that are strongly about their objects are thoughts with demonstrative or indexical components; *de dicto* thoughts are simply those that are not *de re*, that is, that are entirely devoid of any occurrences of indexicals. Burge thinks of indexicality as essentially involving a nonconceptual element, by which he means that not everything relevant to determining which object a *de re* thought is about is part of the intentional content of the thought. (2) In most cases *de re* thoughts are not essentially *de re*: if the token demonstrative application had failed to refer to any object, the thought would have remained the same thought. (3) Empty singular thoughts have no truth conditions and are therefore untrue and so, in accordance with bivalence, are to be counted false; the

See Burge 1982.

¹⁸ See Burge 1974a and 1983.

¹⁹ Interestingly, then, there is an exact correspondence between Burge's and Russell's verdicts on the truth values of the sentences of natural language, even though Burge rejects Russell's analysis of the logical form of such sentences, holding as he does, the view that demonstrative content is irreducibly demonstrative.

details are worked out in terms of a negative free logic whose verdicts on truth values correspond to Russell's.

I turn next to a theory that holds just the opposite view of *de re* thoughts in which they are essentially tied to their objects and are fully conceptualised.

2.3 *De re* senses: McDowell and Evans

According to Pettit & McDowell(1986), 'one cannot properly support the claim that a state of mind is object-involving in itself by appealing to the possibility of attributing it transparently' (p. 6n18).²⁰ A *de re* belief is not merely object-involving in the sense that it relates a believer to a spatio-temporal object and so is correctly reportable in the relational style. Two further factors are required: that the object enter into the *content* of the belief and that it do so *essentially*. As McDowell (1984) puts it, '*contents ... are de re*, in the sense that they depend on the existence of the relevant *res*' (p. 291). Unlike Burge's view of the logical form of ascriptions of *de re* belief, where the *res* occurs outside the specification of content, on the McDowellian view, the *res* enters into the specification of the content and in such a way that if there is no *res* then there is no content to be believed, and hence, no belief. In short, the *content* of a *de re* belief is *object-dependent*. Burge's claims to the contrary notwithstanding, on McDowell's view Burge's account of the logical form of *de re* ascriptions of *de re* beliefs obscures rather than mirrors their epistemic nature: '*de re* attributions do not display the logical form of states with *de re* content' (ibid., p. 291).

The doctrine of object-dependent thought is a Fregean view of *de re* belief because for a believer to be related to an object his thought must contain a sense as a constituent, where a Fregean sense is the way the object is presented in thought, a kind of conceptual perspective on the object. Thoughts involving such '*de re* senses' are, to

²⁰ Cf. McDowell 1984, p. 291 and Evans 1982, p. 73.

put it in Burge's terms, fully conceptualised.²¹ It is the doctrine of object-dependence that opens up the possibility that *de re* thoughts are both contextually tied to their objects and fully conceptualised. This combination of complete conceptualisation and object-dependence is a novel mixture of two elements sundered by Quine and Burge: relatedness to objects and being part of the thinker's cognitive field (in the sense of being up for rational evaluation). As McDowell puts it, 'Two or more singular senses can present the same object; so Fregean singular thoughts can be both object-dependent and just as finely individuated as perspicuous psychological description requires' (1986, p. 142). McDowell's point is, I think, that getting Ralph's psychology right requires distinguishing between:

(5) Ralph believes that the man at the beach is a spy

and

(6) Ralph believes that the man in the brown hat is a spy

for the truth of (6) and the falsity of (5) explain why, for example, Ralph does not try to phone the CIA when he sees Ortcutt at the beach but does do so when he sees him in the brown hat. But, on the relational style of ascription (5) and (6) collapse into the single:

(7) Ortcutt is believed by Ralph to be a spy.

We can, of course, substitute 'the man in the brown hat' or 'the man at the beach' for 'Ortcutt' in (7); and we may have very good reasons for doing so (if, say, our interlocutor is familiar with Ortcutt only under these modes of presentation). On the traditional way of looking at relational ascriptions, such as (7), they are linked to psychological irrelevancy because of their insensitivity to the alleged difference between

²¹ Which is not to say that they are fully *descriptive*. See Evans (1981).

(5) and (6)—not to mention their immunity to the constraints of reason, in the sense discussed in the first chapter. To invoke some McDowellian terms, the relational style operates with a ‘coarseness of grain’ unsuited to perspicuous psychological description whereas the notional style gives us the ‘fineness of grain’ necessary to such description. Since on McDowell’s view object-involvingness is not separated from psychological reality, the object-dependent theory allows us to invoke object-involved thoughts in our psychological explanations. We can both distinguish (6) and (7) and secure their object-involvingness.

The *raison d’être* of such ‘perspicuous psychological description’ is its link to the psychological explanation of action *qua trying*. Since Ralph is trying to inform on the man in the brown hat, but is not trying to inform on the man at the beach, we need (*inter alia*) the fineness of grain secured by the distinction between (5) and (6) to explain what he is trying to do. However, since what Ralph actually *does* is inform on the man at the beach as well as on the man in the brown hat (since the former=the latter=Ortcutt) there is no need to distinguish between (5) and (6) to explain what he is *doing*; (7) explains why it is that the very man Ortcutt is being informed on by Ralph. (Of course, Ortcutt is also believed by Ralph not to be a spy. Given this ‘near-contrary’ ascription the question arises as to how his doing can be explained by (7). This is the topic of chapter 4.) While one can *try* to do something impossible if one does not realise it is impossible, such as prove the completeness of arithmetic, or in Ralph’s case, both inform and not inform on one and the same man, one cannot actually *do* something impossible. (We shall return to these issues briefly in §3 and in greater detail in chapter 4.)

McDowell, then, distinguishes between a *de re attribution* that is synonymous with Quine’s relational sense of belief ascription, and *de re content* understood as above (1984, p. 291). Object-dependent thoughts are, then, thoughts with *de re* content. It is for this reason that one cannot properly support the claim that a state of mind is object-involving—that is, that it has *de re* content—by showing that it can be attributed in the *de re* way. McDowell is in agreement with us in wanting to separate the issues of

quantification and strong aboutness (see especially 1984, p. 291n22). Whereas he seems unsure about their relation, however, I have adopted the decisive view that *de re*, or relational, attributability does not imply *de re* content.

On McDowell's view, then, if there is no object answering to a subject's alleged singular thought, if, say, he is hallucinating, then there is no singular thought that he is having. This object-dependent view of singular thought is worked out in great detail and sophistication by Evans (1982). Evans's view is akin to Kaplan's model of being *en rapport* with the object of one's thought in the sense that it involves a harmony between causal and epistemic factors. In Kaplan's model, recall, 'of-ness' and 'vividness' must coincide for the subject to have a *de re* thought; *de re* thoughts are like *good photographs* of people. The very large difference from Kaplan comes with the account Evans gives of the two factors.

The first, causal, factor is articulated in terms of the person possessing *information* flowing from the object as, say, in perception (as well as indirectly in memory and testimony). The content of an informational state is given independently of the object from which the information flows and thus may be represented by an open sentence containing as many places and predicates as is required to capture the desired content. So information can be misinformation and even information of nothing. Evans (1982) says that when information is of something then it is of that thing with which it must be compared to judge its accuracy (p. 125). I think we can safely assume that an informational link between subject and object amounts to a special kind of causal connection between the two. Indeed, Evans, like Kaplan, employs the photograph analogy to explain the notion of information.

The second, epistemic, element is articulated in terms of the individual having what Evans calls a 'mode of identification' of the object, by which he means that the individual knows which object it is that he is receiving information from in the sense that he can identify it. There are three kinds of modes of identification: descriptive, demonstrative, and recognition-based. Very roughly, whereas the first, descriptive, mode of identification involves the agent's ability to cite facts uniquely true of the object from

which the information flows, the latter two modes of identification involve more practical capacities: to *locate* the object on the basis of information from it and to be able to *recognise* the object when presented with it, respectively. Just as for Kaplan ‘of-ness’ and ‘vividness’ must both centre on x for α to *represent* x to a subject—and so for that subject to have a thought reportable *de re*—so too for Evans the mode of identification must target the object from which the information derives for the subject to have a singular thought about that object. Having a mode of identification of an object involves having what Evans calls an adequate or coherent Idea-of-an-object (on which more anon).

While Kaplan restricts his investigations into the epistemology of singular thoughts to the conceptual or descriptive—that is, denotational—nature of *pure thought*, as one might put it, Evans’s account focuses on *action*, on what subjects can *do*, such as locate and recognise objects, or direct their actions to the places or upon the objects that their thoughts concern. We might put the point by saying that whereas Kaplan’s account is a pure ‘input’ theory, Evans’s is an ‘input-output’ or functional theory.

The background of Evans’s account of singular thought is complex. It begins (1982, chapter 4) with the assumption that for a subject to have a singular thought that a is F the subject must know what it is for the proposition ‘ a is F ’ to be true. For a subject to know this he must have an Idea of the object a where ‘An Idea of an object is part of a conception of a world of such objects, distinguished from one another in fundamental ways’ (p. 106). For any object whatever, there is the *fundamental ground of difference* (FGD) of that object (at a time): that which differentiates it from all other things, that is, that identifies it as a certain *sort* of thing; and that further identifies it as the possessor of characteristics that differentiate it from all other things of the same sort. One has a *fundamental Idea* (FI) of an object, δ , when one thinks of it as the possessor of the FGD which it in fact possesses. According to Evans’s account, when we have a FI of an object, δ , then that can combine with our possession of the concept of being F , to yield direct knowledge of what it is for the proposition ‘ δ is F ’ to be true. When we have a *non-FI* of an object, a , then we know what it is for the proposition ‘ a is F ’ to be

true in virtue of knowing the truth of some pair of propositions of the forms: ' δ is F ' and ' $\delta = a$ '. In short, 'we can take the subject's Idea-of-an-object, a , to consist in his knowledge of what it is for an arbitrary proposition of the form ' $\delta = a$ ' to be true' (1982, p. 110). The FGD of a material object is given by the sortal it falls under and its spatial location at a time. So, according to the foregoing, one has an adequate Idea of a material object either when one has a conception of it as the occupant of a particular location at a particular time or when one has knowledge of what it is for the relevant object to be (identical to an object) at a particular location in space and time. So, for a subject to have a singular demonstrative thought a is F he must have a conception of a as identical to the occupant of a particular location in space and time; it is this conception of a as the object at such-and-such a location at such-and-such at time that provides the subject with an adequate Idea of the object. That the subject does have this conception of the object is shown by the subject's ability to locate the object in egocentric space on the basis of an information link to it and his general capacity to align his egocentric space with objective space.

There are a couple of problematic aspects to Evans's complex account that should be mentioned. First of all, as John Campbell has recently remarked, 'It is very hard to make sense of the "fundamental level of thought" about spatial objects Evans describes' (1997, p. 62). Indeed it is; especially in light of the fact that for Evans it appears that the three modes of identification—the descriptive, the recognition-based, and the demonstrative—all provide *non-FIs* of objects. This raises the question of just what kind of modes of identification are involved in fundamental thoughts. The fundamental level of thought is clearly supposed to be some kind of impersonal and objective conception of an independently existing world of objects and places. But it is not clear exactly what this amounts to; and Evans himself apparently expressed reservations about the fundamental level of thought (1982, 264f). He appears to think that it amounts to having one's spatial thinking organised around a framework of familiar objects and places which he calls the 'frame of reference'. But it is not clear that such a frame of reference could provide a subject with a more impersonal

conception of the world than the subject's thoughts about the objects and places that make up the frame; especially since the subject may have to think of the objects and places that make up the frame as ones that *he* has encountered in *his* past (ibid.).

Campbell suggests, plausibly, that the 'fundamental level of thought' about material objects can be eschewed in favour of what he takes to be Evans's real insight: the connection between perceptual demonstrative thinking about objects and the perceived location of those objects.

This thought leads straight into the second problem, however, which is how the idea of the perceived location of the object is to be interpreted. McDowell (1990) interprets Evans as requiring the subject *correctly* to perceive the object's location egocentrically and argues that Evans was correct in so maintaining this. For my part, I have been persuaded by Peacocke (1991) that, *pace* McDowell, not only is this requirement simply too strong but it is not in fact a requirement demanded by the text of *The Varieties of Reference* (1982). Rather, what Evans (1982) requires—and this is the way I have been explaining the idea up until now—is that the subject merely have an *ability* to locate the object on the basis of his perception of it. The subject need only have the capacity to go about finding the object on the basis of perceiving it. This weaker requirement conforms better with the pre-theoretic intuition that a subject can think about an object in a perceptual demonstrative way even when, owing to an illusion or faulty perception, he is not in fact correctly perceiving the object's location (Peacocke, 1983, 1991, gives compelling examples of this possibility.) If this is the right way to understand Evans's idea then the further question arises as to how strong the 'ability' requirement is. I am again persuaded by Peacocke (1991) that the subject need only have a *general* ability to locate things egocentrically on the basis of his perception of them. If, for example, a subject has been incorrectly perceiving the location of something—a bird, say, to take Peacocke's (1991) example—that suddenly disappears altogether from his sight so that he is not in fact able to locate the object correctly, then he can still be said to have been thinking about the object under a perceptual demonstrative mode of presentation. As Peacocke puts it, 'The subject's general ability

in favourable circumstances to exploit information-links to establish the egocentric location of perceived objects allows us to count the subject as acquainted with the bird, even if the bird in fact moves away' (ibid., p. 125). I shall follow suit in interpreting Evans in this way.

Summarising, then, Evans's line of thought regarding perceptual demonstrative thoughts about material objects is as follows. To have a perceptual demonstrative thought one must know what it is for that thought to be true. Having this knowledge requires knowing which object one's thought concerns; this is the 'know which' requirement that Evans calls Russell's Principle (I shall return to it in chapter 3). Given the connection between an object's FGD and its location, knowing which object is in question requires the subject to have the general ability to locate the object egocentrically on the basis of his perception of it and to have the general ability to align his egocentric placing of the object with the objective order of things.²²

It follows, on Evans's account, that if there is no object (or place) on which the subject's locating ability is uniquely targeted—if, say, he is hallucinating or a series of different objects or places present themselves to the subject without his knowledge—there will be no singular thought available to him. A McDowellian *de re* sense is effectively an Evansian mode of identification or Idea-of-an-object. A subject has a *de re* sense or an adequate Idea-of-an-object only if there is one object to which he is appropriately connected; that is, in part, what it is to have such an Idea. If there is no such object, then there cannot be any such Idea, and hence, since singular thoughts require such Ideas (or *de re* senses), there can be no such singular thought. More intuitively perhaps, yet more metaphorically, since Ideas/*de re* senses are like Fregean 'modes of presentation' of objects or 'ways of thinking' about objects, if no object presents itself to an individual there obviously cannot be any *way* or *manner* in which that individual is thinking about an object.

²² McDowell 1990, Peacocke 1983, 1991 and Campbell 1997, despite their difference, all rightly emphasise the crucial role that locating objects plays in Evans's theory of demonstrative thought. It is precisely his ignoring of this essential element of Evans's theory that vitiates Kent Bach's (1987) criticisms of it.

Notice that this is in stark contrast to the Burgean view whereby a singular thought with intentional content is secured by way of the thinker engaging in an act of reference or application of a 'mental indexical' that does not have to be successful. Such acts, for Burge (1983), are not individuated in terms of the agent *successfully* applying his mental indexicals: 'Applications may be either occurrent acts or continuing dispositions to occurrent acts. ... it should be noted that there may be an application without its being *to* any object' (p. 85). As he explains, 'applications ... are individuated with an eye toward accounting for the individual's cognitive life over time. What counts as the same application depends on the individual's memory and his own sense of whether he has switched referents or not'. (ibid., pp. 90-91). For Evans and McDowell, of course, if an individual ends up in a situation in which he is either hallucinating or failing to track a single object his 'cognitive life over time' will not consist in any *singular* thoughts whatever else it might consist in (such as purely descriptive—quantificational—thoughts).

Evans remarks, against Frege, that 'Where thoughts, or beliefs, are concerned, surely failing to have the value True *just is* having the value false' (p. 25). Burge, of course, unlike Frege, agrees with this; his free logic is constructed with just such an assumption in mind. Since both sides agree, against Frege, on the relation between thoughts and truth *values*, yet Burge rejects object-dependence while Evans and McDowell embrace it, their disagreement about empty singular thoughts can only be over the relation between thoughts and truth *conditions*. Though Burge never squarely confronts the issue, because it is buried in his primary project of constructing a semantics and logic for indexical languages containing empty singular terms, he appears prepared to allow for thoughts without truth conditions. The object-dependent theorist, by contrast, does not allow this. On Evans's and McDowell's Fregean view, the intentional content of a thought is essentially truth conditional because the content of a thought is precisely something that represents the world as being a certain way: the intentional content of a thought lays down correctness conditions that the world must meet in order for the thought to be true. Unlike Burge, they adopt the view that since an

atomic sentence containing an empty singular term does not express a thought, because it has no truth conditions, it cannot have a truth value (Evans, 1982, p. 25; McDowell, 1982, p. 304). For Burge, recall, such sentences, failing as they do to have truth conditions (they have only conditional truth conditions), are simply assigned the value false in virtue of bivalence. That the debate here is over truth conditions rather than truth values is further illustrated by the fact that the only empty singular terms Evans is willing to countenance as fit to figure in sentences that can express genuine thoughts are those that are associated with clear descriptive conditions: namely, what he calls ‘descriptive names’ (1982, §§1.7, 1.8, 2.3). This is because only with this kind of empty singular term can sentences embedding them have determinate truth conditions, and hence, express thoughts. Evans adopts a negative free logic akin to Burge’s in which atomic sentences containing descriptive names are counted false. I shall return to the issue of truth conditions in the next chapter.²³

3. Explanation revisited

The foregoing is a broad picture of the most sophisticated version of the object-dependent view of singular thought and its most important differences from its major competitor. In the rest of this chapter I consider whether an argument in favour of the object-dependent view of singular thought that invokes considerations of psychological explanation is sound. I shall argue that it is not and that, generally speaking, the dispute between the object-dependent theorists and the dual-component theorists cannot be settled on grounds that appeal to psychological explanation. In the next chapter I move to the non-explanatory considerations pro and con each singular thought theory and conclude that with respect to perceptual demonstrative thoughts neither theory is fully satisfactory. I then offer a sketch of what I think a satisfactory theory might look like.

²³ Issues related to these are discussed in further detail, in the context of the relation between Frege’s philosophy and truth-theoretic theories of meaning, by Dummett 1973, chapter 12, 1981, pp. 129-139; McDowell 1977, 1982; Higginbotham 1984; and Sainsbury 1997.

With this sketch in place I return in the final two chapters to elaborating and defending the account of *de re* explanation introduced in the first chapter.

3.1 Whither the explanatory necessity of object-dependent thoughts?

The dispute between dual-component theorists and object-dependent theorists is often played out against the background of psychological explanation, as if either view could be established or refuted by considering its nature.²⁴ Indeed, one recent critic of object-dependence has said of Evans and McDowell that ‘one of their central arguments for the existence of object-dependent thoughts is the indispensability, in the psychological explanation of intentional action, of reference to such singular thoughts’ (Noonan, 1991, p. 1) Now, as far as I am aware, neither Evans nor McDowell explicitly argues for the existence of object-dependent thoughts on the grounds that reference to them is necessary in the psychological explanation of intentional action. Nevertheless, since the idea has gained some currency in the literature it is worth examining in detail to see what is wrong with it. As I shall try to show, attention to the distinction between tryings and doings, together with the account I have given of how these types of behaviour are explained, not only casts serious doubt on the prospects for any such explanatory defence of object-dependent thoughts, but also brings out certain confusions in previous criticisms of it. In short, I do not believe that the issue of the connection between object-dependence and psychological explanation has been properly laid to rest; I hope to do that here.

As we have seen, the Evans-McDowell view of singular thought is a synthesis of Russellian and Fregean ideas. From Russell comes the idea that singular thoughts are object-dependent in the sense that the very existence of the thought depends on the existence of its object. The motivation for this view, which will be discussed at greater length in chapter 3, is the idea that to have a thought a thinker must know how the

²⁴ E.g., Carruthers 1987, 1988; McCulloch 1988, 1989; Noonan 1986, 1991; Crawford 1998.

thought represents things as being. If the thought in question is singular then for the thinker to fulfil this requirement he must know which object it is that is represented and how it is so represented. This is the only way a singular thought can be targeted on an individual object. So object-dependence is *au fond* driven by the principle that, as Evans puts it, ‘in order for a subject to be credited with the thought that *p*, he must know what it is for it to be the case that *p*’ (1982, p. 105).

From Frege comes the principle about what McDowell (1986) refers to as the ‘topology of psychological space’ (p. 145). This is the principle that ‘if some notion like that of representational content is to serve in an illuminatingly organised account of our psychological economy, it must be such as not to allow one without irrationality to hold rationally conflicting attitudes to one and the same content’ (p. 142). This is the principle that Evans (1982, pp. 18-19) calls the Intuitive Criterion of Difference (ICD) and it commonly glossed by saying that Fregean senses are individuated by ‘cognitive significance’ (Peacocke, 1981).²⁵ I shall examine it in detail in the next section.

McDowell (1986) goes on to say that the principle that thoughts are governed by the ICD ‘is a way of insisting on the theoretical role of thoughts (or contents) in characterising a rationally organised psychological structure’ (p. 142) and that there is no good reason against combining this with Russell’s equally correct view that the object of a singular thought enters into the content of the thought. Whence we end up in the happy position that ‘Fregean singular thoughts can be both object-dependent and just as finely individuated as perspicuous psychological description requires’ (*ibid.*).

We do not yet have an argument for the necessity of object-dependent singular thoughts in the psychological explanation of intentional action. It may seem that this conclusion is very close at hand, however. Psychological explanation of intentional action is, after all, rationalisation and thoughts governed by the ICD are precisely what guarantees their aptness as *reasons* for action. The implicit premise is, then, that thoughts governed by the ICD are required in the psychological explanation of intentional action. Notice, however, that the *object-dependent aspect* of object-dependent

²⁵ Cf. Schiffer (1978) on ‘Frege’s Constraint’.

singular thoughts—the Russellian element—has not played any role at all in reaching this conclusion.

As far as I can see, the situation is this. On the one hand, what we have is an argument for the *Russellian* object-dependence of singular thoughts which turns on the principle that to entertain a proposition one must know its truth conditions. The Russellian status of singular thoughts is evidently arrived at by a conceptual analysis of what constitutes entertaining a thought about an object. There is a constitutive connection between intentional content and truth conditions. On the other hand, we have the argument that if singular thoughts are to ‘figure in the direct delineation of the contours of thought’ (McDowell, 1986, p. 142) then they must be subject to *Frege’s* ICD and that only a ‘direct delineation of the contours of thought’ is adequate to explain intentional action. Nothing that has been said so far excludes the position that the only general requirement on the kind of singular thoughts suitable for the psychological explanation of intentional action is that they be governed by the ICD. No commitment is made either way as to the Russellian status of such thoughts—though such a status may be established on independent grounds.

As far as Evans and McDowell are concerned, then, the constitutive connection between singular thought and psychological explanation appears to be due entirely to Frege’s ICD and has nothing especially to do with object-dependence. Indeed, when Evans (1982) remarks that, for Frege, ‘The link between the notion of sense and the ordinary notions of propositional-attitude psychology was extremely direct’ (p.18) it is, he claims, the ICD that forges the link.

In the first chapter I argued that notional attributions explain tryings and relational attributions explain doings. I shall now show that the ICD and Quine’s ban on the thought-language disparity (LTD) schema—the ban on instantiations of the conjunctive schema: *x* sincerely denies ‘*p*’ and *x* believes that *p*—briefly discussed in the first chapter are *au fond* the same principle. If this is true then notional ascriptions and ascriptions governed by the ICD are both suited to explain tryings. Indeed, when McDowell speaks of ‘the direct delineation of the contours of thought’ I believe he

must have in mind thoughts the ascription of which are apt for explaining tryings. If it is true that purely notional ascriptions suffice to explain tryings, and notional ascriptions are not existentially committing, then it seems there is no essential role for the ascription of object-dependent thoughts in the explanation of tryings. But we have also seen that it appears that relational ascriptions explain doings; and since relational ascriptions are not governed by the ICD it seems, once again, that ascriptions of object-dependent thoughts, whether they be relational or notional ascriptions, are left out of the explanatory picture. It is *either* the ICD *or* the relationality that plays the explanatory role—but not both at the same time. The object-dependent aspect does no essential explanatory work. I turn first to establishing that the ban on LTD conjunctions just is the ICD (§3.2) and then to showing how this fact renders reference to object-dependent thoughts, whether by way of notional or relational ascriptions, explanatorily unnecessary (§3.3).

3.2 The Fregean forge

Thoughts ascribed under the aegis of the ICD are no other than thoughts ascribable notionally. That is to say, the criterion for ascribing thoughts notionally just is the ICD, or rather, to be more precise, a principle that can be extracted from it. To see this we need to turn back to Frege's famous puzzle of the Morning Star and the Evening Star and see how his solution to the puzzle involved postulating a particular connection between thought and language.

As is well known, the puzzle is to explain how it can be that certain sentences are informative—that is, have a certain 'cognitive value' or 'cognitive significance'—while others are uninformative—that is, have no cognitive value or significance—even though they all say the same thing about the same things—that is to say, they have the same meaning (*Bedeutung*) or 'semantic value', to use Dummett's term, and are composed out of expressions with the same semantic values. Another way of putting it would be to say that what needs explaining is how someone can understand two sentences that say

the same thing about the same things, yet believe one is true and simultaneously either believe the other is false or remain agnostic about it. In an effort to avoid prolixity I shall sometimes say that someone who believes a sentence to be true *accepts* that sentence and that someone who believes that a sentence is false *rejects* it. So, suppose Ralph understands and accepts ‘Hesperus is a star’ and understands but rejects or is agnostic about ‘Phosphorus is a star’.²⁶ Now, of course, Hesperus=Phosphorus=Venus. So, ‘Hesperus is a star’ and ‘Phosphorus is a star’ say the same thing about the same thing, namely, that the planet Venus is a star. That is to say, both sentences attribute the same property, *being a star*, to the same entity, *Venus*. So, if ‘Hesperus is a star’ and ‘Phosphorus is a star’ say the same thing, and Ralph understands them both, how can he have different attitudes towards them?

I think it is important to stress that, as I understand it, this is Frege’s puzzle. If it is not exactly the historical Frege’s puzzle then it is at least the most *neutral* way of describing the central thrust of a puzzle first brought to our attention by Frege that does not presuppose any controversial assumptions or tendentious psychological or semantic theories about what thoughts or propositions are. The puzzle is not always set out in the proper neutral manner in which I have set it out, however—or so it seems to me. For example, it is often set out by *assuming* as part of the pre-theoretical data to be explained that it could be true that Ralph believes Phosphorus is a star and false that he believes Hesperus is a star (see Jacob (1997) for an example of this mistake). But to assume this is already to commit oneself to a theoretical position that goes beyond the data and, *pace* Jacob (1997, p. 217), beyond anything implicit in commonsense. On this tendentious view, the problem is then to explain how someone could have the one belief and fail to have the other given certain other views about ‘propositions’. But all that we are entitled to is the fact that someone may accept a Hesperus *sentence* yet reject or remain agnostic about a Phosphorus *sentence*. Indeed, that someone could believe

²⁶ Frege’s (1892) original examples were, of course, identity sentences. I use sentences not involving identity in honour of the fact that the puzzle is not about identity but about the cognitive value of sentences *simpliciter*.

Phosphorus is a star yet not believe Hesperus is a star is precisely Frege's *solution* to the puzzle, not part of the puzzle itself.²⁷

Frege's answer to the question posed a paragraph back is that though the two sentences say the same thing, and though Ralph does indeed understand them, he understands them *differently*. To understand two sentences differently is to associate different senses (*Sinne*) with them—since, for Frege, understanding an expression involves 'grasping' its sense. Frege called the sense of a sentence, as opposed to the sense of a proper name or concept expression, a *thought*. So to say that Ralph understands the sentences differently is to say that for him they express different thoughts; Ralph believes the thought expressed by one but not the thought expressed by the other. The reason Ralph accepts 'Hesperus is a star' is that he believes the thought that Hesperus is a star; the reason why he remains agnostic about 'Phosphorus is a star' is that he does not believe the thought that Phosphorus is a star. So, the explanation of why Ralph holds different attitudes toward 'Hesperus is a star' and 'Phosphorus is a star' is that he believes the thought expressed by the former but not that expressed by the latter.

The link between sense and ordinary propositional attitude psychology is, in the words of Evans, 'extremely direct' (1982, p. 18). This connection is embodied in Frege's ICD:

the thought associated with one sentence *S* as its sense must be different from the thought associated with another sentence *S'* as *its* sense, if it is possible for someone to understand both sentences at a given time while coherently taking different attitudes towards them, i.e., accepting (rejecting) one while rejecting (accepting), or being agnostic about, the other. (Evans, 1982, pp. 18-19)

Given that thoughts are also meant to be the *objects* of the propositional attitudes, in the sense they are what we believe, desire, fear, etc. we can say that:

- (a) If it is possible for someone at the same time to understand and accept ^[p] and understand and not accept ^[q]—i.e., either reject ^[q] or remain agnostic about

²⁷ Cf. Wettstein (1989) who emphasises the important distinction between 'the uncontroversial cognitive data to be explained, and the data-as-described-in-terms-of-Fregean-categories' (p. 327).

it—then that person believes the thought associated with $\lceil p \rceil$ and does not believe the thought associated with $\lceil q \rceil$.

From (a) we can extract:

$$(b) (x \text{ understands } \lceil p \rceil) \rightarrow [(x \text{ accepts } \lceil p \rceil) \rightarrow (x \text{ believes } p) \ \& \ \sim(x \text{ accepts } \lceil p \rceil) \rightarrow \sim(x \text{ believes } p)],$$

in which ‘x believes p’ is shorthand for ‘x believes the thought associated with or expressed by $\lceil p \rceil$ ’. (b) says that you accept a sentence you understand only if you believe the thought it expresses and that you do not accept a sentence you understand only if you do not believe the thought it expresses. With a view to focusing in on the particular link between thought and language we are interested in, the latter conditional can be formulated thus:

$$(c) (x \text{ understands } \lceil p \rceil) \rightarrow [\sim(x \text{ accepts } \lceil p \rceil) \rightarrow \sim(x \text{ believes } p)]$$

which, by contraposition on the consequent, is equivalent to:

$$(d) (x \text{ understands } \lceil p \rceil) \rightarrow [(x \text{ believes } p) \rightarrow (x \text{ accepts } \lceil p \rceil)]$$

which, by exportation, in turn gives us:

$$\mathbf{F} [(x \text{ believes } p) \ \& \ (x \text{ understands } \lceil p \rceil)] \rightarrow (x \text{ accepts } \lceil p \rceil).$$

Principle **F** states that believing a thought and understanding a sentence that expresses that thought are sufficient to get someone to accept the sentence, that is, to believe that the sentence is true. It follows, of course—and this is the important point enshrined in (c)—that if one does not accept a sentence which one understands, that must be because one does not believe the thought it expresses.

Given the connection between thought and language that **F** postulates we can now see exactly why Ralph accepts ‘Hesperus is a star’ but not ‘Phosphorus is a star’. Though he understands both sentences, which is to say that he grasps the thoughts they express, he believes the one thought but does not believe the other—he believes (the thought that) Hesperus is a star but he does not believe (the thought that) Phosphorus is a star. This is precisely the fineness of grain that McDowell refers to and that enables Frege to capture the way in which ‘minds are laid out’ (1986, p. 146).

To *believe* that Hesperus is a star is, according to **F**, to be disposed to accept ‘Hesperus is a star’ if you understand it, that is, grasp its sense. To *grasp the sense* of ‘Hesperus is a star’—that is, to *understand* ‘Hesperus is a star’—is to be disposed to accept it if you believe the thought it expresses. To *accept* ‘Hesperus is a star’ is to be disposed to form the belief that Hesperus is a star if you understand it. We see, then, that **F** forges a very particular connection between the concepts of *thought*, *understanding*, and *acceptance*—or, more generally, between thought and language. This particular connection has deeply influenced recent discussion of propositional attitude attribution and the nature of psychological explanation.²⁸

In his paper ‘A Puzzle About Belief’, Kripke (1979) draws attention to the link between understanding, believing, and accepting that is presupposed by philosophers working in the Fregean tradition who hold that there is an important variety of propositional attitude attribution that is, in Quine’s sense, referentially opaque. Kripke asks, ‘Why do we think that anyone can believe that Cicero was bald, but fail to believe that Tully was?’ and answers:

Well, a normal English speaker, Jones, can sincerely assent to ‘Cicero was bald’ but not to ‘Tully was bald’. And this even though Jones uses ‘Cicero’ and ‘Tully’ in standard ways—he uses ‘Cicero’ in this assertion as a name for the Roman, not, say, for his dog, or for a German spy. (p. 112)

²⁸ **F** is not, of course a principle propounded explicitly by Frege. Nevertheless, that Frege is committed to an assumption embodied in **F** comes out clearly in many places; e.g., 1892, p. 156; 1914, p. 321, and 1918, p. 333.

Kripke goes on to make explicit the presupposition informing this reasoning. He calls it the ‘Disquotation Principle’ (**DP**): *If a normal English speaker, on reflection, sincerely assents to ‘p’, then he believes that p*. Kripke remarks that ‘Taken in its obvious intent ... the principle appears to be a self-evident truth’ (p. 113).²⁹ However, he also speaks of a ‘strengthened “biconditional” form of the disquotation principle’ which adds that ‘failure to assent indicates lack of belief, as assent indicates belief’ (p. 113). It is precisely this extra assumption, that failure to assent indicates lack of belief, that is definitive of Frege’s notion of a thought and that enables him to solve the puzzle about the Morning Star and the Evening Star. The extra assumption is that *if a normal English speaker believes that p, then he will, on reflection, sincerely assent to ‘p’*. Donnellan (1990) calls this the ‘Reverse Disquotation Principle’. I shall follow Tomkow (1992/3) and refer to it simply as the Quotation Principle:

$$\mathbf{QP} [(x \text{ believes } p) \ \& \ (x \text{ is a normal English speaker})] \rightarrow (x \text{ will assent to } \ulcorner p \urcorner)$$

Kripke does not say whether he takes *this* principle to be a self-evident truth. Deferring for the moment the question whether **QP** can be reckoned along with **DP** as a commonsense principle underlying our ordinary practices of belief ascription, there can be no doubt that it is a principle underlying *philosophical theorising* about belief ascription. Since we want **QP** to apply to all languages, and since the condition that x be ‘a normal English speaker’ is obviously meant to ensure that x *understands* $\ulcorner p \urcorner$, it is clear that **QP** is, in all essentials, our Fregean Principle **F**:

$$\mathbf{F} [(x \text{ believes } p) \ \& \ (x \text{ understands } \ulcorner p \urcorner)] \rightarrow (x \text{ accepts } \ulcorner p \urcorner).$$

F and **QP** are not, of course, *strictly* equivalent since **F** is meant to connect the *Fregean* concept of understanding—which is essentially tied to Frege’s concept of *sense*—to the concepts of belief and acceptance. However, as Evans emphasises, Frege’s concept of

²⁹ Kripke restricts the replacements of ‘p’ to nonindexical words and does not discuss the difficulties

sense is directly related to ordinary psychological notions—it had to be for it to solve the puzzle of cognitive significance. So whether or not one thinks of understanding as the grasping of Fregean senses, and the latter as ‘modes of presentation’ or ‘ways of thinking of things’, it is clear that, whatever understanding a sentence amounts to, philosophical theory has it that it is at least supposed to be the sort of thing that disposes one to accept the sentence when and only when one believes what it says. To this extent, then, Kripke’s **QP** is no other than the Fregean principle governing criteria of belief attribution. It is a principle that has informed most of the subsequent discussion of propositional attitude attribution.³⁰

Now, for what it is worth, I think that **DP** is on stronger ground than **QP**. Since a proper treatment of the issue would take me too far beyond my main concerns, I shall simply record, fairly briefly, the reasons why I think **DP** is certainly true and why **QP** *may* be false and how I view Kripke’s ‘puzzle about belief’.

I think Kripke is right that **DP** is a self-evident truth; or rather, I think that there is some suitable version of it formulated more precisely to take care of indexicals and various psychological defeating conditions (such as distraction, deceit, tiredness, etc.) that is a self-evident truth. For it seems to me that part of what it is to be a competent speaker of a language is to be someone who can generally be counted on to believe what he says. Knowing a language is, in part, being able to communicate one’s thoughts to others. Obviously we can often tell what someone believes by his non-linguistic behaviour; moreover, we appear very often to know what creatures without language believe. But non-linguistic behaviour can only carry us so far. If we could not count on a person’s sincere and understanding assertion that ‘p’ as indicating his belief that p then it is hard to see how we could ever come to know anything more about what another person believes than that he is hungry, angry, happy, sad, or in pain. Understanding what a sentence says and believing that it is true surely is, *ceteris paribus*, believing what it says.

that indexicals pose for **DP**. In light of this, ‘disquotation’ seems a bit of a misnomer.

³⁰ Grandy (1986, p. 322) also notes the role that a principle in all essentials the same as **QP** plays in philosophical discussions of belief ascription.

It does not follow from any of this, however, that the *only* things people believe are those things they would *say*. It does not follow, that is, that understanding a sentence and believing what it says are sufficient, even *ceteris paribus*, to get a person to believe the sentence is true. If a counter-example to **QP** is wanted it seems to me that Kripke may very well have provided it. His stories about Pierre and Peter could be taken as constituting a *reductio ad absurdum* of **QP**. For, as Kripke shows, it seems as if we can derive a contradiction by assuming **QP**. First of all, we can tell a plausible story in which Peter understandingly accepts the sentences ‘Paderewski had musical talent’ and ‘Paderewski did not have musical talent’. It follows from **DP** that Peter has inconsistent beliefs. At this stage, we may or may not have a puzzle depending on how well-disposed we are towards the idea that people can have inconsistent beliefs. It is a puzzle for Kripke since he is not well-disposed towards thinking that people—at least leading philosophers and logicians (p. 122)—can have inconsistent beliefs. I myself am rather well-disposed toward the idea that even ‘leading’ philosophers can have inconsistent beliefs so I do not find anything particularly puzzling here. The answer to Kripke’s hard-pressed question, What *does* Peter believe?, seems to me simple: he believes that Paderewski had musical talent and also believes that he did not have musical talent. So I opt for Kripke’s possibility (*d*) (p. 123).

However, I prefer to describe Peter as having *inconsistent* beliefs rather than as having *contradictory* beliefs, as Kripke describes him, because I think it is important in these kinds of puzzling cases to preserve a distinction between *formal* or *syntactical* notions and *semantic* ones. Inconsistency is a semantical notion while contradictoriness is a syntactical one. Though Peter’s beliefs cannot both be true, and are therefore clearly inconsistent, it seems to me a further difficult question whether they are contradictory, in the sense of having the *form* $[p \ \& \ \sim p]$. After all, the whole problem turns on the fact that Peter *equivocates* on the two occurrences of ‘Paderewski’ in the two sentences he accepts and so obviously does not take the conjunction of the two sentences to have the *form* of a contradiction. If he did so take them and he still accepted them then we would conclude that he is an incompetent or deviant speaker of

English and that therefore we could no longer take his attitude toward sentences as indicative of his beliefs. That Peter equivocates on one of the major terms in the two sentences he accepts is obviously why, as Kripke remarks, ‘he is in no position to see, by logic alone, that at least one of his beliefs must be false’ (p. 122). It does not follow from this, however, that Peter’s beliefs are *consistent*—as both Kripke and Lewis (1981) insist is a *datum* of the puzzle. It seems clear to me that Peter has inconsistent beliefs. As I see it, the difficulty arises when we try to answer the further question whether Peter has *contradictory* beliefs—given the fact that Peter himself does not understand the two sentences he accepts as formally contradictory whereas *we do* understand them in that way. Pondering this question brings us rapidly into deep issues about the ontology of the ‘objects’ of belief: Does it even make sense to attribute logical form to *what* we believe?³¹ Having raised the question I must shy away from trying to answer it here.

Returning to the question of whether **QP** is true, let us continue the story in the following way. Peter still accepts ‘Paderewski had musical talent’ in a context in which he thinks a famous pianist is being talked about and so by **DP** still believes that Paderewski had musical talent. However, Peter has now become less sceptical than he was before about the musical abilities of politicians, and decides to remain agnostic about the truth of the sentence ‘Paderewski had musical talent’ in a context in which he thinks a former president of Poland is being talked about. Now, as Kripke says, in this situation it is only if we assume **QP** in addition to **DP**—that is, assume the ‘strengthened “biconditional” form of the disquotation principle’—that we get a contradiction. For, by **QP**, Peter’s lack of assent to ‘Paderewski had musical talent’ forces us to conclude that he does *not* believe that Paderewski had musical talent. This really is a puzzle no matter how well disposed one is towards people *believing* contradictions; for it *is* a contradiction pure and simple. The way out may very well be to abandon **QP**.³²

³¹ Fodor, of course, is famous for championing a positive answer, which he calls fulfilling ‘Aristotle’s Condition’: ‘A theory of propositional attitudes should legitimise the ascription of form to objects of propositional attitudes. In particular, it should explain why the form of a belief is identical to the logical form of the correspondent of a sentence which (opaquely) ascribes the belief’ (1978, p. 329).

³² Cf. Salmon 1986, p. 132.

Importantly for our concerns, **QP** is at work, for example, in Quine's (1956) argument that quantifying into propositional attitude contexts from outside is a 'dubious business'. Recall that the problem is this. Ralph believes that the man in the brown hat is a spy. This belief ascription is true in virtue of the fact that Ralph sincerely and understandingly accepts the sentence 'The man in the brown hat is a spy'. This is **DP** in action. No problem so far. However, given that Ortcutt *is* the man in the brown hat, can we not then say that Ralph believes that Ortcutt is a spy? The alleged problem with wanting to say this is that it is part of the story that Ralph rejects the sentence 'Ortcutt is a spy'. So if we did want to say this, we would find ourselves accepting an instantiation of the outlawed LTD schema (see I.1), namely,

Ralph sincerely denies 'Ortcutt is a spy' and believes that Ortcutt is a spy.

Quine does not give any reasons at all as to why such LTD conjunctions should be objectionable; he simply assumes that they are. There may very well be a not-so-hidden agenda behind this assumption, given Quine's sententialist theory of belief (I.1). This, of course, cannot play any role in Quine's argument on pain of circularity. At any rate, the point is that if such conjunctions were not objectionable, there would be no 'problem' at all about quantifying in for Quine to solve. The problem, remember, is that *if* 'believes that ...' is treated as referentially opaque, that is, if it is taken as resisting substitution of co-referring singular terms *salva veritate*, then it is meaningless to quantify into it. Evidence for the truth of the antecedent—for the alleged failure of substitution—on which the whole problem of quantifying in turns, is the unacceptability of instantiations of LTD schema—and the reason why such instantiations are unacceptable can only be adherence to **QP**. It is precisely Quine's assumption that Ralph's rejection of the sentence 'Ortcutt is a spy' indicates that Ralph does not believe that Ortcutt is a spy that leads him to disallow instantiations of the LTD schema and acquiesce in the referential opacity of 'believes that ...'. Without **QP** there is no reason to assume that there is something wrong with LTD schema instantiations, and hence, no

reason to assume that belief contexts are referentially opaque. If **QP** is rejected, then it is on the cards to endorse Ralph's believing that Ortcutt is a spy despite his protestations to the contrary. Of course, by **DP**, since Ralph accepts the sentence 'Ortcutt is not a spy' it must be that he also believes that Ortcutt is not a spy. So acceptance of **DP** and rejection of **QP** would land us in the situation where Ralph has inconsistent beliefs, namely, that Ortcutt is a spy and that Ortcutt is not a spy.

My goal is not to decide whether this is a good place to land. Notice, however, that the result that Ralph has two inconsistent beliefs—that Ortcutt is a spy and that Ortcutt is not a spy—is mitigated by the fact that, given the rejection of **QP**, it is not true that he would accept the simple formally contradictory sentences 'Ortcutt is a spy' and 'Ortcutt is not a spy'. For, by **DP**, he has the aforementioned inconsistent beliefs because he accepts the sentences 'The man in the brown hat is a spy' and 'Ortcutt is not a spy' (as well as 'The man seen at the beach is not a spy') which, though inconsistent, are not formally contradictory. In any case, whether there is anything wrong with people having inconsistent beliefs (even when they do not knowingly accept any formally contradictory sentences), and whether **QP** should be reckoned true and of a piece with **DP**, are extremely difficult issues that cannot be settled here. I have already given reasons for being sceptical about **QP**. The main point of this digression through the fundamental principles of belief ascription at work in Frege and Quine is simply to show that they are the same: notional ascriptions just are ascriptions governed by the ICD.

3.2.1 Fregean fineness of grain in action

As we have just seen, the Fregean fineness of grain yielded by the ICD, if true, enables us to explain a puzzling feature of people's behaviour toward sentences. Does it have any explanatory payoff with regard to an agent's non-linguistic behaviour? Yes. It

enables us to explain an agent's action under an intentional description, that is, it enables us to explain an agent's *trying*, in the way that was elaborated in I.3.

Ralph thinks Phosphorus and Hesperus are different heavenly bodies and that neither is the planet Venus—he has *told* me as much. I have asked Ralph to point out his favourite heavenly body, which is Phosphorus; he hates Hesperus and does not care much for Venus. So he wants to point out Phosphorus and does not want to point out Hesperus or to point out Venus. Again, he has *said* as much—‘We’ve got to be careful, I don’t want to point out Hesperus or Venus by mistake’, he says, ‘they look awfully similar to Phosphorus. Phosphorus is my favourite; I hate Hesperus and don’t care much for Venus’. So there we are out on the moor very early one clear morning, Ralph and I, and Ralph is pointing to Phosphorus. Although Ralph has only *done* one thing here, there are at least three different descriptions of it: he has pointed to Phosphorus, pointed to Hesperus, and pointed to Venus. But of the three only the first description is one under which his doing is intentional since only it is a description of what he is trying to do that he would acknowledge. In fact, the second and third descriptions of his doing are descriptions under which his doing was something he was trying not to do. So Ralph has succeeded in doing one thing that he was trying to do and failed in doing two other things that he was trying not to do. Unfortunately for Ralph, he does not realise that what he was trying to do was impossible: to point at Phosphorus and not to point at Hesperus, that is, simultaneously point and not point at Venus. Poor confused Ralph: he is in a love-hate relationship and does not even know it. Nonetheless, things are not all that bad, Ralph is not *irrational* —which is to say that he has his *reasons* for what he is trying to do. We can have reasons for trying to do, what are, unbeknownst to us, impossible things. In citing Ralph’s reasons, however, we need to ascribe thoughts that are governed by the ICD. For we need to distinguish the thought that *Phosphorus is my favourite heavenly body* from the thought that *Hesperus is my favourite heavenly body* if we are to explain what he is trying to do, namely, point to Phosphorus and not to Hesperus. The explanation is, of course, that he believes the former thought but not the latter one; after all, he accepts the sentence ‘Phosphorus is my favourite heavenly body’

but rejects the sentence ‘Hesperus is my favourite heavenly body’. The explanandum here is Ralph’s action under the intentional description: pointing to Phosphorus—for pointing to Phosphorus is what he is trying to do. So, why is Ralph pointing to Phosphorus? Because he wants to point to his favourite heavenly body and believes that Phosphorus is his favourite heavenly body.

If, however, we want to explain what Ralph actually *did*, namely, point to that chunk of matter orbiting the sun and known variously as Venus, Phosphorus, and Hesperus, then we do not need the aforementioned fineness of grain. For while Ralph can indeed try as he might to point to Hesperus and not to Phosphorus, he cannot actually *do* this. When he points, he points to that chunk of matter in outer space no matter what it is called. Since what he does he does to Phosphorus and Hesperus and Venus all at once there is no need to distinguish amongst different thoughts with the singular senses of ‘Phosphorus’, ‘Hesperus’, and ‘Venus’. We, as explainers and ascribers, need to describe the chunk of matter in some way, of course. Suppose we use the name ‘Venus’. Our explanandum event is then Ralph’s pointing to Venus. To put it in terms of my earlier discussion (I.3), we are here explaining an unintentional consequence of Ralph’s intentional action of pointing to Phosphorus (his trying), namely, his pointing to Venus (his doing), which is something he did not want to do but did all the same. The explanation of Ralph’s pointing to Venus is that he wanted to point to his favourite heavenly body and believed, *of* Venus, that it was his favourite heavenly body. Given the fact that he does not want to point to Venus, perhaps the relational ascription that he believed, *of* Venus, that it was not Venus, is also required. We are here reminded of another deluded soul who found himself in a rather less pedestrian predicament: Oedipus Rex. Oedipus was trying not to marry his mother and was trying to marry Jocasta (and thereby escape the oracle’s terrible prophecy). Unfortunately for him what he was trying to do was impossible—hence the tragedy. To explain why Oedipus married his mother we need *inter alia* the relational ascription that his mother was believed by him not to be his mother.

The need for fineness of grain in individuating an agent's thoughts is correlative with the fact that intentional action is intentional only under a description that the agent would acknowledge as a description of what he is trying to do. Oedipus's *intentional action* consists in his marrying *Jocasta* for that is what he is trying to do; he is not trying to marry his mother. However, since how people actually *behave*, what they end up doing, is not likewise behaviour only under a description that they would acknowledge, there is no need for fineness of grain in ascribing their thoughts in order to explain what they did. What Oedipus does he does to *the very women Jocasta herself* and so we can explain his marrying that women by citing, *inter alia*, the relational ascription that that very women was believed by Oedipus not to be his mother.

To put the point from a slightly different angle, though pointing to Venus is something that Ralph did, and marrying his mother is something that Oedipus did, since neither of these things was done intentionally, they are not things we should expect to give a *rationalising* psychological explanation for. Ralph does not have any reasons for pointing to Venus; on the contrary, he has reasons for not pointing to Venus. Similarly for Oedipus *vis-à-vis* his mother. What does explain the fact that Ralph pointed to Venus when what he was trying to do was point to Phosphorus is the relational ascription that he believed, of the planet Venus, that it is Phosphorus or that it is his favourite heavenly body or something to that effect. This latter is, of course, a relational ascription. And as such, it is not governed by the ICD: for, first, Ralph would not accept the sentence 'Venus is my favourite heavenly body'; and second, it is also true that Venus is believed by Ralph *not* to be his favourite star and not to be Phosphorus. *Near-contrary* ascriptions are true of Ralph. This, however, is no obstacle to our explaining his actual behaviour; for since what we want to explain is not something Ralph did for a reason, there is no requirement that we cite thought ascriptions governed by principles of rationality, that is, no requirement that we cite thoughts governed by the ICD. There is more to say about near-contraries and they are discussed in detail in chapter 4.

3.3 Object-dependence and explanation

There is a passage in Evans (1982) in which he *appears* to offer considerations in favour of the view that ascriptions of object-dependent thoughts are essential to a certain kind of psychological explanation. Whether or not this is a correct interpretation of what Evans is up to in the passage (on p. 203), it has been widely interpreted in this way. Sainsbury (1985), for example, endorses the view that ‘The need for Russellian [i.e., object-dependent] thoughts in our psychological descriptions is correlative with our need to explain *object-related behaviour*’ (p. 138; italics in original) and claims that Evans has an argument for this claim that is ‘both illuminating and decisive’ (p. 137).³³ Though neither Sainsbury nor Evans says exactly what they mean by ‘behaviour’, from the examples they give I think we can safely assume that they have in mind what we are calling an agent’s doing rather than an agent’s trying.

The argument in question occurs in the course of a general attack on ‘methodological solipsism’ (MS).³⁴ Evans’s alleged argument in favour of object-dependent psychological explanation is, in the first instance, a rebuttal to an argument for MS. This latter argument runs roughly as follows: since the behaviour of molecular duplicates is identical (because their brains have identical ‘causal powers’) the explanations of their behaviour should be the same; since mental states are what explain behaviour, this means that the duplicates have the same mental states (even though they are situated in different environments).³⁵ It is, of course, extremely important for Evans to refute this argument, for MS is directly at odds with the theory of object-dependent thoughts. Evans’s rebuttal consists in targeting the first premise. He rightly points out that whether the behaviour of duplicates is identical depends on how that behaviour is described. If singular terms are used to describe it, then the behaviour is not the same in both cases and so the argument that the duplicates must have the same thoughts lapses and the way is cleared for object-dependent thoughts. The core idea appears to be that

³³ Cf. McDowell 1984, 293 n32.

³⁴ See Fodor 1980.

³⁵ The argument will be scrutinised in detail and refuted in chapter 5.

when the explanandum is singular the explanans must make reference to object-dependent singular thoughts. While the argument certainly succeeds in establishing that beliefs about particular objects are necessary in explaining behaviour directed upon particular objects, it does not succeed in establishing that these beliefs are object-dependent.

To see why this is so, let us fix on an example similar in all essentials to Evans's: Burge's (1982) Alfred and his apples. There is an apple—apple 1—on the counter in front of Alfred and he thinks it is wholesome; wanting to eat something wholesome, he reaches out and eats the apple. Burge supposes that, counterfactually, it might have been that Alfred was pondering the wholesomeness of an identically appearing yet internally rotten apple. Suppose, then, we want a commonsense psychological explanation of Alfred's eating of apple 1. Why did Alfred eat apple 1? It certainly seems incontestable that this bit of behaviour of Alfred's can be explained only by reference to Alfred's thoughts about apple 1. After all, it would not suffice to explain his eating *apple 1* to say that he is generally well-disposed toward apples. We do not want to know why he eats apples; we want to know why he ate that particular apple. In order to explain this, apple 1 must make an appearance somewhere in our explanans. Now this surely must be right as far as it goes—but it does not go very far. In particular, it does not go as far as demonstrating the object-dependent nature of those singular thoughts needed in psychological explanations of singular explananda. It is, after all, an entirely general point about the logic of explanation that if the explanandum is the occurrence of a particular event then the explanans must include reference to that particular event. The covering law model of explanation got that much right. To press into service a Fodorian astrophysical analogy, if I want to know why the moon orbits *the earth* then the explanation I am given had better mention something about *the earth's* gravitational force. Merely citing the law of universal gravitation does not tell me why the moon orbits *the earth* rather than some other chunk of matter. Again, *mutatis mutandis* for Alfred and his apple. So Evans is absolutely right when he says that 'it is not surprising that singular beliefs—beliefs about particular objects—should explain

behaviour only in so far as that behaviour is describable with the use of singular terms' (1982, p. 203). But this point is no more the reflection of something deep about the essential nature of singular thought—namely, its object-dependence—than the fact that the only way to explain the moon's orbit around the earth is to mention the earth is the reflection of something deep about the essential nature of orbiting—that orbiting is, for example, planet-dependent. In short, what appears to be an observation about the nature of singular thought is no more than an instance of a general truism about the logic of singular explanation. Acceptance of this latter point can survive the rejection of object-dependence. (Related points are taken up in chapters 4 and 5.)

Consider the perspective on singular psychological explanation that emerges from Burge's writings. In the actual and counterfactual situations Alfred would be making a contextually different application of the same indexical mental content to different objects. 'The *nature* of his mental state is the same', as Burge (1982) puts it, 'he simply bears different relations to his environment' (p. 97). Though to my knowledge Burge nowhere discusses singular psychological explananda, I take it that on this theory the explanation of why apple 1 got eaten by Alfred would consist in part in saying that Alfred believed, of apple 1, that it was wholesome. This, of course, is a relational ascription. As such, it explains what Alfred did, namely, eat apple 1. To explain why Alfred ate apple 2 we say that it was apple 2 that Alfred believed to be wholesome. Apple 2, of course, is rotten. So maybe we want to know why Alfred, wanting to eat something wholesome, ate that rotten apple. The explanation would be that that rotten apple was believed by Alfred to be wholesome. Notice that the relational ascription is necessary here; the notional ascription that Alfred thought that that rotten apple was wholesome does not make any sense.

Evans's example involves two *Doppelgänger* each searching a different place for a cat they think is there. The respective explananda are A's disposition to search *p1* (the place where he is) and B's disposition to search *p2* (the place where he is). Evans's point is that A's singular belief will only explain one kind of behaviour: searching *p1*. I submit that if what wants explaining is A's searching *p1*, then A's

belief, of p1, that it harbours a cat, will do the trick. Once again, though, this does not show that the mental content of A's belief with respect to p1 is object-dependent in that it is a content that B's thought with respect to p2 could not have. Evans, of course, has other reasons for thinking this, namely, the insistence that content is truth conditional. (This is discussed in the next chapter.)

Burge (1982) is at pains to emphasise that, in his opinion, the difference between apples 1 and 2 'does not bear on Alfred's mind in any sense that would immediately affect explanation of Alfred's behaviour or assessment of the rationality of his mental activity' (p. 99). As we have just seen, this view is quite consistent with holding that relational or *de re* attributions that make reference to the difference between apples 1 and 2 are necessary in an explanation of Alfred's behaviour *vis-à-vis* either of the apples. Burge's reference to the rationality of Alfred's mental activity, and to the fact that identities and differences among objects must impinge on Alfred's consciousness in order to affect explanations of his behaviour, are clear indications that the kind of behaviour he is talking about cannot be Alfred's reaching out for *apple 1* or his reaching out for *apple 2*. Rather, it must be something that Alfred does in *both* situations, that is, some intentional action in which Alfred is engaging in both situations. It cannot be *reaching out for an apple*, of course, because, according to Burge's theory, Alfred can have a thought with the same apple-ish content even in a counterfactual situation in which there is no apple and Alfred is hallucinating one (Burge, 1983, 1991). In such a situation Alfred is not actually reaching out for any apple. So, presumably, Alfred's action in all three situations is his *trying to reach out for an apple*, or to put things from Alfred's point of view, his *trying to reach out for that apple*. I presume that since Burge thinks Alfred can think *that apple is wholesome* even in the absence of any apple for his demonstrative application to latch onto, he also thinks that Alfred can try to reach out for and eat *that apple* even when there is no apple to be eaten. Tryings are, in this sense, just propositional attitudes. This comes as no surprise, of course, since we have already seen that notional attributions—that is, attributions governed by the ICD—explain tryings and Burge is explicit that 'the obliquely occurring expressions in

propositional attitude attribution ... are the stuff of which explanations of his actions and assessments of his rationality are made' (ibid.). By 'actions' here Burge can only mean the things agents try to do.

So, Burge's view of singular thought meshes well with the bipartite model of psychological explanation introduced in the first chapter. Burge's claim that the obliquely occurring expressions in content clauses are the 'stuff' of action explanations just is the claim that notional ascriptions explain tryings. Though Burge does not consider the explanation of doings, his account of *de re* belief easily accommodates the view that relational ascriptions explain doings. We must conclude, however, that the ascription, whether relational or notional, of object-dependent thoughts plays no special role in commonsense psychological explanation. For what does the work in the explanation of a trying is the fact that the notional ascription is governed by the ICD; and what does the explanatory work when it comes to explaining doings is the relationality of the relational ascription. The *combination* of the ICD and relatedness to objects, which is definitive of object-dependent thoughts, appears to play no indispensable explanatory role—not even in explanations of intentional doings, or to put it the other way around, successful tryings.

It might seem as if it is here, with successful tryings, that we require reference to object-dependent thoughts. Perhaps this is what Sainsbury (and Evans) have in mind. Perhaps their behavioural explanandum is not, as I suggested, a doing, but rather a *successful trying*. The idea might then be that it is in the explanation of successful tryings that reference to object-dependent thoughts is required. But this is not so. For we can easily explain a successful trying with a combination of a notional ascription and a relational ascription. How do we explain Ralph's intentionally shaking Ortcutt's hand? That is, how do we explain the fact that, in trying to shake Ortcutt's hand, Ralph actually pulled it off, he actually did shake Ortcutt's hand? We do so by saying that he wanted to shake a pillar's hand and believed that Ortcutt was a pillar (notional) and, more than that, it was, lo and behold, Ortcutt, rather than someone else, who was believed by Ralph to be the pillar (relational). That is to say, the fact that Ralph's belief that

Ortcutt is a pillar was a belief *of Ortcutt* is what explains why Ralph's trying was successful.³⁶

The reply to the objection from successful tryings must be phrased carefully, however. The main point is that if one is content to accept a dual-component view of perceptual demonstrative thought, in which such thoughts are properly ascribed relationally, then one should accept the foregoing dual-component style explanations of successful tryings in which the explanans consists of both notional and relational ascriptions of non-object-dependent thoughts. Of course, if one is not content to accept a dual-component account and prefers, for other non-explanatory reasons, an object-dependent account, then it may well be that, from within that framework, the explanation of successful tryings requires explanation in terms of object-dependent thoughts.

In the next chapter I shall try to show that the doctrine of object-dependent perceptual demonstrative thought should not be accepted and for reasons having nothing to do with psychological explanation. This does not mean that one should accept Burge's dual-component view, however, for it too is not entirely satisfactory. I shall present a sketch of what I think a satisfactory theory of perceptual demonstrative thought looks like. In the final two chapters I shall show how this view of perceptual demonstrative thought combines with the account, given in the first chapter, of how relational ascriptions explain doings, to form a coherent account of how the *de re* psychological explanation of action upon objects works.

4. Summary

The main points of this chapter are the following.

- (1) Burge's dual-component theory of *de re* belief and Evans's and McDowell's object-dependent theory of singular thought represent the two main rival accounts of

³⁶ Cf. Brandom (1994, pp. 523-24).

perceptual demonstrative thought, in the following sense. According to the former, the intentional content of a perceptual demonstrative thought can remain constant across the duplicate and empty possibilities. Contrary to this, the latter view has it that the object of a perceptual demonstrative thought enters into the very identity of the thought's intentional content in such a way that it cannot remain constant across duplicate or empty possibilities.

(2) As McDowell in particular emphasises, ascriptions of object-dependent thoughts serve, in part, to characterise the psychological structure of a subject's mind in a rationally organised fashion. This way of characterising a subject's thoughts gives us the 'fineness of grain' needed to rationalise their thoughts and actions. This fineness of grain is a direct result of the fact that object-dependent thoughts are, in part, individuated by the ICD. Individuating thought by the ICD is recapitulated, in a slightly different guise, in adherence to the QP that underlies the ban on LTD conjunctions that is, in part, definitive of the notional style of thought ascription and which, in turn, is responsible for the fact that notional ascriptions are sway to the constraints of reason. In short, embodied in the ICD is a principle (F) in all essentials equivalent to the QP.

(3) It is the principles of rationality underlying, and the fineness of grain yielded by, the ICD that does the work in explaining tryings. Given the connection between the ICD and the QP, this is simply to say, as I did in the first chapter, that notional ascriptions explain tryings. The Russellian object-dependent aspect of object-dependent thoughts plays no role in explaining *tryings*.

(4) Doings can be explained by ascriptions which are not governed by the principles of rationality embodied in, or the fineness of grain yielded by, the ICD/QP; that is, doings can be explained by relational ascriptions. The Fregean 'cognitive significance' aspect of object-dependent thoughts plays no role in explaining *doings*.

(5) So long as one is content to accept a non-object-dependent account of singular thought, even the explanation of *successful tryings* need not make any reference to object-dependent thoughts.

(6) Given (3), (4), and (5), it appears that the object-dependence of singular thoughts cannot be established on grounds appealing to psychological explanation.

III

PERCEPTUAL DEMONSTRATIVE THOUGHT: PART 2

In the last chapter I discussed two theories about the nature of perceptual demonstrative thought and concluded that the dual-component theory comports better than the object-dependent theory with the account of psychological explanation introduced in the first chapter (I.3). If that account is roughly correct then it appears that the object-dependent nature of perceptual demonstrative thought cannot be established solely by considerations that appeal to psychological explanation. I do not wish to endorse the dual-component theory as it stands, however, for it seems to me that there is something right about the object-dependent theory that has nothing to do with psychological explanation and which is incompatible with the dual-component theory. Neither theory, I maintain, is fully satisfactory; for both contain elements that are objectionable on grounds having nothing to do with psychological explanation. In this chapter I shall explain why these elements are objectionable and present an account of perceptual demonstrative thought free of such elements.

My goal is to outline in a broad way an account of perceptual singular thought that preserves what seems right in both dual-component internalism (DCI), exemplified most prominently by Burge, and object-dependent externalism (ODE), exemplified by Evans and McDowell, and jettisons what seems wrong in each. In my opinion, what is right about DCI is the view that the intentional content of perceptual demonstrative thoughts, such as *that painting is monochrome* or *that man is a cubist painter*, remains the same across various possibilities where numerically different objects that are qualitatively identical—duplicate objects, for short—present themselves to the subject having the thought. It follows, obviously, that what is wrong with ODE is the view that the intentional content of a subject's perceptual demonstrative belief would necessarily be different from what it

actually is if a duplicate object had presented itself to the subject. However, what strikes me as right about ODE is the view that if no object at all had presented itself to the subject—if, say, he was hallucinating—then there would have been no demonstrative content for his thought to contain. It follows from this, of course, that DCI is incorrect in thinking that the intentional content of a subject's perceptual demonstrative belief about an object would remain the same if that subject had been hallucinating and no object at all had presented itself to him. To coin a slogan for this position: duplicate object, same demonstrative content; no object, no demonstrative content. My view, then, is a kind of hybrid that sits mid-way between DCI and ODE. I do not have a cogent deductive argument whose conclusion is that the hybrid position is true but I hope to show that it is at least tenable and, moreover, fairly plausible given certain fairly plausible assumptions, in short, that something like it should be seriously considered as what the correct account of (visual) perceptual demonstrative thought might look like. There is, however, an argument to the conclusion that such a hybrid position is impossible. At the end of the first section I shall present the argument and show how the hybrid position avoids it.

1. Between dual-component internalism and object-dependent externalism: property-dependent externalism

The intentional content of a perceptual demonstrative thought—an occurrent, conscious perceptual belief—about a material object is intimately bound up with the perceptual experience of the object upon which the thought is based. When I think to myself *that painting is fauvist* the perceptual demonstrative mode of presentation of the painting essentially involves my visual experience of the painting. If I were unable to *see* the painting, with all its wild and vibrant colours, I would be unable to form the perceptual belief and arrive at the judgement that the painting is a fauvist painting. To say that the intentional

content of my perceptual belief is ‘bound up with’ or ‘involves’ the visual experience upon which it is based is simply to say that the *phenomenal character* of my visual experience of the painting—how the painting is presented to me, how it appears to me, what it is like for me—in part determines the content of my perceptual belief or judgement. More specifically, it is the particular aspects of my visual experience’s phenomenal character, its *phenomenal features* (Langsam 1997), such as the painting’s *appearing red* to me, that in part determine the content of my perceptual belief. This particular ‘appearance of red’ is an instantiation of the phenomenal feature of redness and it in part determines the content of my belief that that painting is fauvist. It is, of course, a vexing question exactly what this relation between sense experience and cognition is. Is the phenomenal character of the visual experience itself part of, or contained in, the intentional content of the belief?¹ Or is it rather that the conscious character of the perceptual experience, while not itself literally part of the content of the belief or judgement, nevertheless somehow gives rise to it?² Since the conflict between DCI, ODE and the hybrid view does not turn on the answers to these questions I shall leave them moot. Everyone agrees that it is the perceptual experience of an object that provides the perceptual demonstrative way of thinking of the object that in part constitutes the intentional content of the perceptual demonstrative thought or judgement about the object.

The fundamental differences between DCI, ODE and the hybrid view stem, I maintain, from prior views, often tacitly presupposed, about the nature of sense experience itself rather than its relation to cognition. To see this, consider Michael Martin’s (1997) useful taxonomy of approaches to sense experience: the *subjectivist* view, the *intentional* view, and the *naïve realist* view. Briefly, subjectivist or ‘qualia’-based views treat the phenomenal or qualitative or conscious character of experience as involving objects or features whose existence depends upon the subject’s awareness of them. The classic

¹ Searle 1983 and McGinn 1982b hold such a view. For arguments against such a view see Peacocke 1986, 1989.

² As, e.g., in Evans 1982.

example of a subjectivist view is, of course, the sense-datum theory of experience according to which the immediate objects of experience are (possibly non-physical) entities that are internal mental surrogates for the perceived external objects and that possess qualities that correspond to the qualities of the indirectly perceived external object. Other subjectivist views that reject an ‘act-object’ analysis of perception, such as the adverbial theory, dispense with mental intermediaries such as sense-data, holding that the experience, or the act of experiencing, itself possesses the phenomenal features in question.³ The intentional view assimilates experience to intentional states, such as belief and judgement, holding that the phenomenal character of perceptual experience is constituted and exhausted by its representational content. The phenomenal character of experience is seen as nothing more than the way experience *represents* the world as being and is individuated by the objects and qualities that must be present in the world for the content of the experience to be correct. On this view, perceptual experiences are said to have a representational content determined by their ‘satisfaction conditions’ (Searle, 1983) or ‘correctness conditions’ (Peacocke, 1992). The naïve or direct realist view takes the phenomenal character of experience to be constituted by the actual external objects of perception and those of their qualities that are manifest to us when we perceive them. The external object and its observable properties literally constitute the phenomenal character of perceptual experience in the sense that one could not be in such a conscious state of mind were one not perceiving the object in question and its observable properties. The observable properties of the perceived object directly present themselves to us and thus constitute the phenomenal features of our sense experience.

This three-fold taxonomy is particularly apposite for our concerns since it categorises various views of perceptual experience in part by how they answer the question whether the phenomenal character of experience can have the phenomenal features it does without the objects or qualities in virtue of which those features are individuated actually

³ For a compelling attack on adverbial theories see Martin 1998.

being instantiated. According to both the subjectivist and naïve realist approaches, the qualities in virtue of which the phenomenal character of experience is individuated must actually be realised or instantiated in order for the experience to have that phenomenal character. According to the sense-datum version of the subjectivist theory, these qualities are instantiated by internal mental entities whose existence depends on the awareness of the subject; according to naïve realism these qualities are simply the manifest properties of ordinary objects in the world (whose existence does not depend on the awareness of the subject). On the intentional theory, however, an experience may be an experience as of some object or quality without that quality actually existing or being realised, since the experience is seen as a *representation* of the object or quality in question and representations, in order to be representations, do not require the objects they represent to exist. Thus Dretske (1995), a recent advocate of the intentional theory, speaks of a subject's consciousness or awareness of the properties of pinkness and rat-shapes when he is hallucinating or dreaming of pink rats. Of these properties he says 'They are the same properties ... as those who see pink rats are aware of' and that 'What makes a creature conscious of these properties is the same thing that makes a person who sees pink rats conscious of them: an internal state that represents something to be pink and rat-shaped' (p. 102). Unlike the subjectivist and naïve realist, the intentionalist has it that one can be *aware of*, be *conscious of*, objects and properties even when these properties are not in fact instantiated; in fact, even when they are instantiated, one is conscious of them in virtue of harbouring an internal state that represents them to oneself. Importantly for our purposes, however, the subjectivist and the intentionalist agree, against the naïve realist, that the hallucinatory experience as of a pink rat is of the same conscious or phenomenal character as a veridical perceptual experience of an actual pink rat.

The subjectivist view, especially in the form of the sense-datum theory, is largely out of favour these days; its position has been usurped by the intentional theory. (Jackson, 1977, however, defends a sense-data theory; see also the 'sensational properties of

Peacocke, 1983). Whether this is a good thing is of no great moment for present purposes, for what is of interest is what subjectivism shares with intentionalism, namely, as was just stated, that the phenomenal character of veridical perception is the same as that of hallucinatory experience. Since the intentional theory preserves this element of the subjectivist theory without the latter's notorious attendant problems, and since it has become more dominant in recent discussions of perception, I will set out the debate as one between the intentionalist and the naïve realist; though in so far as this debate over the nature of experience has ramifications for the debate over the nature of demonstrative thought, which is our primary concern, one could just as well juxtapose naïve realism and subjectivism.

After remarking on the fact that the intentional theorist and the naïve realist both agree, against the subjectivist, that it is the normal external objects of perception that are the things 'before the mind'—as opposed to the internal awareness-dependent features of the subjectivist—Martin notes that the disagreement between the two theorists is over the *way* in which the external objects of perception are before the mind:

The naïve realist thinks of this relationally: the objects are part of the relational state of affairs which comprises perceptual experience. The intentional theorist denies this relational character. Experience is rather quasi-relational: it has a character such that it is as if the objects of perception are before the mind, but they are not required to be so in order for one to be in this state. (1997, p. 85)

Though Martin does not discuss the matter, one version of the naïve realist view that the phenomenal features of perceptual experience are *relations* between material objects and minds is the Theory of Appearing (Alston, forthcoming; Langsam, 1997). The Theory of Appearing is so-called because it construes the relation in question as that of a material object's *appearing* a certain way to a subject and takes the relation of an object's appearing a certain way to a subject as what is most fundamental to the nature of perceptual experience. Moreover, according to the Theory of Appearing, the appearing relation is primitive: it is irreducible to more fundamental concepts, such as causation or tendencies to believe. It is this version of naïve realism with which I am concerned.

The relational character of sense experience commits the naïve realist to rejecting the view, shared by the subjectivist and the intentionalist, that experience forms a common kind between perception and hallucination. Since the phenomenal character of perceptual experience is literally constituted by the manifest properties of the external material objects of perception, if there are no such objects in which any such properties are instantiated, as in hallucination, then the subject cannot be having a perceptual experience, whatever else he may be having. For the naïve realist, there is nothing more in common between veridical perceptions and illusory or hallucinatory experiences than that they are indistinguishable for the subject who has them. Its appearing or looking to Roxanne as if there is a fauvist painting before her—her being subject to an appearance of a fauvist painting before her—does not describe a single kind of experiential state of mind present in both perception and hallucination. Naïve realism is in this sense committed to a kind of ‘disjunctivism’ about experience: the state of its looking to you as if there is a fauvist painting before you is constituted by an exclusive disjunction of distinct types of mental states: *either* one is in a state of veridical perception, which is an essentially relational state of affairs involving the very properties of the object perceived, *or* one is in a state that is not a veridical perception but is indistinguishable from one.⁴

It is this naïve realist view of perception, with its attendant committal to disjunctivism, which is the *first* motivation driving the hybrid position on demonstrative thought. It will be useful to say what is distinctive about the version of naïve realism that I favour and situate it in relation to the current debate about sense experience and perceptual content.

As I view the matter, the naïve realist, unlike the intentionalist, sees perception as fundamentally different from intentional states such as belief and judgement, in the sense that perception *presents* the world to us rather than *represents* it to us. Perceptual

⁴ There is debate, which we need not consider here, about how best to formulate disjunctivism. For discussion see Snowdon 1980-81, 1990, McDowell 1982, 1986, Child 1994, Millar 1996 and Martin 1997.

experiences are presentations, not representations. In saying that sense experience presents external material objects to the subject I mean that such objects appear a certain way to the subject. To say that in sense perception a certain object appears a certain way to a subject is to say that, unlike intentional states such as belief, perceptual experiences give us *direct access* or *direct awareness* of the object.⁵ Such direct awareness is the converse of the appearing relation: to say that a subject is directly aware of an object's being a certain way is to say that that object appears a certain way to him. In perception, as opposed to belief, the external world itself intrudes into our conscious awareness. So I maintain, with the Theory of Appearing, that what is most fundamental to perceptual experience is certain objects' appearing in certain ways to a perceiver. It is plausible that this is why perceptual experience is so much more 'fine grained' than belief. The 'sensuous specificity of perceptual experience' (McDowell, 1994, p. 60n17)—what is sometimes called its analogue character (Peacocke, 1992)—is conspicuously absent from belief and this is because it is a direct result of the impact of the multifarious features of objective reality on our senses. Alston (forthcoming) entreats us to carry out a version of the following experiment. He looks out of his study window at the variegated scene outside where he sees trees, birds and squirrels on his lawn, his neighbour working in his garden across the road, and cars and trucks driving by on the road. He then closes his eyes and thinks about the scene: he remembers the trees, wonders what the birds and squirrel are up to, hypothesises that his neighbour is still working, etc.. Then he opens his eyes and takes a look. He comments:

My cognitive condition is radically transformed. Whereas before I was just thinking about, wondering about, remembering the trees, squirrels, the houses, and so on, these items (or some of them) are now *directly presented* to my awareness. They are *present* to me, whereas before I was merely dealing with propositions *about* them.

Putnam 1994 also advocates a kind of naive realism-cum-disjunctivism that he calls *natural realism* (after a remark of William James's).

⁵ Cf. Searle (1983, p. 46) and Alston (forthcoming).

Näive realism, understood along the lines of the Theory of Appearing, offers what seems to be the most intuitively plausible way of characterising the distinctive nature of sense experience and how it differs from other modes of cognition, such as belief.

It is a delicate issue whether an intentional theory of perception is also committed to rejecting all versions of naive or direct realism and embracing some form of a representational theory of perception according to which in perception we are not directly or immediately aware of the properties of material objects but only indirectly aware of them by being directly aware of some mental representation of them (in this sense, a sense datum theorist who is also a realist, and not, say, a phenomenalist, holds a representational theory of perception). Someone who favours the view that perceptual experience has *representational content* may not see himself as committed to a representational, that is, *indirect*, theory of perception. Such an intentionalist's idea is presumably something to the effect that in perception we become directly aware of material objects and their properties by representing them in perception. The naiveté or directness of this position escapes me, however. If I experience the observable properties of things in veridical perception, if, that is, I am aware and conscious of such properties in exactly the same way I experience those properties in dreams and hallucinations—namely, by my internal states representing them to me—then this seems to me to introduce a form of indirectness into perception which does not save the phenomenology of perceptual experience, namely, its presentational nature, its transparency or diaphanousness. So I follow Martin (1997) and Langsam (1997) in thinking of naive realism, as I understand it, as essentially committed to some form of disjunctivism about experience.

The *second* intuition motivating the hybrid position is a further 'näive' thesis about perceptual experience; it is the near platitude that objects present themselves to us by way of their qualitative properties, their colours, shapes, textures and smells—their 'manifest' qualities, as I have been calling them up to now—and not by way of their individual metaphysical or scientific essences, such as *being numerically identical to ...* or *having the*

chemical microstructure Our psychologies have been designed in such a way that our perceptual systems detect the *qualitative* properties of things and not their *haeccieties* in so far as haeccieties are not qualitative but involve the very identity or ‘quiddity’ of things and stuffs. Perceptual experience can be directed towards particulars, of course, but it is so directed only via the universal features they instantiate and that are presented to us in our experience of them. These properties of which we are or can become aware through perceptual experience, and on the basis of which we come to have demonstrative thoughts or form demonstrative judgements, could have been instantiated by numerically distinct things without the phenomenal character of our experiences being any different. Perceptual experience is, in short, a purely qualitative affair: we are perceptually aware or conscious only of the qualitative features of external objects.

So the kind of disjunctivism that this version of naïve realism embraces is importantly different from the kind of disjunctivism found in writers such as McDowell (1986), Child (1994), and Martin (1997). According to Child (p. 153), the very identity of the object perceived enters into a specification of the intrinsic phenomenal character of the perceptual experience of the object; he remarks that the disjunctive view of experience is a ‘direct analogue’ (p. 146) of the object-dependent view of singular thought. In contrast to these theorists, the kind of naïve realism and disjunctivism that the hybrid view of demonstrative thought presupposes is one according to which the identity of the object perceived does not enter into the phenomenal character of the experience; only the observable properties of the object do. This is why I emphasise that the version of naïve realism the hybrid position presupposes is a version of the Theory of Appearing. Since the phenomenal character of sense experience is essentially a matter of an object’s appearing a certain way to a subject, and an object’s very identity, its haecciety, cannot appear to a subject, an object’s identity cannot enter into the individuation of the phenomenal character of perceptual experience.

Since the qualitative features that are perceptually presented to us in experience are objective properties of things in the environment external to the thinking and acting subject, the hybrid view is a version of externalism, in particular, a version of what Martin Davies (1998) calls *constitutive externalism*: namely, ‘that the fundamental philosophical account of what it is for an individual to have [a mental property] does need to advert to the individual’s physical or social environment’ (p. 327). The features of the environment that such an account needs to advert to are, on the hybrid view, the observable properties that objects and stuffs in the environment manifest to us by their perceptual presence—such as *looking red*, *feeling rough*, or *having a waterish appearance*—and not the objects’ or stuffs’ haecceities—such as *being identical to ...* or *having the chemical microstructure ...*. The intuitive idea is that if a subject is having an hallucination of a particular object and no particular object is presenting itself to that subject, then no features of the world are being presented to the subject in any perceptual experience, and hence, nothing is there to provide a perceptual demonstrative way of thinking that could constitute any demonstrative content that might figure in any perceptual demonstrative thought. But since, in a veridical perceptual experience in which the properties of an object are presented to a perceiver, such properties might have been instantiated by different things, in a counterfactual situation in which duplicate objects present themselves to the subject by way of instantiating the very same properties, the demonstrative content of the subject’s demonstrative thought is the same as it would be in his actual situation; it is just that the demonstrative content of his thought would be about or related to a different object. I shall call the view *property-dependent externalism* about perceptual demonstrative thought, or PDE for short, though I shall sometimes refer to it as the hybrid or property-dependent view.

A naïve realist like myself, who endorses the Theory of Appearing, takes the nature of perceptual experience to be constituted by its phenomenal character which it construes as a relation consisting of object appearing or being presented in certain ways to perceiving subjects. An intentionalist, as we have seen, thinks of perceptual experience as having

representational content. Pure intentionalists hold that there is nothing more to the nature of sense experience than the way it represents things as being (Dretske, 1995; McGinn, 1989) and so for them there is no distinction between the phenomenal character of experience and its representational content; both come to the same thing. There are other intentionalistic views, however, according to which the way an experience represents things as standing does not exhaust the nature of the experience. Searle (1983), for example, speaks of the way perceptual experience presents the world to the subject being ‘realised in’ the phenomenal qualities of experience and claims that this is one of the features of perceptual experience that sets it off from other intentional states such as belief, which are not phenomenally ‘realised’. Peacocke (1983) argues for a layer of ‘sensational properties’ in experience that are not representational and that are not features of experience in virtue of which experience has the content it does. There is clearly a possible position according to which perceptual experience has at least two main aspects or ‘layers’: a sensational or qualia-like layer that is non-representational and another layer of representational content. This representational layer may itself consist of different layers or kinds of representational content, such as the ‘scenario content’ and ‘protopositional’ content Peacocke (1992) claims to find in perceptual experience.⁶ Moreover, different answers could be given to the question as to what the relation is between these layers and what the relation is between these layers and the physical constitution of the perceiving subject—in other words, questions of supervenience arise.

In fact, one reason for positing a distinction between phenomenal character—the non-representational or sensational aspect of experience—and perceptual content—the representational aspect of experience—is to avoid an apparent conflict between externalism or ‘anti-individualism’ about perceptual content (for which see Burge, 1988b) and the view that perceptual content is a phenomenological notion. For one might accept that perceptual content is a phenomenological notion—the way perceptual experience represents things to a

⁶ For some interesting criticisms of Peacocke’s views on perceptual content see Millikan 1991.

subject is the way things seem to that subject—and find it plausible both that phenomenal character is locally supervenient on the physical constitution of the subject—it is preserved across all actual and counterfactual natural duplicates⁷—but that perceptual content is not. Davies (1992, 1996) argues that so long as we are careful to distinguish between the different kinds of supervenience relations that hold, on the one hand, between perceptual content and phenomenal character and, on the other hand, between phenomenal character and the physical constitution of the subject, there is no real conflict between the claim that phenomenal character is locally supervenient and externalism about perceptual content. But he emphasises that this resolution of the apparent conflict depends on accepting the distinction between the phenomenal character of experience and its perceptual content.

The relevance of this is for present purposes is that, *pace* Davies (1992, p. 44), the naïve realist does not find it at all implausible that phenomenal character is not locally supervenient; indeed, it is the very essence of the position that the phenomenal character of experience is partly constituted by its relation to the instantiation in the environment external to the subject of the properties in terms of which it is individuated. Consequently there is no need—at least no need stemming from externalist considerations—for a notion of phenomenal character that is distinct from perceptual content. Nor is there any worry about a possible disparity between phenomenal character and perceptual content; the worry that, for example, a perceptual experience with the phenomenal character normally associated with viewing Velázquez's *Pope Innocent X* might actually represent Vermeer's *The Lace-maker* to someone. For the naïve realist, perceptual content is indeed a phenomenological notion, but the phenomenology of perceptual experience is a matter of how things appear, how they are perceptually presented, to a perceiver, and this is partly a function of the observable properties of the object perceived. While internal physical constitution certainly plays a role in determining perceptual phenomenology, it does not completely determine it; the manifest properties of the objects in the perceiver's environment contribute essentially to

⁷ Natural duplicates are those that share all their purely qualitative properties and that inhabit worlds with

determining the phenomenology of the experience. This is not say, of course, that the phenomenology of certain kinds of feelings or sensations such as nausea or pain or dizziness is not completely determined by internal physical constitution. Indeed, it seems quite plausible to think that the phenomenology of these kinds of experiences is locally supervenient. The naïve realist need only deny that the phenomenology of perceptual experiences is locally supervenient. So the naïve realist eschews any such distinction between the phenomenal character of experience and its representational content. For the naïve realist perceptual content is a phenomenal notion, explained in terms of the appearing relation. In light of this, when speaking of the hybrid position, I shall henceforth use the locutions ‘perceptual content’ and ‘phenomenal character’ interchangeably and sometimes simply speak of ‘perceptual experience’.

This is not the place for an extensive critique of the alternative theories of perceptual experience and a full-dress defence of the naïve realism that informs the hybrid view. The goal of the foregoing is simply to situate the naïve realist view in the larger debate about perceptual experience so as to convey a clear sense of what it amounts to. PDE has three guiding principles or ‘intuitions’. The first is naïve or direct realism about perceptual experience. The second is the essentially qualitative nature of sense experience. The third, discussion of which opened this section, is one shared by all theorists of demonstrative thought: namely, that it is the perceptual experience of an object that makes available the perceptual demonstrative way of thinking of the object.

Though these three principles may not strictly *entail* PDE, I believe they lead fairly naturally to it. Naïve realism and its attendant disjunctivism about perceptual experience are clearly doing most of the work here. According to naïve realism, when no perceptually presented properties are externally instantiated before a subject and impinging upon him—if he is hallucinating, say—the subject cannot be having a perceptual experience. By our third principle, it appears to follow that our subject cannot be having a thought with any

the same laws of nature as the actual world. For the need for this qualification see Davies 1998, §1.1.

perceptual demonstrative content. To this extent PDE is in accord with ODE and in conflict with DCI over the empty case. Consider now the duplicate case. Nāive realism and our second principle about the essentially qualitative nature of sense experience seem to lead to the view that when the qualitative nature of a subject's environment is held constant but the identities of the objects in which the qualities are instantiated are varied there is no change in the phenomenal character of his sense experience. Again, given our third principle about the relation between perceptual content and demonstrative thought content, we are led to the view that the demonstrative content of our subject's thought remains unaltered as well. In this case, PDE concurs with DCI against ODE.

Several points about the hybrid view should be stressed. First, the claim that we cannot become perceptually aware of the non-qualitative properties or haecceities of things and stuffs, does not mean that we cannot think demonstratively about particular objects but only their various properties. We obviously can and do form demonstrative beliefs and judgements about particular objects; but we do so on the basis of those of their properties that are manifest to us in perceptual experience at certain places and times. Second, just which properties these are is clearly an empirical matter to be investigated ultimately by experimental psychology or neurophysiology. Nevertheless, the broad empirical knowledge already embodied in commonsense gives us a rough idea of what some of these properties are: negatively speaking, we know that they are not haecceities such as *being identical to ...* (in the case of things) or *having the chemical microstructure ...* (in the case of stuffs or natural kinds). Indeed, the very possibility of running Twin Earth thought experiments—the staple food for thought of contemporary philosophers of mind—trades on our possession of such empirical knowledge. Positively speaking, we know what some of these properties actually are: *looking red, feeling rough, having a waterish appearance*. Again, the possibility of setting up Twin Earth thought experiments depends on such knowledge. Finally, the nāive realist view of perceptual experience and the claim that perceptual experience is what makes available the demonstrative content of perceptual

demonstrative thoughts and judgements is intended to be neutral as regards the debate about how concepts enter into perceptual experience. According to some, the content of perceptual experience—at least of concept-exercising rational beings—is a kind of *conceptual* content.⁸ Others hold that the content of experience involves a distinctive kind of *non-conceptual* content.⁹ The naïve realist view of perceptual experience, in terms of which I have explained the intuitions motivating the hybrid view, is only committed to something that most who theorise about these matters accept: that it is perceptual experience that in part determines, or makes available, the content of perceptual demonstrative thoughts. The vexing question of whether this requires that perceptual experience itself be fully conceptualised is an issue I cannot dwell on here.¹⁰ The basic point to keep firmly in mind is the obvious truism that unlike other kinds of thoughts perceptual demonstrative thoughts have an inextricable link to perception itself. As I shall try to show, that truism has been lost sight of and the damaging effect has been the construction of implausible theories of demonstrative content.

In the literature on the intentional content of demonstrative thought one finds two sorts of position. The first—which I have labelled dual-component internalism—has it that the intentional content remains constant across duplicate situations, in which numerically distinct but qualitatively identical objects are perceptually presented to the subject, and—most importantly—*across empty situations*, in which no objects are presented (because, say, the subject is hallucinating). So, according to DCI, the intentional content of perceptual demonstrative thoughts about particulars must be provided by something other

⁸ McDowell 1994, chapter 3, e.g., holds the view that perceptual experience is entirely conceptual.

⁹ Evans 1982, e.g., holds the exact opposite of McDowell's view, that perceptual experience is entirely non-conceptual. Peacocke 1992, holds that the content of perceptual experience consists of both conceptual representational contents, on the one hand, and non-conceptual representational contents (the 'scenario' and 'protopositional' contents mentioned earlier) on the other, and possibly a layer of non-representational features (the 'sensational properties' mentioned earlier) as well.

¹⁰ Alston (forthcoming and 1996) argues against the view that perceptual experience is fully conceptualised but that the Theory of Appearing allows concepts to enter into determining the nature perceptual experience. Further relevant discussions of perceptual experience can be found in Evans 1982, Peacocke 1992, Crane 1992b, 1992c, McDowell 1994, Davies 1996, Dretske 1995, Martin 1997, and the essays collected in Crane 1992a.

than the perceptual presence of the properties of the objects themselves; otherwise there could be no content in the empty case. This means that DCI is committed either to subjectivism or intentionalism about the content of perceptual experience; for only these views allow there to be any perceptual content when the qualities in terms of which the perceptual content is individuated are absent. It is not, however, very clear just what the DC internalist takes the intentional content of perceptual demonstrative thoughts to be provided by; whether it is some kind of subjective awareness-dependent features of experience or rather special kinds of representations. Burge (1991) appears to advocate an intentionalist approach to perceptual experience; given his account of *de re* belief this makes perfect sense.

Bach (1987), another advocate of DCI, argues that perceptual demonstrative thinking involves ‘percepts’ which form part of the demonstrative content of the thought and which are explained as ‘ways of being appeared to’. The demonstrative content of a perceptual demonstrative thought includes percepts distinctive of each sensory modality and there need not be any object that is actually appearing to a person in a certain way for that person to have a demonstrative thought with a percept. Peacocke (1993) speaks of the content of demonstrative thoughts as having the objects ‘bleached out’ of them leaving behind some kind of common residue or type that can, presumably, exist in the absence of any object needing to be bleached out. Elsewhere he presents a sophisticated theory of perceptual content in which there are layers of non-conceptualised representational content in perceptual experience—the ‘scenario’ content and ‘protopositional’ content mentioned earlier—that can exist even in hallucinatory experience (1992, p. 67). Peacocke does not, as far as I know, explicitly connect these two theories up. In earlier work (1986, 1989), however, he had maintained that ways of perceiving things—the ‘manners of perception’ that constitute the ‘analog perceptual contents’ of sense experience—while not identical to perceptual demonstrative modes of presentation nevertheless contribute essentially to their individuation. In any case, Peacocke’s current views on perceptual content and

demonstrative thought content certainly seem to lead to a version of DCI which rejects naïve realism about perceptual experience. I cannot canvass all the extant, let alone possible, versions of DCI. Suffice it to say that however the notion of demonstrative content is cashed out by DC internalists, and however much, if any of it, on their view, involves non-conceptualised perceptual content, the point is that since the DC internalist has it that the intentional content of demonstrative thoughts is something that can remain constant not only across duplicate situations but empty situations as well, he is committed to the rejection of naïve realism and to acceptance of some form of subjectivism or intentionalism about perceptual experience

The second position—which I have called object-dependent externalism—has it that the intentional content of a perceptual demonstrative thought is so intimately tied to its object that its intentional content cannot remain constant *even across duplicate situations*. What account of the nature of perceptual experience is this view committed to? McDowell certainly advocates a kind of naive realism-cum-disjunctivism about perceptual experience (see especially his 1986); it is, moreover, a naive realism according to which the external material object of perceptual experience itself enters into the individuation of the content of the perceptual experience. Evans, however, appears to differ from McDowell in both respects. For, first, he appears to advocate an intentional theory of perception (1982, p. 226) and, second, as we saw in the last chapter, he holds that the non-conceptual content of perceptual experience, or what he calls the *informational content* embodied in a demonstrative thought (more generally, in any information-based particular-thought of which the demonstrative is but one variety), is individuated in a non-object-dependent way by an open sentence (II.2.3).¹¹ So, according to one version of this second position, the perceptual content of perceptual experience and the intentional content of perceptual demonstrative beliefs are both object-dependent. According to the other, the perceptual content of experience is not object-dependent but demonstrative belief content is.¹¹ The

¹¹ Davies 1992 also holds the second version.

property-dependent externalism that I favour rejects both these views holding that neither the content of perceptual experience nor the content of perceptual demonstrative thoughts is object-dependent.

The impression one gets from the literature is that the available options are twofold: either a form of externalism in which content is tied to the very existence *and identity* of objects or a form of internalism according to which content is tied to neither. I submit that both views are too extreme and that we can gratify the externalist desire for a more intimate and direct relation between mind and world while at the same time paying homage to the internalist intuition that the very particularity of objects, their identity, does not enter into the nature of demonstrative mental content. To invoke Peacocke's metaphor, the *identity* of objects is bleached out but since the residue that remains behind is literally constituted by the properties of the objects gleaned in perception it does not follow that perceptual demonstrative thoughts are possible in the absence of any object at all.

The idea that one could treat the duplicate and the empty cases separately by holding that while it is true that there is no content in the latter there is the same content in the former seems not to have been considered. As I indicated earlier, the reason for this may be the thought that such a position is incoherent because the idea that the content of a thought could depend on the *existence* of an object but not on the *identity* of that object is quite simply unintelligible. For if the intentional content is in part determined by the instantiated properties of the object that it is about then it must be determined by that very object itself. After all, the property instantiations are inextricably tied to the object itself: they are instantiations of properties *by that very object* and so inevitably bring in their wake the object itself. One cannot simply shave the property instantiations off the object in which they are instantiated. In this sense, then, if the content is dependent on the instantiated properties it must also be dependent on the object itself. So the object itself must enter into the determination of the intentional content of the thought.

This objection misconstrues the hybrid position. Property-dependent externalism does not say that the intentional content of a perceptual demonstrative thought is dependent on property *instantiations*. What it says is that the intentional content is dependent on *the properties* that are instantiated. Since the intentional content depends on the properties that are instantiated, and not on the instantiations of those properties, the object in which those properties happen to be instantiated does not enter into the content of the thought. As far as I can see, there is nothing unintelligible about this idea that renders it a non-starter.

Though I cannot presume to have offered a fully worked out theory of this third hybrid position, I have canvassed what I hope are cogent considerations in its favour, indicating the general thrust of the position, with a view to offering it as a serious contender. The rest of this chapter is given over to supplementing the account by trying to show that PDE is more adequate than both ODE and DCI.

2. For and against object-dependent intuitions

The strategy I shall pursue in defence of the property-dependent view is this. There are various conditions that it is desirable for any theory of singular thought to fulfil, to which I shall shortly turn. Each of ODE and DCI satisfy certain (different) ones at the expense of not satisfying others; in this sense each theory grasps its own particular nettle. PDE satisfies all of the important desiderata and in so doing grasps fewer nettles—so it should be accepted. Before turning to the specifics, I want to show that an important intuition of the object-dependent theorist—the ‘no object, no mental content’ doctrine—can be maintained by a position that does not tie the identity of intentional content to identity of its object.

A certain difficulty we shall encounter, however, in defending PDE is that discussions and defences of ODE and DCI are conducted by their advocates with either the duplicate case or the empty case in mind but not both. This situation makes it difficult to

extrapolate from what the theory in question says about the one case to what it is committed or even permitted to say about the other. ODE theorists are usually concerned to defend their view that in the absence of any object to anchor one's demonstrative thoughts one cannot have any demonstrative thoughts. This is evident in the writings of Evans and McDowell who are at great pains to convince us that there should be nothing shocking in the idea that a subject may suffer the illusion of entertaining what seems to him to be a quite determinate thought even though it is not, because there is no object to which his thinking relates. Counterfactual situations in which a subject bears stable dispositional connections or informational links to different duplicate objects do not figure prominently in their discussions. Historically speaking, the reason for this is that much of this strand in contemporary thinking about thinking comes out of ruminations on Russell's views on thought and language in which the primary problem-setter is how to secure meaning or cognitive content where there is *no* object answering to one's singular thoughts. Conversely, discussions of DCI are informed by *Doppelgänger* scenarios in either their counterfactual or Twin Earth guises in which everything is held the same except for the numerical identity of the object of thought (or the physical micro-structure of the stuffs, in the case of natural kinds). Empty cases rarely make an appearance in this strand in the literature. Again, there is an historical explanation for this, which is that much of this strand of thought is informed by Kripke's counterfactual and Putnam's Twin Earth thought experiments about natural kinds in which the chief problem is what to say in cases where there appear to be *two or more* objects answering to the content of one's thoughts. This isolation of issues makes it difficult to see the viability of a middle position. Nevertheless, it is my contention that what DCI and ODE each say about one of the issues—the empty case or the duplicate case—does not translate well into the other and that once this is seen the prospects of a middle position begin to lighten on the horizon.

To get the feel for what I have in mind consider things for a moment from a relatively pretheoretic and intuitive perspective. Evans (1982) marshals two very compelling

general objections to Frege's 'attempts to discern sense where there is no semantic value' (p. 25). Both involve the connection between cognitive significance and semantic value. The first invokes the connection between thoughts and their semantic values, namely, their truth values; the second, the more general issue of Frege's metaphor of sense as a 'mode of presentation' of its semantic value. Evans claims that in the absence of any semantic value neither the notion of a singular thought nor the notion of a mode of presentation makes sense.

In order to understand the first, we must keep in mind the essentially Fregean background in which the object-dependent theorist is working: the view that thoughts must have truth conditions. Whatever else is constitutive of a genuine thought, it is at least something that represents the world as being a certain way and so is either true or false depending on the way the world is. Thoughts, then, at least beliefs, have truth values *in virtue of having truth conditions*. A thought of the form Fa is true if and only if a is F and is false if and only if a is not F . Unlike the view of the free logician (II.2.3), for Evans the only way in which a *genuine* singular *thought* can be false is if its predicative component fails to be satisfied by the object of the thought. If an alleged thought has no truth conditions—because, say, there is no a for F to be applied to—then it cannot have a truth value either. In this way, as we saw (II.2.3), for the object-dependent theorist, if a sentence fails to have a truth value it fails to express a thought, because 'failing to have a truth value' is tantamount to 'failing to have any truth conditions'; and an alleged thought that has no truth conditions is—by the very representational nature of thought—no thought at all. Given this view of things, Evans asks 'What can it mean on Frege's, or on anyone's, principles, for there to be a perfectly determinate thought which simply has no truth-value? ... [W]hat sense can be made of a belief which literally has no truth-value—which is neither correct nor incorrect?' (1982, p. 24). It is clear from what was said before (II.2.3) that Evans's bafflement is not to be abated by the 'manoeuvrings' of the (negative) free logician in which such a belief is simply *stipulated* to have the truth value *false* on the grounds of an

adherence to bivalence. For Evans, it appears that the operative notion of falsehood must be one that can plausibly be applied to thoughts construed as *psychological phenomena*, and for him this means that thoughts are false in virtue of a state of affairs in the world failing to obtain.¹² This, of course, is why for Evans the only kind of singular thoughts that can fail of reference are those that are expressible by means of ‘descriptive names’ because it is only with such thoughts that quite determinate truth conditions are associated.¹³ The immediate relevance of all this lies simply in the fact that one can share Evans’s bafflement at the idea of finding sense where there is *no* semantic value without balking at the idea of finding the *same sense* attached to *different* semantic values.

Evans expresses a similar bafflement at the idea of sense without semantic value when trying to ‘cash the metaphor with which Frege introduces the idea of sense. ... On my interpretation of the metaphor the difficulty remains acute: it certainly does not appear that there can be a way of thinking about something unless there is something to be thought about in that way’. (Ibid., p. 22) It seems to me that whether or not Evans intended to be taken at his word here, we should take his final existentially quantified clause seriously: ‘unless there is *something* to be thought about in that way’. For, again, one can agree that the idea of a mode of presentation only makes sense so long as there is something to be so presented, while maintaining that the same mode of presentation can be involved in presenting different things. Why cannot more than one object appear or be presented to a thinker in exactly the same way? Since we are here concerned with perceptual demonstrative thoughts, the question can be put by asking: Why cannot two numerically distinct but duplicate objects situated in identically appearing surroundings be, say, visually presented to a subject in exactly the same way?

The position I am recommending—the idea that (perceptual demonstrative) senses can present different semantic values is compatible with the idea that when there is no

¹² A proper treatment of this issue would take us into the most fundamental issues in the philosophy of logic, in particular, the theory of predication. I cannot do this here. For an engaging and nontechnical investigation into such matters, covering the free logic spectrum, see Lambert (1983).

semantic value there is no sense—is, of course, inconsistent with a central tenet of ODE, namely, the role of truth conditions in individuating the content of thought. But this is not, as it stands, an objection to the proposal for it is one of the very things in dispute.

Following Davies (1998), we can say that when it comes to perceptual demonstrative thoughts (and possibly other indexical thoughts), DCI and PDE allow a distinction between the content and aboutness of thoughts that ODE does not. The *content* of a thought is its mental component and the *aboutness* of the thought is an extra-mental relation that the content bears to its object.¹⁴ The truth conditional semantics of a perceptual demonstrative thought is a combination of content and aboutness. The aboutness of a thought obviously determines its truth conditions: different aboutness relation, different truth conditions; different truth conditions, different thought. According to DCI and PDE, however, the fact that two thoughts have different truth conditions, due to their differing aboutness relations, does not mean that they have different *contents*, that is, that they are different in any *mental* respect. Since ODE construes content, the mental aspect of thoughts, as essentially representational, that is, truth conditional, it collapses the distinction between content and aboutness. If two thoughts are different because they have different truth conditions then they must have different content, they must genuinely differ in their mental aspects. What I am saying in this section is that given the dispute over whether there is any distinction between content and aboutness, all that should be assumed in advance is that all genuine *thoughts* have truth conditions, that is, that all genuine thought is a combination of content and aboutness. This assumption is preserved by PDE and is in part why it can uphold the ‘no object, no content’ doctrine and at the same time reject the ‘different object, different content’ doctrine. In upholding the former doctrine, however, it must reject ODE’s truth conditional approach to the content of perceptual demonstrative thought.

¹³ See §2.3 of Evans 1982.

¹⁴ For a clear expression of such a view, though not in these terms, see the opening pages of Burge (1982) in which the example of Alfred and the apples is to be found.

So much for clearing away some obstacles to the development of the middle position. I turn now to the important desiderata for a theory of perceptual demonstrative thought and how they can be satisfied by the hybrid position.

3. Truth conditions and the intentional content of perceptual demonstrative thoughts: against DCI

First and foremost among these desiderata is the Fregean principle that thoughts have truth conditions. Thoughts, by their very nature, represent things as being a certain way and are true or false according to whether things are as they represent them to be. The second is that perceptual demonstrative content must be something of which the subject can be aware because of its essential link with perceptual experience. Senses, after all, are for the Fregean the way in which semantic values are presented to an individual at a time. Frege's classic example of the morning star and the evening star (1892), and of the single mountain seen from two different perspectives by two different explorers (1914), illustrate the point vividly. The third desideratum, which follows immediately from the first two, is that any project that focuses on truth conditions in order to give an account of intentional content must explicate those truth conditions in a way that reflects the manner in which the subject of the thought grasps that content. The truth conditions of the thought must be given in a way that displays the way in which the content is grasped by the thinker of the thought. These principles figure prominently throughout Evans (1982) and are used in tandem with fatal force in criticising competing theories. Restricting ourselves to perceptual demonstrative singular thoughts, it is certainly true that, if accepted, the above principles—which, joining them together, we can call the principle of the psychological plausibility of content-explicating truth conditions or, for short, PPTC—seriously constrain any attempt to specify the content of singular thoughts. For a variety of reasons that I shall not rehearse here,

PPTC does appear to rule out, for example, descriptive reductions of singular thought (II.2).¹⁵

Evans, of course, argues for more than these three principles. He thinks that a correct theory of perceptual demonstrative thought must further respect what he calls Russell's Principle (RP): namely, 'that in order to be thinking about an object or to make a judgement about an object, one must *know which* object is in question—one must *know which* object it is that one is thinking about' (1982, p. 65). And we have seen how, in the case of perceptual demonstrative thought, Evans cashes out 'knowing which' (II.2.3). Unlike PPTC, which is widely accepted, RP is surrounded by controversy and adherence to it is supposed to be what is so distinctive about Evans's theory. Whether or not RP can be taken as a desideratum that must be fulfilled by any coherent theory of perceptual demonstrative thought obviously depends on exactly how it is interpreted. The task of determining what the truth is about RP is beyond the scope of this work. Rather, since I find Evan's interpretation, in terms of possessing a locating ability, quite plausible I shall try to show, in the next section, that the hybrid position can satisfy it. My first task, however, is to show that PPTC can be fulfilled by a non-object-dependent theory, in particular, by Burgean DCI; I shall then turn to RP.

Burge (1991) is explicit in accepting PPTC; indeed, he calls it 'uncontroversial' and says that 'It helps define the project of characterising Intentional states' (p. 199). In light of it, he offers the following schema for the truth-conditional explication of the content of demonstrative statements and thoughts. 'That F is G' is true if and only if:

¹⁵ One reason is that the proposed quantificational contents are too sophisticated for creatures with limited intellectual capacities to have, such as small children or higher animals, creatures that certainly appear to have perceptual demonstrative thoughts about objects in their environment. Another is that such contents are simply intuitively extremely implausible to attribute to a creature (even with the requisite conceptual capacities) in certain contexts—as when the creature is looking directly at the thing in question (See Evans 1982, *passim*, but esp. 173n44). A third deploys the ICD, or, more precisely, the QP. It is alleged to be possible for a subject to have a certain attitude toward the candidate descriptive thought without having that attitude toward the demonstrative thought, thus demonstrating that they are not the same thought.

(a') that F is G [where one indicates the relevant F, and where 'that F' is not only used, but stands for the mode of indication used in the statement (or visual experience) whose truth conditions are being given] (p. 200).

Burge comments on this explication: 'the Intentional content does not include any physical object that is actually picked out ... The satisfaction conditions require that there be a relevant demonstrated object if the Intentional content is to be true. (p. 211n4). This gloss is obviously intended to show, albeit rather sketchily, how Burge's adherence to PPTC—his philosophy of mind and epistemology—is consonant with his formal-cum-pragmatic theory of the logic and semantics of a natural language containing demonstratives—his philosophy of language—discussed earlier (II.2.1). At first sight, however, it is hard to see how it can be. Recall that the very essence of Burge's view is precisely that the intentional content of a demonstrative thought is not truth conditional; the intentional content of such a thought is represented, in a canonical statement of its logical form, by an open sentence that is supposed to represent the application of the content, by the thinker at a time, to the relevant object. This captures the idea that demonstrative content can remain constant across duplicate and empty situations. How, then, can Burge claim adherence to a project whereby demonstrative content is explicated by way of a specification of truth conditions? Surely a truth conditional explication of intentional content ties the content inextricably to the object of thought. PPTC seems fundamentally at odds with the view of *de re* belief construed as about 'predication broadly conceived'.

There is a sense in which there is a real conflict here and a sense in which there is not; further, this is due to the difference between the duplicate and the empty situation. Turning to the positive point first, let us focus on the normal case in which demonstrative reference is successful. What Burge may have in mind is that the intentional content of a particular demonstrative thought can be explicated truth conditionally even though that content is not truth-conditional. Less paradoxically, the right hand side of the biconditional, which displays the intentional content of the thought by giving its truth conditions, is to be

read in such a way that, although ‘That F is G’ is a closed sentence, the demonstrative element ‘That F’ consists of two separate parts: the first being an open sentence of the form ‘x is F’ that represents the whole intentional content of the thought, its mental aspect, and the second being the object to which the open sentence is applied. Both these elements are present in the right hand side of the biconditional; the intentional content associated with the open sentence is present *in* the truth conditions *along with* the object to which it is applied. So the reason why one can display the intentional content of a successful demonstrative thought by giving its truth conditions in the special way illustrated by (a’), even though that intentional content is not itself truth conditional, is that the intentional content is, as it were, ‘part of’ those truth conditions without being identical to them (because the object to which the content is applied is also ‘part of’ them). This is how PPTC and the neo-Fregean intuition of no sense without a semantic value can both be gratified by a non-object-dependent theory of perceptual demonstrative thought, that is, by a theory that does not tie intentional content to the identity of the object of thought. *To this extent* DCI can abide by PPTC.

This is not, however, entirely satisfactory, which brings me to the second, negative point. In the empty case one cannot display the intentional content by giving the truth conditions in this special way because there are no truth conditions to be given. There can be no bracketed off-stage direction pointing us to an object that contributes to the specification of truth conditions. In such a case the right hand side of the biconditional is left as an incomplete, uninterpreted dangler unable to display intentional content truth conditionally because unable to display any truth conditions. This consequence is, of course, implicit in everything that has gone before; for we have already seen in the discussion of Burge’s formal semantics for a language containing demonstratives (II.2.1) that assignments of truth conditions are conditional upon successful demonstrative applications. In the empty case, however, since there is no object netted by the act of demonstrative application, we are unable to detach the biconditional consequent of the

overall material conditional in order to derive any truth conditions. The upshot is that DCI cannot ultimately sustain PPTC for its founders on the empty case. Though Burge claims to accept 'without serious reservation' (1991, p. 196) the view that truth conditions are intrinsic to thoughts it is totally unclear how this is supposed to be consistent with his insouciant insistence (in 1983 and 1991) on the coherence of genuine empty demonstrative thought. We are forced to conclude that despite his claims to the contrary, Burge cannot simultaneously adhere to PPTC and the view that genuine perceptual demonstrative thought is possible in the absence of an object for it to home in on.

Yet, while DCI must ultimately be rejected it does not follow that we must swing, pendulum style, all the way over to ODE. For one can accept that part of Burgean DCI in which the intentional content of demonstrative thoughts is not intrinsically truth conditional but rather comes to be associated with different truth conditions in different circumstances. We can also accept the view that the intentional content may be displayed by giving those truth conditions in an appropriate way without accepting the view that such an intentional content can exist in the absence of any truth conditions. The positive reason for rejecting the existence of perceptual demonstrative content in the empty case is that such content is made available by the way in which objects are perceptually presented to a perceiver. The way in which objects are presented to a perceiver is determined in part by the way they appear to the perceiver and this, in turn, is in part a matter of the observable properties manifested by those objects, properties that can be manifest by numerically distinct objects but not by no object at all. The requirement that perceptual demonstrative thoughts have truth conditions is, in a sense, another way of insisting that the idea of perceptual demonstrative content is at least in part the idea of an object appearing a certain way to a subject.

4. Russell's Principle and locating abilities

So far, we have seen how a view of demonstrative content that does not tie that content to the *identity* of its object can fulfil the aforementioned desiderata. To summarise, the view is that every successful perceptual demonstrative thought is a combination of two things: (i) the intentional content of the thought, canonically represented by an open sentence *à la* Burge, which corresponds to the way in which the object of thought is presented to the mind of the subject and which, in turn, is itself a matter of which observable properties are manifest in the perceptual experience of the object; and (ii) the object of the thought. In this way PPTC, and the view that perceptual demonstrative thoughts that each single out different duplicate objects may share their intentional content, can both be satisfied. However, it is an essential part of this view that in a case of a failed attempt at a perceptual demonstrative thought, due to delusion of some kind or other, there is no intentional content 'remaining' left over, as it were, and so there is no such singular thought, only the illusion of one. The reason for this, again, is that since there is no object singled out in perception there is no manner in which anything is presented to a mind and so there is nothing to provide the kind of content so distinctive of perceptual demonstrative thought.

The possibility of this kind of position has not been recognised because it is unanimously assumed that a dual-component treatment of singular thought walks hand-in-hand with the view that the mental component of a singular thought must be capable of existing independently of any object to which it is applied. It is assumed that a rejection of the possibility of empty demonstrative thought is *eo ipso* a rejection of dual-componency. The reason for the assumption that a dual-component view of perceptual demonstrative thought *must* allow the possibility of empty demonstrative thoughts can only be the tacit acceptance of a subjective or intentional theory of perception according to which the perceptual experiences that provide the demonstrative ways of thinking of objects have the character or content they do whether or not the observable properties in terms of which they

are individuated are actually instantiated before the subject. It is because the hybrid theorist rejects this view of perception and advocates a naive realist view that he can preserve the dual-component analysis even while agreeing with the object-dependent theorist that if there is no object, and so no bearer of observable properties, there is no thought.

What about Russell's Principle (RP)? Rather than try to argue that it is not incumbent upon a theory of perceptual demonstrative thought to respect RP, I will simply try to show that the property-dependent view easily conforms to RP. A few comments are in order about RP and its relation to another doctrine.

As we have seen (II.2.3), the background to Evans's (1982) theory of demonstrative thought is the principle that to entertain a thought the thinker must know what it would be for that thought to be true. Evans considers this principle 'truistic' and remarks that it 'is a form of words which, perhaps, no one will deny' (p. 106). Now, in the case of singular thoughts, RP can be seen to flow quite naturally—indeed, all too naturally—from this truistic principle. For if there is a particular object that must be a certain way for a thought to be true then the thinker must know which object it is if he is to know what it is for that thought to be true. So RP seems to be entailed pretty directly by a truism which no one would deny (cf. McDowell, 1990, p. 257). This is odd. Whether or not the 'truism' is in fact a truism, it is certainly widely held, perhaps even by the majority of analytic philosophers of language and mind.¹⁶ Yet when reading the literature one gets the distinct impression that RP is not widely held; indeed, I think it is fair to say that RP is considered highly controversial by those who accept the truism. This is rather puzzling: How is it that the one is widely held yet the other is considered controversial if the one entails the other by such a direct route? Evans himself certainly thinks that RP is controversial and in need of extended theoretical defence in the face of its opponents. So, despite McDowell's claim that RP is simply the outcome of an application of the truism to singular thoughts (*ibid.*), Evans does not appear to think it is. More likely, of course, is that it is the interpretation of

¹⁶ Devitt 1996, however, rejects the principle and charges its advocates with Cartesianism.

RP that is controversial. A suitably neutral or trivial version of RP does follow from the truism. It is just that many philosophers associate RP with Russell's own interpretation of it in terms of his special notion of acquaintance or Evans's interpretation in terms of practical abilities, and it is these non-truistic versions of RP that are seen as controversial or even rejected. Indeed, Evans remarks that 'The difficulty with Russell's Principle has always been to explain what it means' (p. 89). A discussion of just how strong a version of RP, if any, one is committed to by acceptance of the truism is beyond the scope of this work, as is any substantial discussion of RP in its various guises. My own view is that at least in the case of perceptual demonstrative thoughts, Evans's interpretation of RP is highly plausible and his defence of it fairly compelling and that many philosophers reject it because they simply fail to understand it properly. Despite Evans's extensive discussion of the connection between the *location* and identity of objects, and how perception gives subjects the capacity to *locate* objects, thereby enabling their thinking about the objects to conform to RP, Bach (1987), to cite one example, completely ignores it. He attributes far too strong interpretations of RP to Evans, only to argue, unsurprisingly, that they are so strong as to be quite implausible. Given the protean nature of RP, my strategy will be to show that one is not committed to the object-dependent view of perceptual demonstrative thought by acceptance of Evans's distinctive interpretation of RP and that, moreover, the property-dependent view conforms to it.

We have seen that according to Evans it is necessary and sufficient for knowing which object it is that a perceptual demonstrative thought concerns that the subject have the ability to locate the object in egocentric space on the basis of an informational link to it. As far as I can see, nothing in this account of 'knowing which' is incompatible with a dual-component theory of demonstrative content along property-dependent lines. Suppose we accept the principle that to have a singular thought one must know what it would be for that thought to be true and that this knowledge consists in the practical ability to locate the object of thought on the basis of an information link to it. Reverting to Alfred and the duplicate

apples, let us recall that, ignoring the predicative part of the thought, the property-dependent view has it that Alfred's perceptual demonstrative thought *That red apple is wholesome* consists of two components: the demonstrative content made available by the observable properties of the object manifest in Alfred's perceptual experience of it, represented, in a canonical thought ascription, by the open sentence

[y](Apple(y) & Red(y))

and the actual apple—apple1. Counterfactually, it might have been that this same demonstrative content was applied to a different apple—apple2. Though in accepting this account we are not thereby committed to accepting RP it seems that there is no obstacle to doing so. For it seems entirely reasonable to say that, in the actual situation, for Alfred to be able to think that that red apple is wholesome he must know what it would be for it to be true that that red apple is wholesome and that this knowledge consists in part in Alfred's ability to locate apple1 in egocentric space on the basis of an information link to it. Correlatively, in the counterfactual situation, Alfred must be able to locate apple2 in the same way. In both the actual and counterfactual situations the apples are visually presented to Alfred by way of a causal-cum-informational link that enables him to locate them as *over there on the right side of the table* and he can go over and pick them up and eat them. If all this is true of Alfred then he does indeed know, according to Evans, what it is for it to be true that that red apple is wholesome—for he knows which apple his thought concerns. But none of this implies that Alfred has perceptual demonstrative thoughts with different contents in the two situations. As far as I can see, the fact that Alfred knows that his thought concerns apple1—that is, knows that it is apple1 to which his perceptual demonstrative way of thinking relates—in no way commits us to the view that apple1 itself enters into the determination of the demonstrative content of Alfred's thought in such a way that he could not, counterfactually, have a thought about apple2 by means of the same

demonstrative mode of presentation. To reach that conclusion we need the additional premise that the *intentional content* of a perceptual demonstrative thought is essentially truth conditional. But this is precisely what both DCI and PDE reject (though PDE, unlike DCI, is able to accept the view that is not in dispute, namely, that *thoughts*, as it were, always have truth conditions). Acceptance of RP does not, then, commit one to acceptance of object-dependence—though, for all that has been said, it may very well permit acceptance of object-dependence. I conclude that embracing RP—granting that it is even an acceptable desideratum in the first place—does not rule out embracing the property-dependent view of perceptual demonstrative thought.

5. *Thought and essence: against ODE*

I have argued that DCI should be rejected because it cannot satisfy PPTC; in particular, it fails to preserve the requirement that thoughts have truth conditions. The contest, then, is between ODE and PDE. So far the property-dependent theorist has been on the defensive, trying to show that the theory can satisfy all the desiderata that a theory of demonstrative thought can reasonably be expected to satisfy just as well as the object-dependent view—even including RP. Can anything be said in favour of the property-dependent view that can actually tip the balance in its favour? I believe so; it is time to move to the offensive. For ODE cannot in fact satisfy all the required desiderata while the property-dependent theory can.

It seems to me that the great stumbling-block for the object-dependent theorist is the principle—which forms part of PPTC—that intentional content is something of which subjects can be aware. In a sense this is ironic because it amounts to saying that it is the very notion of Fregean sense construed as a way in which semantic values are presented to individuals that ultimately undoes the theory. How can this can be? Well, the idea of a

perceptual demonstrative mode of presentation is the idea of the way in which an object is presented to the mind of a subject by way of the subject's perceptual experience presenting the object to him. This much is common ground and, at least for those who accept the irreducibility of demonstrative content, it is nicely expressed by McDowell when he says that “‘that man’—when a man is in one's field of vision—expresses a way in which a man can be presented in a Fregean Thought, made possible by the fact that the man himself is present to the mind in virtue of being seen’ (1991, p. 218). The link between demonstrative content and subjective awareness is explicit in Evans (1982) when he remarks on the ‘connection between the concept of a mode of identification and the subject's awareness’ (p. 83). *Thought* content, as opposed to linguistic meaning, is a psychological phenomenon to be located at the personal, conscious level of the thinking subject. It is precisely the flouting of this fact that leads Evans to take the pure causal theorist to task. Evans (1982) attacks what he calls the ‘Photograph Model of mental representation of particular objects’ (p. 81) which has it that a mental state can represent an object simply in virtue of the object playing a suitable role in its casual history. Against this, Evans objects that it invokes facts ‘of which the subject himself may be quite unaware’ and that it is

quite obscure how, if one mental state represents a particular object in virtue of one sort of causal relation to it, and another mental state (of the same subject) represents that object in virtue of another sort of casual relation to it, the sheer difference between the causal relations could generate a difference in *content* between the two mental states, given that it need not in any way impinge on the subject's awareness. (p. 83)

What I wish to glean from this criticism is that a parallel point can be made about the idea, to which the object-dependent theorist is wedded, that the numerical identities of two different duplicate objects of thought are sufficient to create a difference in content between two thoughts about them. For, to echo Evans, it is quite obscure how the sheer difference between the identities of two objects could generate a difference in *content* between the two perceptual demonstrative thoughts about those objects given that it need not in any way impinge on the subject's awareness. Granted Alfred has a different *thought* in the

counterfactual situation in which he is perceiving apple₂. This is because the truth conditions of his thought differ and truth conditions lay down a requirement that the world be a certain way for a thought to be true irrespective of whether the worldly conditions required by the truth conditions impinge upon the conscious awareness of the subject. All this is fully consistent with Alfred's thought in the counterfactual situation having the same perceptual demonstrative *content* as it does in the actual situation. Indeed, not only is this consistent, but it seems to be required by the fact that content is something of which the subject can become aware.

I know of only two places in the literature where something like this point is made. The first is by Kent Bach. He remarks that 'there is no such thing as a representation (linguistic or mental) of an object's essence, particularity, or haecceity ... There is no way to capture in thought the 'particularity' of an object, for as far as the content of the thought is concerned, the thought could just as well have been about a different object, had a different object been in its place' (1987, p. 13n5). This is a very strong, and in my opinion, implausible claim. After all, whether one can represent the essence of an object surely depends on just what one takes that essence to consist in. If the essence of an object, *a*, is its property of being self-identical, for example, then we can quite easily represent it essence—to wit: $\lambda x(x=x)a$. My point is simply that perceptual demonstrative content cannot represent any such properties because such properties are not manifest to us in perceptual experience. The essences of objects, their very identities, cannot appear to us in perception.

The second place where a similar point about thought and the essences of objects is made is in a paper on Kripke's puzzle about belief by David Lewis entitled 'What Puzzling Pierre does not Believe' (1981). Lewis takes Kripke's puzzle (see II.3.2) to show that 'Pierre does not have as an object of his belief the proposition (actually) expressed by "London is pretty." For there is a possible world which fits Pierre's beliefs perfectly—it is one of his "belief worlds"—at which that proposition is false' (p. 412). The proposition

actually expressed by 'London is Pretty' holds at exactly those possible worlds where the thing which is actually denoted by 'London' has the property which is actually expressed by 'is pretty'. Very roughly, on Lewis's view, the content of a subject's belief is the set of possibilities consistent with what he believes; a set containing all the ways things might be for all he believes. So one way of saying what someone believes is to specify the various ways things might be for all he believes (see Lewis, 1986, p. 27f). Lewis describes a possible world in which there are two cities, one called 'London' that is ugly and one called 'Londres' which is pretty. The former is the actual London which has now become completely ugly and the latter is the actual Bristol with a similarly suitably different history (London has fallen into total decay and all its beautiful parts have been demolished and copies made in Bristol, in which a project of beautification has been undertaken). This possible world fits Pierre's beliefs perfectly, Lewis claims; for all Pierre knows it may very well be the world in which he lives. But, of course, the proposition actually expressed by 'London is pretty' is false at this world. So, Lewis concludes, Pierre cannot have that proposition as an object of his belief.

The relevance of this to my criticism of object-dependence is that Lewis diagnoses the error in the view that the object of Pierre's belief is the proposition that London is pretty as one of 'ascribing knowledge of essences that we may not in fact possess' (1981, p. 413). That is to say, since Pierre is not familiar with the essence of London, whatever that essence is exactly, it does not make sense to say that London itself enters into the individuation of the content of his belief. If Pierre was familiar with the essence of London, then the alternative possible belief world that Lewis describes would not fit Pierre's beliefs, because it would no longer be the way things might be for all he believes. Since the alternative possible world is the way things might be for all Pierre believes, since he cannot tell the difference between it and the actual world, he cannot know the essence of London. One need not accept Lewis's own particular possible worlds framework in order to think that there is something right about the central principle in his reasoning: namely, that the notion

of the content of a subject's thought is the notion of how things might be for all he believes. The second principle of PPTC—that demonstrative content is essentially something of which the subject can be aware—can be seen a specific application of this general principle to the case of perceptual belief. Now, one need not be committed to the truth of the general principle in order to think that it has a special significance when it comes to the particular case of perceptual demonstrative beliefs. The principle is overwhelmingly plausible here because of the essential link between perceptual demonstrative thought and perceptual awareness. For all that Alfred is perceptually aware of it may very well be apple 2 that he is thinking about. As Burge himself points out, there is a possible world in which it is apple 2 that Alfred is perceptually aware of and thinking about. Since, to put it in Lewis's terms, this world 'fits' Alfred's perceptual beliefs perfectly—because he cannot tell the difference between it and the actual world, because for all he is perceptually aware of it may very well be the world in which he lives—the very identity of apple 1 cannot enter the content of his perceptual demonstrative belief about the apple.

So, what is right about DCI is that differences between duplicates do not make for differences in demonstrative content. That is, whether it is apple 1 or 2 that Alfred's demonstrative thought is directed at is of no consequence for the individuation of the demonstrative content of Alfred's thought that *that apple is wholesome*. As we have seen, however, it does not follow that the difference between there being *some* object that one's thought is directed at and there being *nothing at all* that one's thought is directed at does not make for a difference in the intentional content of one's thought. For all that Burge's remarks about duplicates not affecting the way Alfred views things have shown, it may very well be of great consequence to the individuation—and indeed to the very existence—of the demonstrative content of Ralph's thought that *that apple is wholesome* that there be *an* object that it is directed at. Indeed, if we adopt the particular version of naïve or direct realist theory of perception sketched above, then the property-dependent way of looking at things seems obligatory.

In short, if we hold the view that the intentional content of perceptual demonstrative thoughts is necessarily something of which subject's are or can become aware then we must conclude that the perceptual demonstrative thinking going on in the duplicate cases involves the same intentional content. For this reason PDE is more adequate than ODE. We saw in the previous section that DCI also fails to satisfy all the desiderata. In the end, it appears that only PDE can satisfy all the required desiderata. These negative points against DCI and ODE, together with the positive proposal about the role of a naïve realist theory of perception in an account of perceptual demonstrative thought, conclude my case in favour of PDE.

6. *Summary*

- (1) The property-dependent view of perceptual demonstrative thought is driven by a particular version of naïve realism about perceptual experience and its relation to perceptual demonstrative thought.
- (2) It appears that a theory of perceptual demonstrative thought informed by such a view of perception can satisfy all the desiderata that a theory of perceptual demonstrative thought should whereas its rivals cannot.
- (3) DCI fails to satisfy the requirement that thoughts have truth conditions.
- (4) ODE fails to satisfy the requirement that intentional content be something of which the subject can be aware.
- (5) In contrast, PDE satisfies both of these requirements.

(6) Part of the reason why DCI and ODE fail to be entirely adequate theories is that they do not give any importance to the distinction between the empty case and the duplicate case. Attention to the difference between these two different possible situations opens up the possibility of a more adequate theory of perceptual demonstrative thought.

IV

***DE RE* EXPLANATION AND THE PROBLEM OF ‘NEAR CONTRARIES’**

Central to the simple account of psychological explanation that I introduced in the first chapter is the claim that relational or transparent or *de re* ascriptions of thoughts are a necessary component in any explanation and prediction of an agent’s behaviour, where the proprietary sense of ‘behaviour’ is what an agent actually does, what I have been calling his *doing*. In the second and third chapters I discussed the nature of perceptual demonstrative thoughts and argued for a particular conception of them that I called property-dependent externalism. In the first half of this chapter I bring together the two ideas—relational ascriptions and perceptual demonstrative thoughts—and argue for the thesis that *relational ascriptions of thought, in which reference is made to a demonstrative mode of presentation of an object, is necessary in the explanation of a doing involving that object*. I show further how relational ascriptions of perceptual demonstrative thoughts work together with psychological generalisations to provide commonsense ‘covering-law’ psychological explanations of doings. With this full account of *de re* explanation in place, the second half of the chapter is given over to answering what appears to be a serious objection to *de re* explanation, namely, that since contrary *de re* ascriptions can simultaneously be true of an individual they can play no role in psychological explanation.

It may be helpful to rehearse the argument for the thesis of the explanatory necessity of relational ascriptions given in the first chapter (I.3.2) before moving on to the more complete thesis involving perceptual demonstrative thoughts. Suppose Ralph is a contestant on a game show in which he is asked to open the door that hides the prize. There are two doors: a red one and a green one. The green one contains the prize and the red one nothing. Alas, unlucky Ralph opens the red door. We want to explain why Ralph did what he did, that is, why he opened the door that he did. The event to be explained must be described or

picked out in some way, of course; for I cannot so much as ask why a certain event occurred without describing or picking it out in some manner, even if only demonstratively (why did *that* break?). With this point in mind, we can say that even though what we want to explain is the occurrence of the event that is Ralph's opening the door he did in fact open, that is to say, Ralph's actual door-opening behaviour on that occasion, we must choose to describe the event in some way. Observing the scene, we may notice many things about the event we want to explain: Ralph opened *the red door*, Ralph opened *the door on his left*, he opened *the smallest door*, etc.. We must choose one of the highlighted definite descriptions as the singular term we shall use to pick out the object Ralph acted upon in our description of the event to be explained. Suppose we opt for the 'the red door' and decide to phrase our 'why-question' thus: Why did Ralph open the red door? A satisfactory answer to this question must employ the singular term 'the red door', as opposed to 'the door on his left' or 'the smallest door', in its efforts to answer the question. For it may be of no help to the asker of the why-question to be given information involving the door on Ralph's left or the smallest door when what he was asking was a question about Ralph and the red door. I submit that there is no way to explain (or predict) Ralph's opening the door without attributing to him a belief that relates him to the very door he opened. That is to say, a necessary condition for explaining why Ralph did what he did, that is, why he opened the red door—if that is the description we are using to describe his action—is the citation of the relational ascription that the red door was believed by Ralph to harbour the prize. (Similarly, a necessary part of the explanation for Oedipus's marrying his mother must be that his mother was believed by him not to be his mother.) We cannot get by with attributing to Ralph a belief in the notional style, such as that Ralph believed that the red door harboured the prize, where 'the red door' occurs obliquely and hence is not open to the usual extensional operations. For that belief does not explain Ralph's opening the red door unless the red door is believed by Ralph to be the red door. If Ralph is colour blind, then it might be the green door that is believed by him to be the red door, and hence, to hide

the prize. In that case, although Ralph thinks to himself *the red door hides the prize*, he thinks this *of* the green door, and so he will actually open the green door—and win the prize. Though examples of mistakes and unsuccessful actions due to false beliefs make the need for relational ascriptions vivid, it is, *au fond*, the relational ascription, whether explicit or implicit, that carries the load in *any* explanation of what an agent did or prediction of what an agent will do, whether successful or not. Indeed, in cases where an agent does succeed in doing what he is trying to do, it will be a relational ascription that explains why he succeeded (Brandom, 1994, pp. 523-24). It is the fact that the red door is indeed the door that is believed by Ralph to be the red door that explains why he succeeded in opening it.

1. *De re explanation elaborated*

In an important though unduly neglected paper Adam Morton has pointed out that ‘If we explain actions by appealing to general principles, then we must quantify into psychological contexts to state these principles’ (1975, p. 7).¹ His example is Donald’s explaining his being physically attacked by Leo by saying that Leo thought he (Donald) had insulted Leo and that Leo attacks anyone whom he believes to have insulted him. The ‘psychological principle’ at work here, which involves quantifying in, appears to be:

$$(PQI) \forall x(\text{Leo believes that } x \text{ has insulted him} \rightarrow \text{Leo attacks } x)$$

This principle about Leo, combined with the particular fact that it is Donald whom Leo believes to have insulted him, explains Leo’s attacking Donald (in the manner of fitting a

¹ A similar claim is made by Peacocke (1981) though it is somewhat below the surface. The idea was first brought to my attention by Terry Tomkow (1992/93).

Hempelian covering-law model of explanation). A couple of comments about (PQI) and its kin are in order.

First of all, for well-known reasons pointed out by John Perry (1993), it is necessary that the expression referring to Leo in the notional content clause of the antecedent of the conditional (i.e., ‘him’) be taken as indicating the way Leo thinks of himself. For the force of the generalisation is lost if we merely take Leo to believe *x* to have insulted, say, *Leo*—for Leo may not realise that his name is ‘Leo’ and hence that it is he who has been insulted; indeed, due to severe amnesia and sensory deprivation he may not know any uniquely distinguishing features of himself expressible without the use of ‘I’ or ‘me’. Presumably, on an occasion of being insulted Leo thinks to himself ‘He has insulted *me*’ or ‘*I* have been insulted by him’ and it is these ‘indexical thoughts’ that are essential to his becoming offended and to his attacking his insulter. I shall take this to be implicit in what follows.

Second, Morton describes the principle underwriting the explanation of Leo’s behaviour as one that involves quantifying *into* a psychological context. As we saw in the first chapter, however, Quine’s proposal about how to make logical sense of quantifications into psychological contexts that resist the substitutivity of identity crucially involves paraphrasing the troublesome constructions—e.g., ‘Leo believes that Donald has insulted him’—into ones in which the subject of the psychological verb phrase following ‘that’ is taken out of the scope of the opacity-inducing operator leaving the predicate behind to remain within its scope—e.g., ‘Donald is believed by Leo to have insulted him’. Such paraphrases are straightforwardly quantifiable—‘ $\exists x(x \text{ is believed by Leo to have insulted him})$ ’—*and* permit substitution of coreferring expressions, precisely because the replacement of the singular term (‘Donald’) by a variable bound by a quantifier no longer involves quantifying into the scope of ‘believes’. From Quine’s point of view, we have thus made logical sense out of those ‘indispensable’ relational statements of belief (where ‘making logical sense’ amounts, for Quine, to preserving the idea that quantification and

substitution go hand-in-hand). Strictly speaking, then, such paraphrases do not involve quantifying *into* psychological contexts; the whole point is indeed to eschew quantifying in. We can, then, reformulate (PQI) along the following canonical lines:

(P1) $\forall x(x \text{ is believed by Leo to have insulted him} \rightarrow x \text{ is attacked by Leo})$.

in which there is no quantification into the scope of ‘believes’. The point of all this is simply that the issue arises as to whether we should say, with Quine (1956), that strictly speaking (PQI) is *meaningless* since it does involve quantifying into a context that resists substitutivity; or whether we should stipulate that what (PQI) really means is more perspicuously represented by (P1), and that, in general, any sentences that involve quantifying in, since they are meaningless, can simply be *assigned* the meanings of the appropriate paraphrases.² Morton does not confront this issue and for our purposes it can remain moot. The moral to be drawn is not, then, exactly as Morton describes it, namely, that ‘If we explain actions by appealing to general principles, then we must quantify into psychological contexts to state these principles’; rather, it is that if we appeal to general psychological principles in our psychological explanations, then these principles will involve quantifying over the material objects that the psychological attitude verbs (such as ‘believes’) and action verbs (such as ‘attacks’) are about. That is, in the psychological explanations the universally quantified psychological principles will be instantiated by ordinary spatio-temporal particulars, such as people (Donald, for example). In short, then, the commonsense psychological explanation of a subject S’s action upon an object x often appears to invoke a universally quantified conditional that is instantiated by x. This nicely fits the covering-law model of explanation: the psychological principle at work is the law

² Quine (1979) offers a biconditional schema for translating between belief ascriptions in which expressions referring to objects of belief occur within the scope of ‘belief’ to ones in which they occur without. See further the exchange between Quine (1986) and Kaplan (1986) over the meaning of the original unparaphrased relational ascriptions of belief.

under which the phenomenon to be explained is subsumed and the relational belief ascription that is the instantiation of the psychological principle is the statement of initial conditions. From the psychological principle together with the relational ascription we can deduce that the action to be explained took place.

Morton rightly points out that ‘The “anyone” in [P1] cannot mean that all instances of “If Leo believes that ... has insulted Leo, then Leo attacks ...” are true. For Leo believes that people have insulted him who are too remote in time and place for him to attack’ (p. 6). Nor can it mean that all instances of the foregoing conditional schema are true in which the blanks are replaced by a distinguished term ‘*D*’ of the Kaplanian variety that ensures that Leo has a belief *about* the object in question, for if ‘*D* approaches Leo disguised as a dancing bear [we] don’t want to predict that Leo will punch *D* on his furry nose’ (p. 7). As stated, then, (P1) is much too simple to be even approximately true. If Leo believes *x* to have insulted him he will not punch *x* even if *x* is within striking range unless he also believes *x* to be within striking range and puts the two beliefs together. That is, for *x* to get punched by Leo, *x* must be such as to be believed by Leo to be an insulter of him *and* to be within punching range. Suppose Leo sees Donald make a rude gesture at him, and comes to believe Donald to have insulted him, but that Leo is unable to catch him on the occasion of the insult. The next day Donald is at a costume party dressed up as a dancing bear and is standing directly in front of Leo talking to him. Leo certainly believes, of the person who is dressed up as the dancing bear and talking to him, that is, of Donald, that he is within punching range. (Perhaps Leo is looking for trouble and wishes that the dancing bear would insult him so that he could have an excuse for punching him.) So, at the very moment when Donald is talking to Leo, Donald is believed by Leo to have insulted him and is believed by Leo to be within punching range—yet Leo does not punch Donald. Why not? Part of the reason is that at that very moment Donald is not believed by Leo to have insulted him *and* to be within punching range; indeed, at that moment *no one* is believed by Leo to be an insulter within punching range.

As a first step toward achieving a psychological generalisation that is even approximately true we need to see the importance of Leo's knowingly ascribing the properties of having insulted him and being within punching range to the same person. In other words, for Donald to get punched by Leo, Leo at least needs to come to believe Donald to have the complex property of being an insulter within punching range—though, as we shall shortly see, this is still insufficient to get Leo to punch Donald. There are, of course, many ways that Leo can come to put these two beliefs together or, what amounts to the same thing, many ways that Donald can come to be believed by Leo to possess the property of being an insulter within punching range. For example, Leo might see Donald getting out of his bear costume or someone might tell Leo that the dancing bear talking to him is the guy who insulted him yesterday. However it is that Leo ends up putting his two beliefs together or, what amounts to the same thing, however he comes to attribute to Donald the property of being an insulter within punching range, this much is needed to get Leo to punch Donald.

It is important to note that the possibility that Leo can believe, of Donald, that he is an insulter and believe, of him, that he is within punching range yet not believe, of him, or indeed of anyone, that he is an insulter within punching range depends on the fact, first noted by Quine (1956), that

(1) Donald is believed by Leo to have insulted him

and

(2) Donald is believed by Leo to be within punching range

do not imply:

(3) Donald is believed by Leo to have insulted him and to be within punching range.

Recall Quine's story about Ralph and Ortcutt. Even though:

(4) Ortcutt is believed by Ralph to be a spy

and

(5) Ortcutt is believed by Ralph not to be a spy

are both true,

(6) Ortcutt is believed by Ralph to be a spy and not to be a spy.

is false. There is a big difference between (6) and

(7) Ortcutt is believed by Ralph to be a spy and is believed by Ralph not to be spy.

(3) and (4) imply (7) but not (6). Notice, by the way, that the idea that there could be a situation in which (6) is true is much worse and much more psychologically implausible than the situations involving Pierre and Peter described by Kripke (1979). Taking the latter and setting aside the details, Kripke tells a story about Peter in which there appear to be good grounds for saying, notionally, that he believes that Paderewski has musical talent and (notionally) that he believes that Paderewski does not have musical talent. Whether or not one thinks that his story compels us to say that Peter has these two inconsistent beliefs (the story is offered by Kripke as a ‘puzzle’: What does Peter believe?), it is no part of Kripke’s story that we are compelled to say that Peter believes that Paderewski has musical talent and does not have musical talent. For the intuition that is supposed to lead us to say that Peter has the two aforementioned inconsistent beliefs is lacking in the case of the latter single contradictory belief: namely, the Disquotation Principle (see II.3.2). It is supposed to be because Peter understands and assents to the sentences ‘Paderewski has musical talent’ and ‘Paderewski does not have musical talent’ that we are compelled to attribute the two inconsistent beliefs to him. Since Peter does not assent to the sentence ‘Paderewski has and does not have musical talent’ we are not compelled to attribute to him the corresponding

single contradictory belief. So, the fact that (6) could not be true does not collide with the fact, if it is a fact, that people can hold two beliefs simultaneously that are inconsistent.

We need not, in any case, rely on examples involving inconsistent beliefs. For it is clear in Ralph's case that although

(8) Ortcutt is believed by Ralph to be the man at the beach.

and

(9) Ortcutt is believed by Ralph to be the man in the brown hat.

are both true, it is not true that

(10) Ortcutt is believed by Ralph to be the man at the beach and the man in the brown hat.

Imagine that someone tells Ralph that the man he saw at the beach is the man he saw in the brown hat. As Quine tells the story, this should be shocking news to Ralph. But if (10) is *already* true because (8) and (9) are true then it cannot be news at all to Ralph. Since the details of Quine's story license (8) and (9) and the subjunctive that if Ralph were to become apprised of the fact that the sentence 'The man in the brown hat is the man at the beach' is true, then he would learn something new, (10) cannot be true.³

Returning to Leo and Donald, it is obvious that (3) is not sufficient to get Leo to punch Donald. Suppose Vinnie tells Leo that the guy who insulted him is within punching range but teasing him does not tell him which of the many people within punching range is the guy who insulted him (the party is very crowded); he does not, for example, tell him that it is the dancing bear. In this situation (3) is true but since Leo does not know *exactly where* the insulter within punching range *is*, Donald does not get punched. If, however,

³ Cf. Dummett 1978, 1975, appendix.

Vinnie does tell him that it is the dancing bear within punching range who insulted him, then is the advent of:

(11) Donald is believed by Leo to be an insulter who is also a dancing bear within punching range.

sufficient to lead to Leo's punching Donald? Only given that there is exactly one dancing bear within punching range, of course. If there is more than one dancing bear within punching range, then Vinnie will need to tell Leo exactly which one is the insulter: perhaps it is the tallest dancing bear or the one to Leo's right. If Vinnie refuses to tell Leo which bear has insulted him, Leo will have to figure it out for himself, perhaps by launching a search and removing the bear costumes one-by-one in order to find his insulter. Which relational ascription is the precise one needed to explain or predict Leo's punching Donald obviously depends on the details of Leo's situation *vis-à-vis* Donald; in particular, whether Donald is recognisable by Leo to be his insulter. The general point is simply that the relevant relational ascription will be one that mentions some characteristic of Donald that enables Leo to punch him. As Morton notes, 'The relevant characteristic will usually concern the spatial location of the insulter-victim, but need not: any characteristic which in Leo's possession will allow him to attack the person having it will do' (pp. 7-8).

In light of this, we might consider improving upon (P1) by revising it to:

(P2) $\forall x \forall t (\text{At } t, x \text{ is believed by Leo to have insulted him}^* \text{ and to be someone who can be attacked there}^* \text{ and then}^* \rightarrow x \text{ is attacked by Leo at } t).$

in which the asterisks are inserted here as reminders that the expressions they are attached to represent Leo's egocentric concepts of *himself* and the spatio-temporal location of *x with respect to himself* (I shall suppress them in what follows). Indeed, to punch someone successfully one needs pretty precise information about the egocentric location and bodily position of one's victim and when exactly it would be a good time to deliver the blow—just

ask Muhammad Ali. As soon as Leo realises that the dancing bear is the insulter, he will be preparing himself for the punch by deliberating on the delivery: ‘Okay, I know it’s that damn bear ... if he moves a little to my left and puts his paws down a bit I can get a good right hook in ... there he goes to my left ... his paws are down ... but people are watching ... I better wait ... okay, nobody is watching now so I can hit him ... now!’—and down goes Donald.

Well—not quite. For as Evans has made clear, in many cases ‘in the absence of an object to anchor our dispositions, we can only make rather gross discriminations of areas or regions in egocentric space’ (1982, p. 132). Indeed, surely it was the fact that Ali’s dispositions were anchored on Foreman himself that enable him to knock him out. For Leo to hit Donald he needs to think of him under a demonstrative mode of presentation; he needs to think of him as *that man* or perhaps as *that bear* (as indeed I already portrayed him as thinking in the recent soliloquy). It is when Leo thinks, of Donald, as *that bear*, that he is an insulter within punching range that Leo hits Donald.

The idea that reference to a demonstrative mode of presentation of an object plays an essential role in any explanation of action upon that object has been argued for most persuasively by Christopher Peacocke (1981) under the title of the ‘Indispensability Thesis’ (IT):

No set of attitudes gives a satisfactory psychological explanation of a person’s acting on a given object unless the content of those attitudes includes a demonstrative mode of presentation of that object. (pp. 205-206)

Peacocke goes on to give a detailed account of what a demonstrative mode of presentation (DMOP) is, the thrust of which is that *token* DMOPs are object-dependent: their existence and identity depends on the existence and identity of the objects they present, in the sense that if there is no object then there is no token DMOP and if there is a different object then

there is a different token DMOP.⁴ Peacocke allows that there can be different tokens of the same *type* of DMOP; indeed, he explains what a token DMOP is by saying that it is what obtains when a type DMOP is ‘indexed’ to an object.⁵ Since it is token DMOPs that are the constituents of an individual’s thoughts, it is they that are relevant to considerations of the psychological explanation of an individual’s action, and hence will be the focus of attention.

In commenting on the psychological explanation for why a certain person grasped a certain container, he says that

Concerning the agent and the container, the *explanandum* is the fact that the former grasped the latter. The *explanandum* is not a propositional attitude, and indeed if we say the *explanandum* is that *a* grasped *b*, then we must note that the places occupied by ‘*a*’ and ‘*b*’ are transparent. The phrase ‘acting on an object’ in the Indispensability Thesis is shorthand for any such relational *explanandum* sentence of the form ‘*Rab* at time *t*’. (p. 206)

So the explananda that fall under the purview of the IT are the same as those that concern *de re* explanation: namely, doings. With this in mind, consider Peacocke’s example of the person—Roxanne, to give her a name—who wants to go on living and thinks that she will die unless she immediately consumes the contents of the container within reach in front of her and so does consume them. According to Peacocke, the relational fact that constitutes the explanandum can be described by the relational sentence ‘Roxanne grasped the container’ in which the proper name and the definite description occur in transparent position. According to the IT, the explanans must make reference to the fact that Roxanne had a thought to the effect that ‘*that container* contains the pill I need to live’; or, if she thinks a thought of the form ‘the ϕ contains the pills I need to live’⁶ for any ϕ that denotes the container, then she must also think a thought of the form ‘the ϕ is *that container*’—both thoughts in which ‘“that container”’ picks out an object presented to the subject in a

⁴ The account is developed further in *Sense and Content* (1983).

particular way in perception' (ibid., p. 207). For her thinking a thought of the form 'the ϕ contains the pills I need' can only explain her acting on the container in front of her is she also thinks 'the ϕ is *that container*'.

Recall that since the explanandum statement is transparent we can use the singular term 'the container left by the doctor' to describe the object acted on by Roxanne. The explanandum is then just as well described as 'Roxanne grasped the container left by the doctor'. Clearly, it is not an adequate explanation of this to say that Roxanne thought that that container contains the pills I need to live (together with a statement about Roxanne's conative attitudes). As Peacocke himself points out in a later paper, 'Quite generally, explanation of a truth by a given set of states is not preserved by substitution of coextensive predicates in that truth, not even if we add a statement of the coextensiveness to the original explanation' (1993, p. 208). What I wish to add to this is that an explanation of a truth by a given set of states *is* preserved by substitution of coextensive predicates in that truth so long as the same substitution of coextensive predicates is made in the ascription of the given explanans set of states. So, for example, if the transparent explanandum statement is 'Roxanne grasps that container', and the key explanans statement is 'Roxanne believes that that container contains the pills she needs to live', then, if we substitute 'the container left by the doctor' for 'that container' in the explanandum statement, the explanation is preserved so long as we make the same substitution in the explanans statement. To be able to do this, however, both explanandum and explanans statements must be transparent, in the sense that the singular term referring to the object acted upon must occur in a transparent position that is open to substitution of co-referring singular terms.

On Peacocke's account of the logical form of an ascription of a thought containing a token DMOP, the position occupied by the singular term referring to the object that the DMOP is 'indexed' to is 'transparent and quantifiable' (1981, p. 190). If this is so, then

⁵ So, unlike the object-dependent *de re* senses of McDowell and the *Ideas* of Evans (chapter II), to which the notion of type does not apply except in so far as it is a collection of object-dependent tokens, types of

the IT allows for a substitution in the explanans statement that corresponds to any substitution made in the explanandum statement. So, the explanation of the doing that is described as Roxanne's grasping the container left by the doctor, made fully explicit, is: Roxanne believed, of the container left by the doctor, as *that container* (or under the mode of presentation *that container*), that it contained the pills she needs to live. Though Peacocke's IT clearly allows for the 'set of attitudes' in which reference is made to a DMOP to be ascribed relationally, because of the transparency of the 'indexing' position, and hence to explain doings, he does not highlight the fact that this relationality is essential to the explanation. The emphasis falls on the fact that reference to DMOPs is needed. If the thesis of the explanatory necessity of relational ascriptions is correct, then it is essential that these DMOPs be ascribed relationally.

Returning to Leo, I propose that our quest for the generalisation that is needed to explain his attacking Donald can end with this following psychological generalisation:

$$(P3) \forall x \forall t [\text{Bel}(\text{Leo}, \langle x \rangle, t, \ulcorner \text{Insulter-within-attacking-range}[y] \text{Person}(y) \urcorner) \rightarrow \text{Attacks}(\text{Leo}, \langle x \rangle, t)],$$

which is rendered in Burge's (1974b, 1977a) notation for demonstrative constructions (as explained in II.2.1) where 'Bel' stands for the multigrade predicate 'believes'. (P3) can be read as saying that: For any x and any t , if, at t , x is believed by Leo to be an insulter within attacking range, and Leo thinks of x at t as *that person*, then x is attacked by Leo at t . The open sentence in the fourth argument place of the antecedent, $\ulcorner \text{Insulter-within-attacking-range}[y] \text{Person}(y) \urcorner$, which can be rendered in the vernacular as *that person is an insulter within attacking range*, makes reference to the fact that Leo has a perceptual demonstrative mode of presentation of x on the basis of which he is able to locate x . The 'relevant characteristics', as Morton calls them, of Donald that allow Leo to attack him are precisely

those characteristics that are presented to Leo by a (visual) demonstrative mode of presentation of him.

(P3) is a canonical representation of a philosophical precisification of a commonsense principle that is akin to a lawlike causal generalisation in that, first of all, it supports various counterfactuals, such as: If, at t , Donald was believed by Leo to have insulted him but was not, at t , believed by Leo to be within attacking range, then Donald would not have been attacked by Leo at t ; and subjunctives such as: If, at t , Roxanne were to be thought of by Leo as *that person* and to be believed by him to be an insulter within attacking range then Roxanne would be attacked by Leo at t . (P3) combines with a relational belief ascription which is its instantiation to explain a doing by subsuming it in the manner of a covering law explanation, in which the relational belief ascription is the statement of initial conditions, to give us something like:

$$\begin{array}{l}
 (P3) \quad \forall x \forall t [\text{Bel}(\text{Leo}, \langle x \rangle, t, \ulcorner \text{Insulter-within-attacking-range}[y] \text{Person}(y) \urcorner) \rightarrow \\
 \quad \text{Attacks}(\text{Leo}, \langle x \rangle, t)], \\
 (I) \quad \text{Bel}(\text{Leo}, \langle \text{Donald} \rangle, t_1, \ulcorner \text{Insulter-within-attacking-range}[y] \text{Person}(y) \urcorner) \\
 (E) \quad \text{Attacks}(\text{Leo}, \langle \text{Donald} \rangle, t_1).
 \end{array}$$

This, then, is a paradigm of what a *de re* explanation, made fully explicit, looks like. The two essential factors in (I) that enable the explanation to work are: (i) the relationality of the ascription, in which the singular term referring to the object acted upon is in referential position outside the psychological verb and (ii) the reference to the subject's perceptual demonstrative mode of presentation of the object acted upon.⁶

⁶ As Hempel (1988) pointed out in one of his late papers, for such explanations to be deductive the explanans must include a statement, what Hempel calls a 'proviso', to the effect that no factors not mentioned in (P3) that are relevant to the outcome of the event described by (E) are present, that (L) states the whole truth about the relevant circumstances present. The issue of provisos and '*ceteris paribus*' or 'hedged' laws is a difficult and under-researched area in the philosophy of science that has only recently received the attention it deserves. See Cartwright 1983, Hempel 1988, Fodor 1989, and Pietrosky and Rey 1995. Though there is debate about whether the provisos needed in psychological explanation differ in kind

2. A critical comparison

Before moving on to consider the aforementioned objection to *de re* explanation I wish to pause and compare *de re* explanation with another model of psychological explanation, propounded by some internalistically inclined authors, which I believe to be flawed.⁷ To take a representative example, Harold Noonan (1986) attacks Peacocke's arguments for the IT and argues in favour of what he takes to be the following contrary thesis (R):

Whenever an action is directed towards a concrete, contingently existing object, other than its agent, in the sense that it is intentional under a description in which there occurs a singular term denoting that object, then an adequate psychological explanation of it is available under a (possibly distinct) description in which occurs a term denoting that object; and in this explanation the only psychological states of the agent referred to are ones which would also be present in a counterfactual situation in which the object did not exist.

He adds that:

any defender of thesis R must maintain that in any explanation of a successful action there must be two components: a purely psychological component in which the relevant attitudes of the agent are cited; and a second, not purely psychological component, in which the surrounding circumstances which ensure the success of the action are described (p. 69)

I shall call this the dual-component (D-C) model of psychological explanation. The idea is that we can explain an agent's action upon an object by citing purely internal states, states that locally supervene on the agent's body, and adding a statement to the effect that there was an object so situated that the agent made contact with it. In Noonan, Segal, Carruthers, and Blackburn the model is offered as part of an argument against object-dependent thoughts. The argument is basically that reference to object-dependent thoughts is 'redundant' in the psychological explanation of intentional action because the D-C model

or only in degree from those found in other explanatory schemes—on this see the debate between Fodor (1987, chapter 1; 1989) and Davidson (1980, 1987, 1993)—I must leave the issue moot here.

⁷ E.g., Baker 1982; Noonan 1986, 1991; Segal 1989; Carruthers 1987; Blackburn 1984, ch.9.

suffices to explain *all* cases of intentional action upon objects. Since object-dependent thoughts play no essential role in such explanations their very existence is called into question. I have already given my reasons for thinking that reference to object-dependent thoughts is not necessary in the explanation of action (II.3.3). I here want to show that the reasons given by the D-C theorists against object-dependent thoughts are not good ones and that this is because their model of explanation is flawed.

All the aforementioned D-C theorists take themselves to be offering an account of the explanation of *intentional action* as is evident by the fact that Noonan, Segal, and Carruthers are all at great pains to emphasise that the D-C model of explanation is a form of rationalisation. Indeed, the redundancy argument against object-dependent thought turns essentially on the assumption that a hallucinating twin of a subject who does not act on any object performs a no less rational action than his non-hallucinating twin who does act on an object. After all, both subjects are *acting* in the sense that they are both *trying* to do *the same type of thing*, for example, pick up, or perhaps reach out for, the container of pills in front of them. If we can rationalise deluded Roxanne's action of *reaching out* with a set of thought ascriptions, *X*, that does not include any relational ascriptions or entail any relational ascriptions (such as ascriptions of object-dependent thoughts), then *X* should equally well rationalise Roxanne's action of reaching out. To complete the explanation of Roxanne's action of reaching out *for the container of pills* we merely add the fact that the container of pills was happily located at the point where she reached out. The *psychological* component of the D-C model applies to both the deluded subject and her non-deluded twin and consists of purely notional ascriptions of demonstrative thoughts, such as 'that so-and-so'. The difference comes with the second, non-psychological, component: only in the case of the non-deluded twin is mention made of the fact that an object was so positioned that the subject acted upon it.

Evidently, the D-C theorist's way of explaining a non-deluded subject's action upon an object depends on the stratagem of 'breaking up' that explanandum into two

components: (a) a statement referring to an action performed by the agent that is a token of a type of action a token of which is also performed by the subject's hallucinating twin, such as *reaching out*; (b) a statement that the subject's token action is related to the object acted upon. Baker (1982) takes the type of action in (a) to be a *basic action*, where a basic action, *B*, is one where there is no other action *A* such that an agent performs *B* by intentionally performing *A*. The example she gives is 'reaching-and-grasping'. Though the other D-C theorists do not pronounce on whether the token action in (a) is always a basic action, their examples all involve what appear to be basic actions. In any event, what all the D-C theorists have failed to notice is that the expressions referring to the objects acted upon in the second, non-psychological, component (b), in which the 'surrounding circumstances which ensure the success of the action are described', occur in transparent position since they fall outside the scope of any of the psychological verbs that occur in the set *X* of demonstrative thought ascriptions that explain the token of the action type described in the first component of the broken-up explanandum, (a). What this means is that the D-C model has in effect subtly changed the explanandum from an intentional action, a trying, to an action *simpliciter*, a doing. For the explanandum is no longer the non-deluded subject's reaching out for object *o* but rather, to put it in questionable English, *o*'s being reached out for by the subject. Since '*o*' here now takes wide scope it is in referential position and is governed by the substitutivity of identity. This means we can substitute in a coreferring expression 'the φ ' that the subject is unaware picks out *o*. If *o* is referred to as 'the φ ', the explanandum is no longer the subject's intentional action since he may not have intended to act upon the φ where 'the φ ' denotes *o*. The D-C conception does not therefore provide an adequate model of the explanation of intentional action.⁸

Consider Gabriel Segal's schematic account of the D-C procedure. Taking our deluded and non-deluded subjects to be, respectively, *S1* and *S2*, and their respective action tokens to be *A1* and *A2*, we can say, according to the D-C account, that *A1* and *A2* are

⁸ This criticism is made by me in Crawford 1998.

tokens of the same action type (probably some kind of basic action), the only difference being that A2 happens to have a relational property that A1 lacks, namely, bearing a relation to an object acted upon, *o*. Given all this, Segal claims that ‘Since X [the set of thoughts in the first purely psychological component of the explanation and which are shared by S1 and S2] explains acts of type A1, X, together with the fact that *o* is around, will explain S2’s doing A2’ (1989, p. 45). As we have just seen, the claim that ‘X, together with the fact that *o* is around will explain S2’s doing A2’ depends on the coherence of breaking up A2 into two parts, or, to put it in Segal’s terms, that ‘S2’s performance of A2 [is] constituted by her performing an act of the same type as A1, in relation to *o*’ (ibid.). It is this last claim that is false and whose falsity undermines the D-C conception.

To see this clearly, take Oedipus’s kissing Jocasta as A2. The explanandum in question is the intentional action of Oedipus’s kissing Jocasta. Oedipus intended to kiss Jocasta; that is what he was trying to do. His kissing her is the kind of explanandum for which one gives a rationalising psychological explanation; for since kissing Jocasta is something he intended to do Oedipus has reasons for doing it. Intuitively, these reasons include *inter alia* his desire, say, to kiss his wife and his belief that Jocasta, or perhaps that woman, is his wife. This belief-desire pair explain—no doubt elliptically, but that is not to the point—A2, Oedipus’s intentionally kissing Jocasta. The D-C explanation of this begins by breaking up Oedipus’s action of kissing Jocasta into a component that says that Oedipus intentionally performed a token of a type of action a token of which Twin-Oedipus, who is hallucinating Jocasta, also performed, such as intentionally puckering his lips, A1, and a component that says that A1 is related to Jocasta. Putting the two components together, we see that the explanandum has been transformed from the original *intensional* statement describing A2—Oedipus intentionally kissed Jocasta—in which the position occupied by ‘Jocasta’ is not open to substitution of coreferring expressions (it is not true that Oedipus intentionally kissed his mother), to the *extensional* statement describing A1’s relation to *o*—Jocasta was the object of Oedipus’s intentional lip-puckering—in which the

position occupied by 'Jocasta' is open to substitution. Since the position occupied by 'Jocasta' in the latter is open to substitution, we can substitute 'his mother' and arrive at: his mother was the object of Oedipus's intentional lip-puckering. The very heart of the D-C conception—its *dual*-componency—prevents any blocking of this substitution and so it is not open to the advocate of the D-C conception to claim that we have altered the D-C explanandum. This clearly shows that, *pace* Segal, *S2*'s performance of *A2* is not 'constituted by' her performing an act of the same type as *A1* in relation to *o*. For, to put it in terms reminiscent of Davidson's (1971a, 1971b) classic discussion of the opacity of attributions of intention, Oedipus intentionally kisses Jocasta but he does not intentionally kiss his mother. The statement 'Jocasta was the object of Oedipus's intentional lip-puckering' leaves it open whether he intentionally kissed Jocasta in a way that 'Oedipus intentionally kissed Jocasta' clearly does not.

This point against the D-C model can be made vivid by considering the fact that the D-C conception must give the same explanation for Oedipus's unintentionally kissing Jocasta as it does for his intentionally kissing Jocasta. The explanation of the former will consist in the citation of *X* and mention of the fact that Jocasta was so positioned that Oedipus's lips made contact with her. But, presumably, the explanation of why Oedipus intentionally kissed Jocasta should be different from the explanation of why he unintentionally did so. Since the D-C conception implies that there is no difference between doing something intentionally and doing something unintentionally it cannot be a correct account of psychological explanation (Crawford, 1998).

Moreover, the D-C conception not only implies that there is no difference between intentional action (trying) and unintentional action (doing) but it also implies, even more absurdly, that there is no difference between action and non-action. Take Lynn Rudder Baker on the application of her D-C model to a famous action:

if there had actually been a dagger in front of Macbeth, then Macbeth, having exactly the same attitudes and making exactly the same movements, would have seized it. The difference between

Shakespeare's Macbeth and our hypothetical Macbeth is not a matter of Macbeth's attitudes, *de re* or not. (1982, p. 384)

This cannot be right, as the following example of veridical hallucination shows. Suppose that Macbeth is hallucinating a dagger and that, unbeknownst to him, there actually is a dagger qualitatively identical to the one he is hallucinating located in the same egocentric space as the hallucinatory dagger. He tries to clutch the 'fatal vision' and ends up clutching the real dagger. In this rewriting of Shakespeare, Macbeth's clutching the dagger is not an action. For there is no description under which it was intentional. Macbeth did not intend to clutch the dagger under *any* description since he was not even aware of its existence. It is a pure accident, a coincidence, that he happens to clutch the dagger, as is shown by the truth of the counterfactual that if the dagger had not been there then he still would have tried to clutch the 'fatal vision' by making the same movements.⁹ Nevertheless, as Baker herself says, the D-C model must give the same explanation for this bodily movement of Macbeth's that it gives of his intentionally clutching a dagger.

The D-C model of explanation absurdly implies that there is no difference between (a) intentional action, (b) unintentional action, and (c) non-action. In light of this it must be rejected as totally inadequate. The lesson to be drawn from the scrutiny of the D-C model of explanation is simply that one must be very careful about what one takes the explanandum of one's theory of psychological explanantia to be. In particular, if the explanandum is a doing then the explanans, whatever its exact nature, must include a relational ascription. Let us see whether *de re* explanation too suffers from some kind of explanatory incoherence.

⁹ Crawford 1998. Cf. Peacocke 1981 and Morton 1975.

3. *The case against de re explanation*

The last few sections have, I hope, made a case for *de re* explanation. We have what appears to be a sound argument for the conclusion that if we are to explain or predict what an agent will do, that is, which object an agent will act on, we shall need some relational ascriptions of thought that relate the agent to the object acted upon and which include a reference to a perceptual demonstrative mode of presentation of the object acted upon. Moreover, it appears that in our commonsense explanations of people's doings we regularly appeal to causal generalisations that quantify over the objects of their doings. For these generalisations to play the explanatory role they appear to play their antecedents must be instantiated by relational thought ascriptions. The relational thought ascriptions combine with the psychological generalisations, in the manner of a covering-law explanation, to explain the event of an agent's doing. Whether one thinks that a covering-law is not always or even ever required in the explanation of a doing, or whether one thinks that such alleged cases are merely elliptical and tacitly presuppose a covering law, the fact remains that there does not appear to be any way of explaining a doing without at least citing some relational ascriptions. While there may be situations in which principles like (P3) are otiose, relational psychological statements like (I) clearly are not. That this is so is buttressed by the failure of the rival dual-component conception of psychological explanation to explain events like (E).

Yet, as straightforward as this appears to be, it has been denied by many prominent philosophers.¹⁰ The argument appears to turn somehow on the logical laxity of the relational idiom, the fact that relational ascriptions are not governed by principles of logic and rationality. Dennett (1982, p. 199-200), for example, correctly notes that from the fact that *a* is believed by him to be *F* and *a* is believed by him to be *G* it does not follow that *a* is

¹⁰ E.g., Schiffer 1978, Fodor 1980, Dennett 1982, Baker 1982, Lycan 1985, Grandy 1986, Carruthers 1988, and Boghossian 1994. Cf. Burge 1982. Baker 1982 gives by far the most impressive argument against *de re* explanation and so it is her views I shall focus on.

believed by him to be *F* and *G*. As we have already seen, however, it is precisely this fact that we exploited to our advantage in giving a *de re* explanation of why Leo did not punch Donald when he was dressed up as a dancing bear, that is, why Leo did not punch Donald even though he believed him to have insulted him and believed him to be within punching range. So the waywardness of relational ascriptions with respect to conjunction introduction is not a problem for *de re* explanation. It is the waywardness of relational ascriptions with respect to the other logical rules of consistency that Dennett mentions that poses the threat to *de re* explanation. There are two hard cases to confront. The first is the one originally noted by Quine, namely, that relational ascriptions that are ‘near-contraries’ of each other, that is, that report inconsistent attitudes that a rational person may have, can both be true of an individual at the same time; that is, someone can believe of *a*, that it is *F* and believe of *a* that it is not *F*. The second case Dennett mentions is one in which an individual thinks, of one thing *a*, that it is *the only F*, and thinks of another thing *b* (where *a* ≠ *b*), that it is *the only F*. Another type of case in all relevant respects similar to this second type of case is where the individual thinks of *a*, that it is *the more F* or *the most F*, and thinks of *b* (where *a* ≠ *b*), that it is *the more F* or *the most F*, where *F* is an adjective such as ‘beautiful’ or ‘valuable’. For our purposes, the important points to notice are the following. The first type of case involves a *single* object to which a person unknowingly ascribes *two* inconsistent properties. The second case involves *two* (or more) objects to each of which a person unknowingly ascribes, inconsistently, a *single* uniquely instantiated property. For convenience, I shall refer to both types of cases as cases of near-contraries, meaning by this cases of inconsistent attitudes that a rational person may have. Though one can generate cases of near-contraries with attitudes other than belief—e.g., a person may intend, of *a*, that he act on it and intend, of *a*, that he not act on it (think of Oedipus)—we shall stick with belief as our paradigm.

It is difficult to construct out of these materials the precise argument against *de re* explanation that its critics have in mind; indeed, the argument, whatever exactly it is

supposed to be, it is rarely made explicit. It often seems to proceed along the following lines.¹¹ Relational ascriptions, suffering as they do from the logical laxity just remarked upon, are not swayed by the constraints of reason. This is not to say that when we relationally ascribe thoughts to people we make them out to be irrational; on the contrary, as has just been emphasised, the relational style allows the ascription of inconsistent thoughts to a rational person. The point is rather that, unlike the ascription of beliefs in the notional style, the ascription of beliefs in the relational style is not done *on the basis of* the so-called ‘assumption of rationality’. It does not follow from this that beliefs ascribed relationally make a person out to be irrational. On the notional way of ascribing beliefs, it is (by and large) supposed to *follow from* the fact that Roxanne believes there are zebras in Africa that she does not also believe that there are no zebras in Africa.¹² Relationally speaking, however, it does *not* follow from the fact that zebras are believed by Roxanne to live in Africa that zebras are not also believed by Roxanne not to live in Africa. As long as this point is kept in mind, we can say, as I did in chapter one, that the notional idiom is governed by the assumption of rationality or the ‘constraints of reason’ whereas the relational idiom is not. The ‘assumption of rationality’ is no doubt in dire need of detailed explication; but for our purposes it will suffice to take it to mean the assumption that the basic logical rules of consistency that are flouted by the two types of near-contraries apply to the endeavour in question. So, the argument against *de re* psychological explanation and its critics appear to have in mind is that (1) psychological explanation is rationalisation, in the sense that its coherence depends on the assumption of rationality; (2) relational ascriptions are not governed by the assumption of rationality; therefore, (3) relational ascriptions cannot be used in psychological explanations.

¹¹ Other than Dennett, this line of thought is most explicit in Schiffer 1978 and Boghossian 1994.

¹² Schiffer 1978, p. 138. Although Schiffer speaks of the ‘internal functional role’ of a belief it is clear that this role is defined by rational or broadly logical relations. Davidson 1980, 1984 is, of course, famous for emphasising the assumption of rationality on the basis of which we ascribe thoughts to others. It is clear that he is talking about notional ascriptions.

The basic response to this line of argument is as follows: *De re* psychological explanation is not a form of rationalisation so the fact that relational ascriptions do not abide by the assumption of rationality is no objection to their explanatory credentials. One could put the reply this way. The explanandum of a rationalising psychological explanation is an action under a description under which it is intentional (i.e., a trying); this is the kind of explanandum that requires the citing of an agent's reasons, and hence, the notional attribution of thoughts. The explanandum of a *de re* psychological explanation is an action *sans phrase* (i.e., a doing); such an explanandum does not proceed by citing an agent's reasons, and hence, the fact that a relational ascription does not specify an agent's reasons for acting is no objection to relational ascriptions being used in these kinds of explanations.

We cannot, however, leave things here. Though the response is basically correct we must see how it can be applied. So we need to work through the details of an example of each type of near-contrary. We need, first, to see exactly how each type appears to cause problems for *de re* explanation and, second, to see whether we have the resources to answer these problems. To this end, I turn now to the most sophisticated argument against *de re* explanation to be found in the literature: Lynne Rudder Baker's (1982) article '*De Re* Belief in Action.'¹³

Baker (1982) argues that *de re* ascriptions cannot figure in action explanations. According to her, 'The diagnosis of the difficulty ... reveals that its source is surprisingly deep; indeed, it is so fundamental that ascriptions of *de re* attitudes regarding concrete objects threaten the coherence of any explanation containing them' (p. 366). My aim in this section is to rebut Baker's charge by showing that *de re* ascriptions do not in fact lead to explanatory incoherence; on the contrary, they are, as we already have reason to believe, essential in the explanation of action. *Strictly speaking*, Baker claims that it is the ascription of *de re attitudes* rather than the *de re ascription* of attitudes that is the problem. It is not

¹³ Besides its impressive negative brief against *de re* explanation, this article also contains the earliest positive presentation of the dual-component model for explaining action upon objects—anticipating, and, it

clear whether her use of the phrase ‘*de re* attitudes’ is a mere *façon de parler*. I suspect that, *contra* Evans (1982), McDowell (1984), and Brandom (1994), Baker thinks that all and only *de re* beliefs are ascribed by *de re* ascriptions. As I have argued, the aforementioned philosophers are correct in holding that this is a mistake. Virtually any belief—*de re* or not—can be ascribed in the relational style. In any case, we can leave the exegetical question moot, for as we shall see although the typical type of case that threatens *de re* explanation is indeed one that involves *de re* beliefs—i.e., beliefs with strong aboutness, such as perceptual demonstrative beliefs about objects—it is the relational or *de re* ascription of these *de re* beliefs that causes the problem.

We find ourselves, then, in the following curious position: on the one hand we appear to have an argument for the necessity of *de re* explanation while on the other we appear to have an argument—or rather the semblance of one—against the very possibility of *de re* explanation. Recall that part of the argument for the explanatory necessity of relational ascriptions was that notional (*de dicto*) ascriptions are insufficient to explain doings. Recall the example of Ralph and the green door that opened this chapter. At the risk of belabouring the point, consider Fodor’s own fable involving a guy and a door:

suppose that all I know is that John wants to meet the girl next door where ‘wants to’ is construed transparently Then there is little or nothing that I can predict about how John is likely to proceed. ... Suppose I know that John wants to meet the girl who lives next door, and suppose I know that this is true when ‘wants to’ is construed opaquely. Then ... I can make some reasonable predictions (guesses) about what John is likely to do ... He’s likely to call upon his neighbour. He’s likely (at a minimum, and all things being equal) to exhibit next-door-directed behaviour. None of this is frightfully exciting, but it’s all I need for present purposes, and what more could you expect from folk psychology? (1980, p. 489).

Fodor’s positive proposal here simply does not work. For reasons we have already dwelt upon, it is simply false that knowing (notionally or opaquely) that John wants to meet the girl next door enables us to predict that he will exhibit next-door-directed behaviour. After all, John may be mistaken about which door is next door and it might in fact be the door two

must be said, considerably outstripping in its sophistication the later D-C theories of Noonan 1986, 1991,

doors down that is believed by him to be the door next to his. If this is true then although John says ‘I’m going to call on the girl next door’, and we can truly notionally ascribe to him the desire to meet the girl next door, what he will do (at a minimum, and all things being equal) is exhibit *two-doors-down-directed behaviour* (Tomkow, 1992/93). In predicting what John is likely to *do*, the relational ascription is essential. Baker herself agrees that notional (*de dicto*) ascriptions cannot explain action upon an object. (p. 380). But now, if *de re* ascriptions too are explanatorily impotent, as she also claims, then what kind of ascriptions will do the job? She does offer her own theory as to what type of ascriptions are needed. Alas, as we saw in the last section, her theory is a version of the dual component conception of explanation which is fundamentally flawed. Anyway, as I shall try to show, since *de re* ascriptions are not explanatorily impotent, her extremely complex account is anyway otiose.¹⁴

In order to present the argument against *de re* explanation I shall work with a challenging example of Baker’s which she adapts from Herbert Heidelberger (1979) and which I already discussed briefly in the Introduction.¹⁵

[Jones] is asked to remove the more valuable of two objects on a table in front of him. On the table are a carved jade dish and a painted porcelain basket, which [Jones] believes are of unequal value. ... After inspecting the dish and the basket, Jones says ... “I believe that this [demonstrating the basket], but not this [demonstrating the dish] is the more valuable. ... Jones then says that he would feel more confident of his judgement if he were allowed to pick up the objects and handle them. To oblige Jones without giving him too great an advantage over Smith [a competitor], he is allowed to handle the objects, but only on the condition that he be blindfolded. Now the two objects are quite similar in shape; and although they differ in texture, the way that they differ in texture is not obvious to the eye. (The painting on the porcelain basket is quite skilful.) Jones, however, sure of his ability to distinguish the dish from the basket by touch alone, consents to the blindfold and gives each object a thorough tactual examination, which, he thinks, confirms his earlier judgement based on the visual examination. So believing that he is holding the basket, Jones says confidently, “I believe that this [demonstrating the object he is holding] is the more valuable.” It turns out, of course, that it is the dish that Jones is holding. ... So without changing his mind, Jones comes to believe of the two objects that each is the more valuable. The dish replaced, the blindfold discarded, Jones is now asked to remove the

Carruthers 1987, and Segal 1989.

¹⁴ Baker, worrying about her own account, asks ‘Is it plausible that ordinary intentional explanation rests on such abstruse principles, which seem to presuppose sophisticated conceptual apparatus on the part of the agent?’ (p. 386). In my opinion, the answer to this question is a resounding No.

¹⁵ This type of example was first presented, so far as I know, by Richard Feldman 1978.

more valuable of the two objects on the table in front of him. ... Jones (predictably) removes the basket. (pp. 367-69)

On the basis of this little tale, Baker takes the following *de re* ascriptions to be warranted (so as to avoid confusion I shall indicate, where appropriate, the sensory modality on the basis of which the ascription is made):

(12) The basket is believed by Jones to be the more valuable. [via sight]

(13) The dish is believed by Jones not to be the more valuable. [via sight]

(14) The dish is believed by Jones to be the more valuable. [via touch]

It is clear from what Baker says later that it is implicit in the story that when blindfolded Jones also comes to believe, of the basket, that it is not the more valuable. So the following ascription is also true:

(15) The basket is believed by Jones not to be the more valuable. [via touch]

The difficulty for the *de re* theorist is then this. First, since (15) is true, citing (12) cannot explain Jones's removing the basket. This obviously corresponds to the first type of case of near-contraries. Second, as Baker puts it, 'since Jones has the same belief of the dish, his belief of the basket that it is the more valuable cannot explain his removing the basket rather than the dish' (pp. 369-70). Given Jones's intention to remove the most valuable item, (12) cannot explain his removing the basket because (14) is also true. This is an instance of the second type of case of near-contraries. So, the case against (12)'s explaining Jones's removal of the basket is overdetermined: both (14) and (15) conflict with the claim that (12) explains or predicts Jones's removal of the basket. The fundamental

problem is that the practice of attributing attitudes in the *de re* way—or, as Quine (1956) originally dubbed it, the *relational* style—permits, by definition, the attribution of near-contraries. Baker claims that the problems raised by such examples are ‘completely general’ and that, ‘It is not just that we have failed to ascribe the right *de re* belief regarding the object acted upon; for the problems stem from the possibility of near-contraries, which haunts *all de re* beliefs regarding objects’ (p. 372).

4. In defence of *de re* explanation

I begin with some preliminary ‘softening up’ remarks.

First of all, what exactly is the force of the argument? Does it really show that we should forswear *de re* explanation *in toto*? Suppose we grant Baker the conclusion that in this example Jones’s action cannot be explained by *de re* ascriptions. Is the mere *possibility* of such a case arising enough to impugn altogether *de re* explanation? One might think not. After all, the existence of irrationality in the form of self-deception, say, or weakness of will, or perversion, or paranoia, not to mention the rest of humanity’s foibles, are not—the eliminative materialists notwithstanding—generally taken to show that our commonsense scheme of reason-giving intentional explanation is fundamentally flawed and deeply incoherent in the sense of being inapplicable even in quotidian cases of normal behaviour. Nor is the experimental data demonstrating the surprising prevalence of poor reasoning skills, irrationally held beliefs, or the contravention of the basic principles of probability theory, among university educated people, taken to undermine the very foundations of commonsense psychological explanation (again, notwithstanding the eliminative materialists). Such abnormal cases certainly challenge and may ultimately defeat our commonsense categories; they may have to be explained by dropping down to what Dennett (1987) calls the design stance or even the physical stance. But in the absence of

smoke, mirrors, blindfolds, inverting lenses, and the artificial environment of the psychology lab, when everything goes smoothly, does the intentional stance not serve us perfectly well? So too one might think that, so long as folks do not become *too* confused, *de re* explanation of their doings will work just fine.¹⁶

However that may be, notice something even more curious about the situation with regard to *de re* explanation. In spite of the fact that Baker lists only (12)-(15), together with Jones's intention to remove the most valuable item and his ability to do so, she remarks that 'Jones (*predictably*) removes the basket' (my emphasis); elsewhere she describes Jones's action as 'intuitively unpuzzling' (p. 378). The question then arises: If (12)-(15) are insufficient to predict Jones's removal of the basket then how are we able to do it? How do we know he will remove the basket and not the dish, given that he believes the basket not to be the more valuable and believes the dish to be the more valuable?

Well, as a first step in the right direction, it pretty obviously has something to do with the facts that (a) the relational ascriptions (12)-(15) become true in two different contexts or circumstances: one in which the items are presented to him visually and one in which the items are presented to him tactually; and (b) Jones performs his removal in one of these contexts, that is, on the basis of his *visual* perception of the dish and basket rather than his *tactual* perception of them. If he had been asked to remove the more valuable item while still blindfolded, and hence on the basis of his tactual perception of the respective items, then he would have removed the dish—even though he believes the dish not to be the more valuable and believes the basket to be the more valuable. This suggests that the difference between the actual and counterfactual situations, just before Jones removes the respective items, has something essentially to do with the interplay between the context in which the relational ascriptions become true and the context of Jones's removal. Indeed, all the various cases of mistaken identity involving subjects' states of mind before their potential *anagnoresis*—as the moment of dramatic recognition in the dénouement of a Greek tragedy

¹⁶ Cf. Dennett (1987) on the lemonade seller's arithmetical mistake in 'Making Sense of Ourselves'.

is called—found in the philosophical literature that appear to confound *de re* explanation: Jones and the basket and dish, Ralph and Ortcutt, Leo and Donald, Oedipus and Jocasta, the Babylonians and Venus, even Oscar and H₂O and XYZ—all these turn on the protagonists not recognising something as something they believe to have a certain property because of a disparity between the original context in which the relational ascriptions true of them become true of them and the new context of their subsequent actions. This indicates that the reason why we know just what these protagonists are going to do must have something essentially to do with our knowledge of the context in which the relational ascriptions became true and the context in which their subsequent actions are taking place and the interplay between these two contexts. With this hint in mind, let us finally turn to what I think is, while certainly very far from the final word on the subject, at least a word that goes some way toward answering the general thrust of the near-contraries objection.

In answer to the question of how Jones's belief, of the basket, that it is the more valuable, can explain his removing it if he also believes, of the basket, that it is not the more valuable, my suggestion is that (12) is *relevant* to an explanation of Jones's removing the basket in a context in which it is visually presented to him because it became true in a context in which the basket was visually presented to Jones. The fact that (15) is also true of Jones—even as he is removing the basket—has no relevance in an explanation of Jones's removing the basket in the context of its being visually presented to him because (15) did not become true in a context in which the basket was visually presented to him. Since (15) became true in a context in which the basket was tactually presented to Jones, it is not relevant to an explanation of his removing the basket in a context in which the basket is not tactually presented to him. The same thing can be said in response to the second type of near contrariety. Given the interplay and disparity between contexts, we can say that (14) does not conflict with the fact that (12) explains Jones's removing the basket on the basis of his visual perception of the items because (14) became true in virtue of Jones's tactual perception of the items. Since the action of Jones's that we are explaining takes place in a

context different from that in which (14) became true there is no reason why (14) should be relevant to this explanation.

We can make more precise the idea that it is the interplay and disparity between contexts of action and contexts of belief formation that renders some relational ascriptions explanatorily relevant and others explanatorily irrelevant. Consider that, notionally speaking, Ralph believes that the suspicious man in the brown hat is a spy; he says as much. Indeed, he says more: he says that the next time he sees the suspicious man in the brown hat he will contact the FBI. So, the property of Ortcutt that *motivates* Ralph to contact the FBI is having-the-suspicious-man-in-the-brown-hat appearance. Generally speaking, a property F motivates an agent S to ϕ an object x at t if and only if at t Fx and at t S wants to ϕ the thing with F . This is not enough to actually get Ralph to contact the FBI, however. He also needs to *locate* Ortcutt on the basis of that motivating property. After all, there is Ralph talking to Ortcutt on the beach and telling him that the next time he sees the man in the brown hat he is going to contact the FBI. A property F locates x for S to ϕ at t if and only if at t Fx and at t S believes he is able to ϕ the thing with F . Ralph's problem is that he is motivated to inform on Ortcutt on the basis of a property that does not locate Ortcutt for him. When he is talking to Ortcutt on the beach the property that locates Ortcutt for him is having-the-man-at-the-beach appearance. So there is a property of Ortcutt that motivates Ralph to inform on him and a property of Ortcutt that locates him for him but, alas, the properties are not the same. For Ralph to inform on Ortcutt, there needs to be a *single* property of Ortcutt that both motivates Ralph to inform on him and that locates him for informing upon. This is why, so far in the story, he will inform on him only when he sees him acting suspiciously in the brown hat. Again, generally speaking, we can say that for S

to ϕx at t there must be a property F of x which both motivates S to ϕx at t and locates x for S to ϕ at t .¹⁷

Consider Jones again. Consider, in particular, the fact that, notionally speaking, Jones thinks that the basket is the more valuable. It is clear that after his visual and tactual inspections, he would assent, if queried, to the sentence 'The basket is the more valuable'. (Recall that when blindfolded and demonstrating the dish as the item he thinks to be the more valuable Jones mistakenly thinks he is demonstrating the basket and thereby confirming his original visual judgement that the basket is the more valuable.) The basket looks like the basket to Jones and the dish looks like the dish to Jones; unfortunately for Jones, however, the dish feels like the basket to him and the basket feels like the dish to him. So, there are only two properties that motivate Jones to remove one of the items: having a baskety appearance or having a baskety feel. There are four properties that locate the items for Jones: having a baskety appearance, having a dishy appearance, having a baskety feel, and having a dishy feel. When Jones is looking at the items he removes the basket because only it is located for him by a property that also motivates him to remove it. When Jones is feeling the items he removes the dish because only it is located for him by a property that also motivates him to remove it. When Jones is looking at the items, the basket is located for him by its baskety appearance and the dish is located for him by its dishy appearance. However, of these two locating properties only one of them is also a motivating property, namely, having a baskety appearance, and so Jones removes the basket. Just the reverse is true when Jones is feeling the items. The basket is located by its dishy feel and the dish is located by its baskety feel. Of these two properties only one is a motivating property: having a baskety feel. Since only the dish has a property that locates it for Jones and that motivates Jones to remove it, Jones removes the dish.

¹⁷ The idea that motivating and locating properties play an essential role in action upon objects comes from Sosa and Pastin (1981), though the basic idea is clearly present in Morton (1975), as is evident from the earlier discussion of universally quantified psychological principles.

The idea of a motivating property is another way of describing the relevance of the context of belief formation or fixation to action on the basis of belief; the idea of a locating property is another way of describing the relevance of the context of action to action on the basis of belief. For an agent to act on an object at a certain time that object must present some property to the agent that both locates the object for him to act on at that time and motivates him to act on it at that time. A property of an object becomes a motivating property in the context of belief formation. This is what has happened with Jones: it is when (12) becomes true that having a baskety appearance becomes a motivating property for Jones. It is when (14) becomes true that having a baskety feel becomes a motivating property for Jones. If either of these motivating properties are to lead Jones to remove an item then they must also be locating properties. It is when one of these motivating properties becomes a locating property that action occurs and Jones removes one of the items. When the context of action is one in which Jones is looking at the items, then of the two locating properties—having a baskety appearance and having dishy appearance—only the former is also a motivating property. So only (12) is relevant to an explanation of Jones's removing the basket on the basis of sight. The same *mutatis mutandis* for the context in which Jones is touching the items.

Note that there is nothing *ad hoc* in this defence of *de re* explanation against the near-contraries objection. There is nothing *ad hoc* about saying that the reason why (12) explains Jones's removing the basket on the basis of sight even though (14) and (15) are also true is that (12) is *relevant* to an explanation of Jones's removal on the basis of sight but (14) and (15) are not. I am not just saying that a relational ascription is irrelevant to a *de re* explanation, and so cannot conflict with it, when it is a near-contrary of an ascription invoked in the explanans. For there is a theoretically well-motivated and non-arbitrary way of explaining this relevance: namely, in terms of the relation between the contexts of belief fixation and action and the relation between motivating properties and locating properties.

In conclusion, I would like briefly to relate this solution to the problem of near contraries to a theme in the work of Robert Stalnaker (1984) and David Lewis (1986). Lewis claims that 'Belief is compartmentalised and fragmented' (1986, p. 30). Because they both hold that beliefs are constitutively tied to behaviour, neither Stalnaker (who calls his approach to intentionality the 'pragmatic picture') nor Lewis (who is a commonsense functionalist) thinks it makes sense to speak of individual beliefs that are held singly. On their view beliefs come in large clumps: Lewis calls them 'belief systems'; Stalnaker refers to them as 'belief states'. Furthermore, Stalnaker claims that

It is compatible with the pragmatic account that the rational dispositions that a person has at one time should arise from several different belief states. A person may be disposed, in one kind of context, or with respect to one kind of action, to behave in ways that are correctly explained by one belief state and at the same time be disposed, in another kind of context, or with respect to another kind of action, to behave in ways that would be explained by a different belief state. This need not be a matter of shifting from one state to another or vacillating between states; the agent might, at the same time, be in two stable belief states, be in two different dispositional states which are displayed in different kinds of situations. ... But if an agent can be in distinct belief states at the same time ... then there is no reason why these belief states cannot be incompatible. In such a case an agent would believe both a proposition and its contradictory, but would not therefore believe everything. It would still be possible in such a situation to explain the agent's actions as rational actions according to the usual pattern. (1984, p. 83)

Lewis says much the same thing; in his own words, 'Belief is compartmentalised and fragmented' (1986, p.30). Of course, *de re* explanation is not, as I have emphasised, a form of rationalisation, since relational ascriptions do not give the way the believer thinks of things and are not bound by principles of rationality. So agreeing with Stalnaker's and Lewis's basic point that incompatible fragmented beliefs can still explain action does not commit me to their claim that this kind of explanation is the 'usual' pattern of rationalisation. For it is precisely the fact that *de re* explanation is not a form of rationalisation and that relational ascriptions are immune from the constraints of reason, that gives my use of the idea of fragmentation an independent motivation that is not available to Stalnaker or Lewis. Whereas they say that beliefs are fragmented, but have no independent motivation for saying this, that is, independent of saving their theories from unpalatable

consequences, I say that relational belief ascriptions are fragmented, and the motivation for this is nothing other than the logical laxity of the relational idiom, for example, the fact that from S 's believing a to be F and S 's believing a to be G it does not follow that S believes a to be F and G .

The logical fragmentation of the relational ascriptions (12)-(15) helps to explain how (12) can explain Jones's removing the basket when the near contrary (15) is true. The very fact that it does not follow from (12) and (15), for example, that Jones believes of the basket that it is the more valuable and not the more valuable shows that (12) and (15) stand compartmentalised from each other, and hence, stand ready to be employed separately in different explanatory circumstances. Of course, that (12) and (15) stand logically fragmented is not simply an unexplainable brute fact. It is the interplay and the disparity between the contexts in which relational ascriptions become true and the contexts in which the actions that are explained by them occur, in the way explained above, that accounts for why relational ascriptions are logically compartmentalised.

One important question that remains, however, is just how finely discriminated these 'contexts' are to which appeal has been made in order to solve the problem of near contraries? Consider, for example, Jones and the basket and the dish. I have said that, basically, the reason why Jones does not remove the basket when he is feeling it is that this 'context of action' is different from the 'context of belief formation' in which the relational ascription that he believes the basket to be the more valuable becomes true. But on what ground can I claim this? What explains why this is a different context, other than the fact that he does not remove the basket in it—which, of course, is the very thing to be explained? This is a difficult question involving what Kaplan (1989) has called 'cognitive dynamics' and I cannot answer it fully satisfactorily. Taking a cue from Evans (1981, 1982), however, I think the answer may lie in the fact that Jones has *lost track* of the basket at some point between the earlier time when he is looking at it and the later time when he is touching it and the still later time when he is again looking at it. This is also what has happened to Ralph

vis-à-vis Ortcutt: he loses track of him between the time when he sees him in the brown hat and the time when he sees him at the beach. So one proposal about how to discriminate contexts is by appeal to the notion of keeping track of an object through space and time. A subject moves into a different context with respect to an object when he has lost track of that object. So, if Jones had not been blindfolded, and was allowed to touch the items when he was also looking at them, then he would not have lost track of the basket. In this situation, he would have removed the basket both on the basis of sight and on the basis of touch. Because he has not lost track of the basket the contexts of action and belief formation are one and the same. We can imagine a similar situation with respect to Ralph: he might have tracked Ortcutt throughout the period in which he changed from his spy-in-a-brown-hat costume into his pillar-at-the-beach-costume. In such a situation the context of action and the context of belief formation would be one and the same and so Ralph would have contacted the FBI when he saw Ortcutt at the beach. To put it in terms of the earlier notion of a 'motivating property', if Ralph had kept track of Ortcutt then another property of Ortcutt would have become a motivating property for Ralph, namely, having-the-pillar-at-the-beach-appearance. In this situation Ralph would have contacted the FBI at the beach and so his context of action and his context of belief formation would not have diverged in the way they did in Quine's original story. A proper treatment of this issue will have to wait for another occasion, however. Nevertheless, although more needs to be said about the problem of near contraries in order to achieve a fully satisfying solution, and therefore a full vindication of the *de re* way, I think what I have said has at least gone some way toward showing that the problem is not insurmountable.

6. Summary

The overall case for *de re* explanation can be summarised as follows.

(1) There appears to be a sound positive argument in its favour: there is no way to predict or explain action on objects (doings) without the help of relational ascriptions that relate the agent to the objects acted upon (of the several examples used, recall Fodor's example of John and the girl next door).

(2) In our explanations of our fellow creatures' doings, we appeal to psychological generalisations like (P3) that quantify over the objects of those doings. This kind of covering-law explanation requires, as a matter of logic, that there be relational ascriptions describing the initial conditions that instantiate these universally quantified conditionals. In this sense, relational ascriptions are a necessary feature of the commonsense covering-law explanations of doings we appear to give in our day-to-day dealings with each other.

(3) No alternative rationalising type of explanatory scheme can explain doings since they are not the sorts of things that are done for reasons.

(4) The alternative D-C model of explanation—whether combined with a rationalising strategy or not—does not work.

(5) It appears that the general thrust of the 'near contraries' objection to *de re* explanation can be met.

In the next chapter I try to show how the second major objection to *de re* explanation can be answered.

***DE RE* EXPLANATION, RELATIONAL PROPERTIES AND CAUSAL POWERS**

In the last chapter I elaborated the conception of *de re* explanation which I introduced in the first chapter and pointed the way towards answering the objection from ‘near contraries’.

In this final chapter I want to show how the other serious objection to *de re* explanation, the objection from causal powers, can be answered. In the course of doing so I also hope to cast light on some of the problems thrown up by the Twin Earth thought experiments.

1. Water, arthritis, and all that: kinds of content

The driving force behind Dennett’s (1982) ‘notional worlds’ characterisation of mental content, Fodor’s (1980) ‘fully opaque’ taxonomy of mental content, Fodor’s (1987) ‘narrow content’, and numerous other similar notions¹ is the attempt, as Dennett puts it, to ‘capture the organismic contribution to belief in isolation’ (ibid., p. 209) from the actual environment of the organism because only the ‘organismic contribution’ to thought can play a role in any ‘proper’ psychological explanation of behaviour. This idea certainly sounds like it is in conflict with the idea of using *de re* ascriptions in psychological explanations. After all, one essential thing that *de re* ascriptions do is precisely to relate an organism to the objects and stuffs in its environment. Capturing this ‘organismic

¹ See, e.g., Stalnaker’s (1990) notion of a ‘diagonal proposition’, Perry’s (1993) ‘created propositions’ and ‘nonincremental truth-conditions’ and Recanati’s (1993) ‘external propositions’. These notions can be adapted to the purpose of specifying the narrow organismic contribution to thought truth conditionally, unlike Dennett’s and Fodor’s notions which are not truth conditional. Especially recommended on this score, however, is Frank Jackson and Philip Pettit’s paper ‘Some Content is Narrow’ (1993) in which they argue persuasively that a notion of ‘narrow, folk, truth-conditional content’ that they call ‘intra-world narrow’ plays an indispensable role in the commonsense psychological prediction (and explanation) of behaviour.

contribution' seems tantamount to eschewing *de re* ascriptions altogether. The advocate of *de re* psychological explanation must, then, reject any line of thought whose conclusion is that bona fide psychological explanation cannot advert to the relations between organisms and their environments in the course of explaining their behaviour. In this chapter I try to show why such thinking should be rejected, thereby removing one of the main obstacles to the very idea of *de re* explanation. I begin with the question: Why would anyone want to capture this 'organismic contribution'?

The answer depends, of course, on who you talk to. I shall concentrate on what I take to be the most powerful and most influential line of thought. It is widely believed that Putnam's (1975) and Burge's (1979) famous thought experiments cause serious problems for any *relational* psychology, that is, for any psychology that operates with more than the 'organismic contribution' to thought. Why is this?

Well, a scientific intentional psychology operates with laws that describe how mental states and events—thoughts, for short—cause behaviour. These laws describe the ways that various *kinds* of thought causally interact with various *kinds* of behaviour. So these laws, like the laws of any empirical explanatory scheme that aspires to be a (special) science, must embed predicates that pick out *natural kinds*, that is, the causal-nomologically relevant properties in virtue of which thoughts cause behaviour. But all behaviour involves bodily movements and as physicalists we believe that the causes of all bodily movements are physical. So, if thoughts indeed cause behaviour that must be because they supervene on the physical properties of individuals, in particular, their neurophysiological properties. Moreover, we know from neurophysiology that the physical events in our brains and nervous systems that are the proximate causes of our bodily motions are so because of their internal or intrinsic or anyway *non-relational* properties; non-relational in the sense that they do not involve any relations to things outside the skin of the subject—though they may involve relations to other things within the skin of the subject. This, of course, means that two thoughts have different causal powers only in so far as they are each instantiated or

realised by neural states that differ in their non-relational properties. In other words, the features of thoughts that are causally efficacious in the production of behaviour *locally supervene* on the subject's body.² But what Putnam's thought experiment shows is that our commonsense scheme for individuating thoughts—namely, by their truth conditions—does not respect this last supervenience requirement. Ralph and Twin Ralph are physical duplicates—all the natural³ non-relational properties of their neural states are identical—yet the truth conditions of the their thoughts differ: Ralph thinks *water* is wet while his twin thinks, as *we* might put it, that *twater* is wet. Therefore, in so far as commonsense psychology individuates thoughts by reference to their truth conditions, it does not individuate thoughts by reference to their causal-nomological properties and so does not individuate thoughts in a way appropriate to psychological laws.⁴ Following one traditional strand in the literature, we can call the kind of thought content that is dependent on physical things and stuffs in the thinker's environment, that is, the kind of thought content that has *physically determined* truth conditions, *propositional content* (so long as we keep in mind that this is the 'Russellian' notion of a proposition, employed for example by Kaplan (1989), the constituents of which are collections of objects and properties in the world, and not the Fregean one according to which propositions are *thoughts* composed entirely of *senses*.)

As is well-known, Burge's thought experiments extend the range of Putnam's external determinants of thought content beyond the physical environment of the thinker and into his social context. The striking moral of Burge's thought experiments is that, according to commonsense psychology, the contents of a thinker's thoughts are in part determined by social factors in his language community of which he may be ignorant,

² To be more precise, the apposite notion of supervenience here is what Davies (1992) calls *modally strong local supervenience*: If *x* has intentional property *F* in possible world *w*₁, and *y* is a duplicate in *w*₂ of *x* (in *w*₁), then *y* has *F* in *w*₂. This is the notion of supervenience I shall employ henceforth.

³ See note 7 of Chapter Three.

⁴ See chapter two of Fodor 1987 and Fodor 1991 for versions of this argument. Cf. Crane 1991 and Dennett 1982. See Stalnaker 1989 for some cogent criticisms of both Fodor's idea of narrow content and Dennett's notional attitude psychology.

namely, how his compatriots use words. Alfred is under the misapprehension that arthritis is a disease that can occur in the thigh as well as the joints. Alfred's medical doctor knows better: arthritis is exclusively a disease of the joints and cannot, by definition, occur in the thigh. Alfred says to his doctor, 'The arthritis in my ankles has spread to my thigh'. Can we truly say of Alfred that he believes that he has arthritis in his thigh? The answer appears to be 'Yes'. He believes something that is, as we might say, necessarily or analytically false—that he has arthritis in his thigh—and so he is pretty confused; but he believes it nonetheless. Imagine now a counterfactual situation in which all non-intentional facts about Alfred's physical, behavioural, phenomenistic, and functional history are held constant while his social context is altered in the following way: in his language community the word 'arthritis' refers to rheumatoid ailments that can occur in both joints and the thigh. Can we truly say of counterfactual Alfred, as we can of our actual Alfred, that he believes he has arthritis in his thigh? Burge invites us to answer 'No' and it is hard to refuse the invitation. After all, *our* word 'arthritis' applies only to inflammations of the joints and Alfred's counterfactual compatriots do not apply *their* word 'arthritis' only to inflammations of the joints; that is to say, their word 'arthritis' does not mean what our word 'arthritis' means—it does not mean *arthritis*. To make the point vivid, consider that, unlike Alfred, when counterfactual Alfred says 'The arthritis in my ankles has spread to my thigh' he expresses a *true* belief. Since Alfred's belief is false and counterfactual Alfred's is true, they must be different beliefs. Burge's conclusion is that by varying only the use of words in a subject's community we can alter the very content of the subject's thoughts. Again, we have a clear breach of local supervenience that bodes ill for the prospects of incorporating commonsense ways of individuating thoughts into psychological laws. The radical conclusion of Burge's thought experiment comes home when we consider that, unlike the case with Putnam's thought experiments, there are no physical things or stuffs in the two Alfreds' environments that accounts for the difference in the truth conditions of their thoughts—there is no extra disease, for example, in counterfactual Alfred's community.

The truth conditions are, rather, determined socially by the way the members of the community use their words. I shall follow Loar (1988) and call this radical new kind of content *social content*.

From these thought experiments, Putnam and Burge draw the conclusion that various philosophical theories of mind that are ‘individualist’ in outlook, that is, that hold that thought content is individuated non-relationally, in the sense of locally supervening on the subject’s body, are mistaken. Of course, the advocate of the Fodorian argument from causal powers adumbrated above infers the opposite conclusion: so much the worse for the commonsense taxonomy *as interpreted by Putnam and Burge*. Since commonsense as interpreted by Putnam and Burge does not taxonomise by causal powers—and so taxonomises twins differently—we need some kind of taxonomy that does—that is, one that does taxonomise twins together—if we are ever to have a scientific psychology.⁵

Evidently, an essential lemma along the way to Putnam’s and Burge’s conclusion that various traditional theories of mind that operate with a locally supervenient, non-relational taxonomy of thoughts are mistaken is that propositional content and social content are the kind of content individuated by commonsense psychology in its efforts to explain behaviour. Let us bring in another useful term from Loar and call ‘whatever individuates beliefs and other propositional attitudes in commonsense psychological explanation, so that they explanatorily interact with each other and with other factors such as perception in familiar ways’ (p. 568) *psychological content*. We can then say that Putnam and Burge assume that propositional content and social content are psychological content. Loar goes on to argue that this assumption is mistaken. Due consideration of Loar’s argument that neither social content nor propositional content is psychological content would take us too far afield. What I want to do instead is emphasise the fact there are good commonsense reasons for saying that Ralph and Twin Ralph are importantly *psychologically alike* despite

⁵ The interpretation of the first Fodorian argument from causal powers is more complicated than I have indicated and will be taken up in detail in the next section. For valuable discussion of Fodor’s argument, especially the dialectical situation, see Davies 1986.

having different beliefs; similarly for the Alfreds (cf. Lewis, 1981, p. 417). Indeed, it was part of Putnam's (1975) own original description of Twin Ralph that 'It is absurd to think that *his* psychological state is one bit different' (p. 227) from Ralph's.⁶ We can grant that when the Ralphs both utter the sentence 'Water is H₂O' and thereby express their beliefs, Ralph's belief is true and Twin Ralph's is false; and again, that when the Alfreds utter the sentence 'My arthritis has spread to my thigh' one of them has a true belief and the other a false one. If the only information we are given is that X has a true belief and Y a false one, and we are then asked whether X and Y have the same belief, it is extremely plausible to think that the proper answer is 'No' (Cf. Stich, 1978). But once the *recherché* situations are described to us in detail and we are asked whether the Ralphs (or the Alfreds) are therefore *psychologically different*, it is very plausible to return a negative answer—at least we feel more hesitation in returning a Yes answer than we did a No answer to the first question.

Let us be very careful, however, in saying exactly why *commonsense* might wish to say that the Ralphs were psychologically alike despite having different beliefs; in particular, let us not confuse commonsense with philosophical theory on this score. We have already discussed philosophical reasons for thinking that the Ralphs are psychologically alike despite their not sharing beliefs. As we have seen, Fodor's metaphysical ruminations on causal powers adumbrated above lead him to the conclusion that 'Causal powers supervene on local microstructure. In the psychological case, they supervene on local neural structure' (1987, p. 44), and hence, since the twins are physical duplicates, they should be classed together for the purposes of psychological explanation. So, there is certainly room in philosophical theorising about the mind-body relation for the view that the Ralphs are psychologically the same.

⁶ Of course, Putnam's original thought experiments concerned linguistic *meaning* and not intentional states such as belief. So when Putnam says that the Ralphs' *psychological states* are not one bit different it is not clear whether he thinks that their *beliefs* are not one bit different either. I will assume with most philosophers that Putnam's arguments do extend to intentional states in so far as these are individuated by

That the causally efficacious aspects of thoughts must supervene on the non-relational neural properties of the subjects of those thoughts, and ultimately upon their intrinsic physical properties, is not, however, the reason why commonsense groups the Ralphs together—or so it seems to me. The reason why commonsense groups the Ralphs together has nothing especial to do with philosophical theories about what supervenes on what. It has to do with the fact that they behave in relevantly similar fashions upon being confronted by qualitatively indistinguishable liquids. Commonsense knows full well that people's reactions to and actions upon the objects and stuffs in their environment depend on the observable properties of those things and not their hidden micro-structures. The success of many practical jokes, for example, depends on this commonsense knowledge. We can easily trick Ralph into drinking XYZ and Twin Ralph into drinking H₂O (though it would not be a particularly funny joke). If we were to swap their respective glasses of H₂O and XYZ for each other without their noticing then they would drink them all the same. None of this depends upon the Ralphs being physical duplicates. We could just as easily pull 'the old switcheroo' (Kaplan, 1989b) on two subjects who were not duplicates. What does the work in leading us, as commonsense psychologists, to the conclusion that the Ralphs are psychologically similar despite having different beliefs is the fact that when they are presented with identical *tableaux vivant* they do the same thing. Let us suppose that you and I both wish to slake our thirst and that you are presented with H₂O while I am presented with XYZ (and that our perceptual and rational faculties are in normal working order). We can, I think, make a couple of boring commonsense psychological predictions here: first, that both you and I will come to believe that we are confronted with something potable and, second, that both you and I will drink our respective liquids. If this is correct, then we are for all intents and purposes psychologically the same, in the sense that we are subsumable under the same psychological laws, such as the following very rough ones:

their truth conditions, and hence, that Putnam's conclusions are on a par with Burge's in this respect. On

(PL1) $\forall x \forall y (x \text{ has a waterish appearance} \ \& \ x \text{ is seen by } y. \rightarrow x \text{ comes to be believed by } y \text{ to be potable}).^7$

(PL2) $\forall x \forall y (x \text{ is believed by } y \text{ to be potable} \ \& \ y \text{ is thirsty} \ \& \ y \text{ wants not to be thirsty.} \rightarrow y \text{ drinks } x).^8$

In the case of you and me, we—the ‘folk’—are quite prepared to say that we are psychologically similar—in the sense that we fall under *something like* the above generalisations—even though we are not physical duplicates. The same, *mutatis mutandis*, for subjects that also happen to be duplicates, such as the Ralphps and the Alfreds.

Commonsense agrees, then, with Fodor that twins should be taxonomised together for the purposes of psychology—but not for his reasons. It is not the fact that the Ralphps’ brains are identical that is doing the work here; what is doing the work is the fact that, when thirsty, the Ralphps will *ceteris paribus* drink any liquid that is qualitatively identical to water regardless of what its chemical microstructure is.

Putnamian and Burgean thought experiments show that duplicates can have different thoughts in so far as these are individuated by their truth conditions; that is, the intentional states of duplicates can differ in their propositional and social content. The point we have now reached is that this does not show that duplicates whose intentional states differ in their propositional and social content are not to be classed together for the purposes of psychological theory. Fodor’s argument from causal powers appears to show that the Ralphps should be grouped together for the purposes of psychological explanation because their brains are identical. Commonsense concludes that the twins should be grouped together because they fall under the same psychological generalisations regardless of the

this, see Burge 1982.

⁷ ‘Has a waterish appearance’ is shorthand for something like: ‘is a colourless, odourless, tasteless, ... liquid’. Obviously it is an empirical question just exactly what this complex property in fact is.

⁸ These universally quantified conditionals are phrased in this awkward way as a reminder of the position adopted in the first chapter that there is no ‘quantifying in’ to positions that resist substitutivity occurring here. The quantified variables occupy fully transparent positions that fall outside the scope of the psychological verbs.

fact that their brains are identical. Thus Fodor and commonsense arrive at the same conclusion, though from very different premises.

The rest of this chapter will be taken up with showing how one can defend the conclusion of Fodor's argument from causal powers—namely, that twins belong to the same psychological natural kind—yet reject his reason for drawing the conclusion. The significance of this for my purposes is twofold. First, and most importantly, since it is *Fodor's* reason for thinking that twins belong to the same natural kind that is inconsistent with the claim that relational ascriptions can play a role in the causal explanation of a subject's doings, the fact that the reason is faulty removes the obstacle to saying that relational ascriptions causally explain doings. Second, once the correct reason for thinking that twins belong to the same natural kind is in place we can see clearly the role relational ascriptions play in the explanation of doings. A corollary of this is that the project of constructing a viable notion of narrow content—whether truth conditional or not—is completely unnecessary for the purposes for which it is seen as being required.

2. Relational properties and causal powers

The conclusion of Fodor's (1987, 1991) argument from causal powers is that twins should be taxonomised together, they belong to the same natural kind, for the purposes of psychological explanation. As I presented the argument above, it turned essentially on two premises. In Fodor's own words, they are:

(1) [P]sychological taxonomy is taxonomy *by* causal powers (1987, p. 40)

and

- (2) Causal powers supervene on local micro-structure. In the psychological case, they supervene on local neural structure (ibid.).

Since the twins are physical duplicates, they have the same causal powers; therefore they belong to the same natural kind for the purposes of psychological explanation. Clearly, if this argument is sound it rules out the use of relational ascriptions in any psychological explanation of behaviour that purports to be causal explanation. This is indeed the way Fodor sees things. Remarking on the considerations he advanced in chapter two of *Psychosemantics* (1987) in favour of classifying twins together, he says:

they were supposed to show that mental states that differ only in 'broad' intentional properties (the sorts of intentional properties that the mental states of molecular twins may fail to share) *ipso facto* do not differ in causal powers; hence that mere differences in broad intentional content do not determine differences in natural kinds for purposes of psychological explanation. (1991, pp. 206-7)

The claim that the causal powers of mental states locally supervene on subjects' bodies is inconsistent with the claim that relational ascriptions can play a role in the causal explanation of a subject's behaviour. The reason is obvious: the truth of a relational ascription does not locally supervene on the physical properties of the subject of the ascription. The point does not depend on examples involving natural kinds (i.e., H₂O/XYZ-type examples) but is quite general. Imagine that at a party Ralph is asked to point out his wife. He sees her across the room and as he points to her says to his interlocutor, 'That's my wife Roxanne over there in the corner, the women with the martini, let me introduce you'. Over yonder, Twin Ralph does the same thing *vis-à-vis* his twin-wife. Ralph believes, of Roxanne, that she is his wife, is drinking a martini, is in the corner, etc.; Twin Ralph believes, of *Twin Roxanne*, that *she* is his wife, is drinking a martini, etc.. Different relational ascriptions; same local physical facts. I have argued in the preceding chapters that any commonsense psychological explanation of Ralph's motion towards his wife must include some relational ascription, such as, for example: Ralph believes, of Roxanne, that she is his wife. Similarly, any psychological explanation of Twin Ralph's motion must

include an ascription to the effect that, for example, Twin Ralph believes, of Twin Roxanne, that she is his wife. Fodor thinks that since the causal powers of mental states are locally supervenient, the difference between the relational ascriptions does not correspond to any difference in the causal powers of the Ralphs' mental states. To generalise: the differences between the relational properties in virtue of which different relational ascriptions are true of a pair of duplicates is not responsible for any differences between the causal powers of those duplicates' mental states, and hence, relational ascriptions cannot contribute to psychological explanations of behaviour.

Fortunately, as I shall show in this section, the key assumption that this reasoning turns on, namely, that the causal powers of mental states supervene on local neural structure, is false. As I have already mentioned, a corollary of this is that there is no need for a notion of narrow content, for as Fodor himself rightly notes, 'If psychology individuates the attitudes relationally, then it is no more in need of a narrow notion of content than commonsense is' (1987, p. 32). The interesting conclusion, however, is that the causally relevant relational individuation of mental states that I shall propose still taxonomises the Ralphs together! Indeed, as I have already suggested, commonsense itself groups the Ralphs together for the purposes of psychological explanation for reasons having nothing to do with their being physical duplicates. It is an interesting fact, in need of explanation, that much of the literature simply assumes that the *only* way to capture what is psychologically the same about twins is to abstract from their environments and posit some kind of locally supervenient narrow/organismic content that they share. One recent author, for example, claims that 'The laws of human psychology must be species-wide; this demands that the types which occur in the laws be environment-independent: they cannot be specific to a particular subject (or class of subjects), nor specific to a particular context. It follows that we need mental states narrowly individuated for the purposes of human psychology' (Recanati, 1993, p. 205). If the rough-and-ready generalisations that I proposed above, which subsume both Ralph and his twin and which are implicit in

commonsense, are at all plausible, then they are *prima facie* counter-examples to this fairly widespread, indeed orthodox, view. Moreover, as we shall see, the diagnosis of what is wrong with this kind of thinking is closely connected to the conflation of twin cases with empty cases that I complained about in the third chapter on perceptual demonstrative thought.

Though one could dispute (1), I take it that the dispute between ‘narrow’ and ‘wide’ theorists takes place against a background of agreement on the truth of a causal view of psychological explanation. The obvious starting point, then, is to ask what entitles Fodor to (2). Ironically, it is Fodor himself who provides the reasons for rejecting (2); he is hoist with his own petard. For Fodor rightly points out that not all the properties that affect the causal powers of their bearers are non-relational properties. As an illustration he offers the example of *being a planet*. This is a relational property the possession of which affects the causal powers of the chunk of rock that is the planet in question. It causes the chunk of rock to move in an ellipse, or to have a Keplerian orbit, for example. A duplicate chunk of rock that is not a planet may not have these causal powers and may therefore behave differently from its twin. Given this rather obvious point, it is truly astonishing to find Fodor summing up the ‘metaphysical point’ of his argument in favour of treating twins together as the claim that ‘Causal powers supervene on local micro-structure’ (1987, p. 44). (1) amounts to what Fodor calls *methodological individualism*: ‘the doctrine that psychological states are individuated *with respect to their causal powers*’ (Ibid., p. 42); and Fodor is quick to point out that ‘*Individualism does not prohibit the relational individuation of mental states*; it just says that no property of mental states, relational or otherwise, counts taxonomically unless it affects causal powers’ (ibid.). Though Fodor distinguishes between methodological individualism—individuation by causal powers—and *methodological solipsism*—individuation without respect to semantic properties—he does not clearly distinguish between individualism and the thesis of the *local supervenience of causal powers*. In both chapter two of *Psychosemantics* and his later paper ‘A Modal

Argument for Narrow Content' he constantly runs together individualism and the local supervenience of causal powers.⁹

To be entitled to (2), Fodor needs a general argument to show that the psychological case is somehow special in that *psychological* relational properties cannot affect causal powers; that, for some reason, in the psychological case, causal powers are locally supervenient. This is not, however, his strategy; rather, what he does is show that *certain* relational psychological properties do not affect causal powers—because they do not pass two *a priori* conditions on causal powers: the 'cross-context' and 'no conceptual connection' tests—and conclude from this that the causal powers are locally supervenient.¹⁰ This is a *non sequitur*. It does not follow from the fact that *some* proffered examples of relational psychological properties do not affect causal powers that *none* do. But it is this latter stronger claim that Fodor needs to sustain (2), the claim that the causal powers of mental states are locally supervenient—and it is this claim that is inconsistent with relational ascriptions playing a role in psychological explanation. One can see the difficulty Fodor is in. Given that there are clear cases of *non-psychological* relational properties that *do* affect the causal powers of the things that have them—being a planet, for example—how is one to show that there are *no psychological* relational properties that do—without assuming the very thing to be proven, that the causal powers of mental states are locally supervenient?¹¹ After all, relational psychological properties, like any type of relational property, are sundry. One risks a failure of imagination if one simply argues inductively that since some psychological relational properties do not affect causal powers none do. But this is precisely what Fodor does. He tries to show that the two aforementioned tests for genuine

⁹ As is often the case in the philosophy of mind, terminology can be confusing. It is important not to confuse Fodor's 'methodological individualism' with Burge's 'individualism'. For Burge's characterisation of individualism see the third paragraph of his 'Individualism and Psychology' (1986).

¹⁰ I shall discuss only the first test. The argument that the second test—the 'no conceptual connection' test—is violated by psychological explanations invoking relational properties of mental states is well answered by Peacocke (1993).

¹¹ Indeed, now that the dust has settled somewhat, it seems a plausible diagnosis of the situation that Fodor and Burge are simply begging the question against each other. If this is right, then the rest of this chapter can be seen as providing a way out of the stalemate.

causal powers rule in certain relational properties, such as being a planet, and rule out certain psychological relational properties, such as '*being a mental state of a person who lives in a world where there is XYZ rather than H₂O in the puddles*' (1987, p. 34). Fodor may very well be right about this particular relational mental property; in fact, I think he is—but it does not follow from this that the causal powers of mental states are locally supervenient. For him to show that, he needs to show that *no* psychological relational property can pass those tests; and this he most certainly has not done.

In short, Fodor confuses (2), the claim that psychological causal powers are locally supervenient, with the following claim:

- (3) Putnamian and Burgean type relational psychological properties do not affect causal powers.

All he does is canvass reasons against (3); nevertheless, for reasons I cannot discern, he takes himself to have established (2). In *Psychosemantics*, he describes his conclusion thus: 'Given the causal explanation of behaviour as the psychologist's end in view, he has motivation for adopting a taxonomy of mental states that respects supervenience' (1987, p. 53); where all he is entitled to conclude is that the psychologist has motivation for not adopting Putnam's and Burge's taxonomy of mental states, that is, mental states taxonomised by their propositional or social content. Similarly, in 'A Modal Argument for Narrow Content' he says 'So individualism is true *and local supervenience is preserved*. End of story' (1991, p. 220; my emphasis). In fact, however, it is very far from the end of the story; it is more like the end of the first chapter of a story. For, to repeat, all Fodor does is marshal considerations against (3). The significance of this for my purposes is, again, that since it is only (2) that is inconsistent with the claim that the relational properties ascribed by relational ascriptions affect causal powers, the latter claim has not been shown to be false. The ultimate irony is that Fodor does not even need (2) to show that the twins belong to the same natural kind for the purposes of psychological explanation. As I have

already suggested, commonsense is way ahead of him in its reasons for thinking that the twins belong to the same psychological natural kind.

If what I have been saying is correct, then one must guard against committing the converse mistake: attempting to vindicate the causal powers of Putnamian and Burgean type relational properties—propositional and social content—by showing that the taxonomy of causal powers in various special sciences does not respect local supervenience. For it is perfectly consistent to reject the general metaphysical view that causal powers are locally supervenient and hold that not all relational properties thereby affect causal powers. It seems to me that the debate, in particular that between Fodor and Burge, has been conducted at too high a level of generality. After all, Fodor agrees that some relational properties do affect causal powers; he just thinks that Putnamian and Burgean ones do not. Though Burge offers many compelling examples of relational properties that affect causal powers—from biology, geology, and even psychology—as far I can see he nowhere argues explicitly and directly that the propositional and social content of mental states affects causal powers—which, of course, is the very bone of contention triggered by Putnam's and Burge's own thought experiments. So Burge really fails to join issue with Fodor. One needs to examine carefully relational properties on a case-by-case basis in order to determine which ones can plausibly be said to affect the causal powers of things that have them and which ones cannot. This is the strategy I shall pursue.

I agree with Fodor that the Ralphs belong to the same natural kind for the purposes of psychological explanation; moreover, I agree with Fodor that this means that Putnamian and Burgean type relational properties do not affect the causal powers of mental states. But since I do not agree with his reasons for these claims, I shall not discuss any further Fodor's arguments for them; they have, in any case, been cogently criticised in detail by Davies (1986) and Burge (1986a, 1989, 1995). These critics' criticisms are, however, offered with a view to defending—or, in the case of Davies (1986), with a view to at least not ruling out—Putnamian and Burgean type relational properties as affecting causal powers.

Rather than discuss the dialectical situation with respect to these critics and Fodor I shall lay out my own reasons for thinking that Putnamian and Burgean type relational properties do not affect causal powers and that twins—or rather, certain kinds of twins—belong to the same psychological natural kind. In the course of doing so I shall comment on how my view avoids the criticisms that are directed at Fodor.

A useful starting point is the so-called ‘cross-context’ test for causal powers. Fodor offers a number of different formulations of this test (cf. 1987, pp. 35 and 158n9; 1991, n3 and appendix) the basic thrust of which is that two things have the same causal powers if and only if, in the same context, they have the same effects. The test derives its intuitive plausibility from the fact that causal power is a counterfactual notion. As Fodor notes, ‘The cross-context test implies that there cannot be a difference in our causal powers unless there are counterfactuals that are true of one of us but not of the other’ (1991, appendix). Much criticism has been levelled at the cross-context test.¹² In my opinion, these criticisms do not get to the heart of the problem because although they correctly interpret the letter of it, they misinterpret its spirit. These misinterpretations are encouraged by Fodor himself and stem, first, from the fact that he offers a number of non-equivalent formulations of the test some of which are clearly inadequate, and second, from his confusion between a psychological taxonomy that respects local supervenience and one that eschews propositional and social content. Consider the fact that Fodor thinks that ‘being in a vat does not ... affect the narrow content of one’s thoughts’, that ‘being in a vat wouldn’t stop a brain from having the very thoughts that you have now’—in short, that brains in vats are ‘just special cases of Twins’ (1987, p. 52). These remarks strongly suggest that on Fodor’s conception of things, Ralph, Twin Ralph, and an envatted twin brain are all three instances of the same psychological natural kind—for twins are supposed to have the same causal powers. This means that the only causal powers of Ralph that are taxonomically relevant to psychology are those that he shares with his twin-brain in a vat. In other words, the only causal powers

¹² See Davies 1986, Burge 1989, 1995, and Baker 1995.

that are taxonomically relevant to psychology are those that locally supervene on brains, that is, those context-independent causal powers of brains that they carry with them wherever they go—the causal powers they have, as Fodor puts it elsewhere, ‘*come what may*’ (1991, p. 208). This is, after all, the local supervenience thesis taken to its logical conclusion.

Ralph’s brain has the same causal powers as a brain in a vat because if the brain in a vat were to be in Ralph’s body in its Earthly environment then it would have the same effects that Ralph’s brain has, for example, getting H₂O into Ralph; and if Ralph’s brain were in the vat then it would have the same effects that the vat-brain has, for example Well, what effects does a brain in a vat have? At this point, the penny drops: since the brain in a vat does not engage in *any* behaviour by *any* standards of what counts as behaviour relevant to psychology, it would be a dramatic denudation verging on the perverse to demand that a psychological taxonomy restrict itself to the locally supervenient causal powers of brains in its efforts to formulate psychological laws.¹³

The foregoing is, I think, the picture that Burge (1989, 1995) has of Fodor’s project. He imagines two intrinsically indistinguishable organs one of which is a heart and the other of which pumps digestive waste. Intuitively they are instances of different biological kinds because they have different causal powers: one pumps blood and the other pumps waste. But, on Fodor’s cross-context test for causal powers the two organs come out as having the same causal powers—switch them and they produce the same effects—and hence must belong to the same natural kind for biological purposes. Burge quite rightly points out that this way of looking at things ‘ignores the fact that specific relations between an entity and its normal environment may be of interest to a special science, and fundamental to its causal taxonomy. ... Fodor’s treatment of any environment as being on a par with other

¹³ The problem cannot be not solved by extending the supervenience basis to include everything from the skin of the subject in. In that case, we merely replace a brain in a vat with a person in a vat whose marionette movements are no more the proper subject of psychology than a brain in a vat is.

“contexts” for testing causal powers is in effect an assimilation of the special sciences to physics’ (1995, p. 227-8).¹⁴

I do not think that Fodor takes himself to be committed to this absurd view of psychology—which is so far removed from his beloved intentional psychology as to be virtually unrecognisable—despite the fact that it is entailed by the local supervenience thesis which he misguidedly champions. Indeed, surely the author of ‘Special Sciences’ (1974) has good reason to reject an ‘assimilation of the special sciences to physics’. The important point is that he need not be committed to any such view of psychology since there are good reasons to taxonomise twins together that do not rely on the local supervenience thesis or the recent interpretation of the cross-context test. As I shall try to show, one can accept the admonitions of Burge and Davies regarding the essentially contextual nature of the special sciences, psychology in particular, and still side with Fodor in holding that Burgean and Putnamian twins that differ in the propositional and social content of their thoughts belong to the same psychological natural kind.

So far we have seen that various arguments fail to establish the thesis that the causal powers of mental states are locally supervenient. The diagnosis of why the proponents of these arguments thought that they did establish the thesis was a simple confusion of that thesis with a quite different, though related, thesis: namely, that Putnamian and Burgean type relational properties—the propositional and social contents of thought—do not affect causal powers. This, together with the fact that nonpsychological relational properties often affect the causal powers of the things that have them, is very strong reason for not ruling out the idea that relational psychological ascriptions—*de re* ascriptions—ascribe relational properties that affect the causal powers of the mental states that have them. We can, however, say more. We can give positive reasons for thinking that relational ascriptions do ascribe relational properties that affect causal powers. To this end, it will be instructive to

¹⁴ The point was made independently by Davies 1986, 1991. See §6.1 of the latter paper for an example in which intrinsically similar components of two information processing systems—the ‘visex’ and ‘audex’,

stick with Fodor's astrophysical analogy and consider two different types of astrophysical situations and compare them with two parallel types of psychological situations. In doing so, the real reason why duplicates belong to the same psychological natural kind will emerge; moreover, that duplicates belong to the same psychological natural kind does not infringe any of the important things that Davies and Burge say about the contextual nature of the special sciences.

Consider the following four examples—two of them astrophysical and two of them psychological—each consisting of the instantiation of a pair of properties. (1) In our first example, we have the planet Terra orbiting the star Sol. We also have a counterfactual situation in which Terra orbits the twin star Twin Sol. In the actual situation, Terra has the property of *being a planet of Sol*. In the counterfactual situation Terra has the property of *being a planet of Twin Sol*. (2) Here, in the actual world, we have Roxanne, who is a devotee of Elvis Presley, asking Elvis for his autograph. Counterfactually, Roxanne might have been asking Twin Elvis for his autograph. Actually, Roxanne has the property of being perceptually related to Elvis, or being related to Elvis for short. Counterfactually, she has the property of being related to Twin Elvis. (3) In this example, we again have the planet Terra orbiting a star in the actual situation. In virtue of this fact Terra has the property of *being a planet*. Counterfactually we imagine that Terra is not orbiting a star (perhaps it is an asteroid floating freely in space). Counterfactually speaking, Terra does not have the property of being a planet or, what amounts to the same thing, has the property of *not being a planet*. (4) With this last situation, we are back with Roxanne who is actually perceptually related to a guy who looks exactly like Elvis and so has the property of being related to someone with an Elvis appearance. Counterfactually, Roxanne has the property of not being related to someone with an Elvis appearance. To recapitulate, we have four pairs of properties: (1a) *being a planet of Sol*, (1b) *being a planet of Twin Sol*; (2a) *being related to Elvis*, (2b) *being related to Twin Elvis*; (3a) *being a planet*, (3b) *not being a*

respectively—are switched. The discussion is conducted against the background of the particular debate over

planet; (4a) *being related to someone with an Elvis appearance*, (4b) *not being related to someone with an Elvis appearance*. The question is: Which of these properties affect the causal powers of the things that have them?

(1) The relevant effects here are moving in an ellipse or having a Keplerian orbit. I take it as obvious that the difference between *being a planet of Sol* and *being a planet of Twin Sol* does not affect the causal powers of Terra in virtue of which Terra moves in an ellipse. If we swapped Twin Sol for Sol, Terra would still move in an ellipse. Terra cannot, as it were, tell the difference between Sol and Twin Sol. So the difference between the relational properties *being a planet of Sol* and *being a planet of Twin Sol* does not affect the causal powers of Terra.

Objection: The relevant effects are not the same in the actual and counterfactual cases. In the actual case, the relevant effect is orbiting Sol; in the counterfactual case, it is orbiting Twin Sol. The difference between the relational properties does affect the causal powers of Terra because 1a causes the former effect and 1b causes the latter effect.

Reply: The debate concerns those causal powers that are, as Fodor puts it, taxonomic for astronomy. Taxonomic properties are *natural kinds*: they are the types of properties that can be expected to turn up in the *laws* of astronomy. The objection confuses the question of what is the *adequate explanation* of Terra's orbiting Sol with the question of what kind of properties the *astronomic law* invoked in the explanation will appeal to. To claim that the relational properties 1a and 1b affect the causal powers of the planets that have them is to claim that there are astronomic laws like the following:

(L) $\forall x \forall y (x \text{ is a planet of } y \ \& \ y = \text{Sol} \rightarrow x \text{ moves in an ellipse around } y)$

that sustain counterfactuals like: 'If y had been identical to Sol, then x would have moved in an ellipse around y. But this is absurd: it suggests that the property of being identical with

whether Marr's theory of vision is 'individualistic' (in Burge's sense).

Sol is playing a causal role in x 's elliptical motion around y —which, of course, it is not. In other words, *being numerically identical to Sol* is not a natural kind of property, it is not a projectible property. The point is completely general, of course, in that *being numerically identical to x* is not a natural kind property in *any* science trafficking in empirical laws no matter how specialised. The metaphysical essences of things, their *haecceities*, are not natural kinds of properties in virtue of which they are responsible for effects. That special sciences are intended to be limited in the range of phenomena to which they apply does not mean that they are not intended to apply to exact duplicates of those phenomena. It might have been otherwise, of course. To paraphrase Fodor (1987, p. 40), it is a contingent fact about how God made the world that the mechanisms by which causes have their effects are not sensitive to the haecceities of things.

(2) As will have been anticipated, the same considerations are supposed to apply to the properties of *being related to Elvis* and *being related to Twin Elvis*. These relational properties do not affect the causal powers of the thoughts of the subjects who have them. Again, the reason is obvious: the metaphysical essences or haecceities of individuals—the difference between Elvis and Twin Elvis—and the scientific essence of natural kinds—the difference between H₂O and XYZ—are, *psychologically speaking*, causally irrelevant. I am most definitely not saying that no law can advert to natural kinds. That would be preposterous; for is very plausible to think that natural kinds are precisely those kinds that figure in laws. Obviously, laws do advert to H₂O; but these laws are chemical laws, not psychological laws. This is because H₂O is a chemical natural kind and not a psychological natural kind. Psychological laws connecting mental states and behaviour will not advert to properties like *being related to Elvis* or *being related to H₂O* because they are not properties to which subjects are sensitive. Like the laws of astronomy, the laws will not make any reference to the metaphysical essences of individuals in a way that would affect which counterfactuals the laws in question sustain. The psychological laws will operate only with those qualitative properties that subjects can discriminate, such as *being related to*

someone with an Elvis appearance or being related to something with a waterish appearance. In psychological explanations these laws will then be instantiated by particular individuals (e.g., Elvis, Twin Elvis) or particular kinds of stuff (H₂O, XYZ). It is in the *statement of initial conditions* that reference to such individuals and stuffs will occur. In short, it is crucial not to confuse *laws* with their *instantiations* or statements of initial conditions.¹⁵

The idea, then, is that there will not be any psychological laws whose projectible properties are beyond the threshold of discrimination of the creatures to which the psychology applies. In the case of normal humans, there will not be any psychological laws such as:

(PL3) $\forall x(x = \text{Elvis} \ \& \ x \text{ is seen by Roxanne} \rightarrow x \text{ will be asked by Roxanne for an autograph})$

(PL4) $\forall x \forall y(x = \text{H}_2\text{O} \ \& \ x \text{ is seen by } y \rightarrow y \text{ thinks } x \text{ is potable})$

sustaining counterfactuals such as: ‘If *x* had been identical to Elvis then Roxanne would have asked *x* for an autograph’ and ‘If *y* had been identical to H₂O then *x* would have thought that *y* was potable’. Rather, psychological laws will most probably be something like the ones adumbrated in the previous section:

(PL5) $\forall x(x \text{ has an Elvis appearance} \ \& \ x \text{ is seen by Roxanne.} \rightarrow x \text{ will be asked by Roxanne for an autograph})$

(PL2) $\forall x \forall y(x \text{ has a waterish appearance} \ \& \ x \text{ is seen by } y. \rightarrow x \text{ comes to be believed by } y \text{ to be potable}).$

¹⁵ The point that Fodor has confused laws with their instantiations is made by Evans in his commentary (1980) on Fodor’s brief for methodological solipsism. Cf. Peacocke 1981, p. 202.

that are, of course, highly hedged, but that nonetheless sustain counterfactuals like: ‘If x had had an Elvis appearance then Roxanne would have asked x for an autograph’ and ‘If x had had a waterish appearance ... then x would have come to be believed by y to be potable’. It is (PL5) and the various counterfactuals it sustains that are part of the explanation of why Roxanne does not ask Elvis for his autograph when he is in disguise and does ask an Elvis impersonator, when he is dressed up as Elvis, for his autograph. The covering-law explanation for Roxanne’s asking Elvis for his autograph, which is a doing, would then be something like:

- (PL5) $\forall x(x \text{ has an Elvis appearance} \ \& \ x \text{ is seen by Roxanne.} \rightarrow x \text{ will be asked by Roxanne for an autograph})$
 (C1) Elvis has an Elvis appearance, is seen by Roxanne, ...
 (E1) Roxanne asked Elvis for an autograph

and the explanation for Roxanne’s asking Twin Elvis, or an Elvis impersonator for that matter, for his autograph would then be:

- (PL5) $\forall x(x \text{ has an Elvis appearance} \ \& \ x \text{ is seen by Roxanne.} \rightarrow x \text{ will be asked by Roxanne for an autograph})$
 (C2) Twin Elvis has an Elvis appearance, is seen by Roxanne, ...
 (E2) Roxanne asked Twin Elvis for an autograph.

Similarly, to move to a case of a person’s interaction with a natural kind rather than an individual, the covering-law psychological explanation of Ralph’s drinking some sample of H₂O in front of him would then be something like:

- (PL2) $\forall x \forall y(x \text{ is believed by y to be potable and y is thirsty and y wants not to be thirsty.} \rightarrow x \text{ drinks y}).$
 (C3) A sample of H₂O was believed by Ralph to be potable, ...
 (E3) Ralph drank the sample of H₂O

and the explanation of Ralph’s similar behaviour *vis-à-vis* XYZ would then be:

- (PL2) $\forall x \forall y (x \text{ is believed by } y \text{ to be potable and } y \text{ is thirsty and } y \text{ wants not to be thirsty.} \rightarrow x \text{ drinks } y).$
 (C4) A sample of XYZ was believed by Ralph to be potable, ...
 (E4) Ralph drank the sample of XYZ.

The psychological covering laws (PL5) and (PL2) are the same, respectively, in both cases, despite the fact that Roxanne is related to different individuals in her two different situations and Ralph is related to different liquids in his two different situations.¹⁶ The explananda (E1) - (E4) are, of course, doings and not tryings. For psychological laws like (PL5) and (PL4) to explain Ralph's and Roxanne's doings it is essential that the statements of initial conditions (C1) - (C4) be relational ascriptions.

Now, (PL5) and (PL2) are only sketches of what the real psychological laws would look like; the statements of initial conditions (C1) - (C4) are similarly sketchy. Better approximations would bring the laws closer to the psychological 'principle' formulated in the last chapter about Leo (P3), in the sense that they would make reference to demonstrative modes of presentation of liquids and celebrities. Similarly, the relational ascriptions that form the initial conditions would have to include reference to Roxanne's and Ralph's demonstrative modes of presentation of the respective objects and stuffs they are acting on.

This, then, is the sense in which a scientific psychology that is a sophisticated extension of commonsense groups together twins whose thoughts may have different propositional and social content. The reason is that the propositional and social content of thoughts do not affect the causal powers of those thoughts. The relational properties that do affect the causal powers of thoughts are those such as *being related to someone with an Elvis appearance* (in the case of action on an individual) and *being related to a waterish liquid* (in the case of action on a stuff)—which brings us to the third pair of properties.

¹⁶ Cf. Peacocke loc. cit.

(3) Unlike the difference between *being a planet of Sol* and *being a planet of Twin Sol*, the difference between the properties of *being a planet* and *not being a planet* does, as Fodor maintains, affect the causal powers of the chunk of rock that has them:

It is because *this* rock-twin is a planet and *that* rock-twin is not that this rock-twin has a Keplerian orbit and that rock-twin does not; it is because this rock-twin is a meteor and that rock-twin is not that this rock-twin's effects include craters and that rock-twin's effects do not. But, patently, *being a planet* and *being a meteor* are relational properties in good standing. To be a planet is to be a rock (or whatever) that is revolving around a star; to be a meteor is to be a rock (or whatever) that is falling, or has fallen, into collision with another rock. (1991, p. 211).

Moreover, there are astronomic laws connecting *being a planet* with having a Keplerian orbit, and these laws sustain certain counterfactuals, for example: 'If that rock-twin had been a planet then it would have had a Keplerian orbit'. In contrast, as we already saw above in the discussion of the first pair of properties (1a/1b), there are no causal laws sustaining counterfactuals such as 'If this rock-twin had been a planet of something identical to Sol, then it would have had a Keplerian orbit'. The difference between 1a/1b type properties and 3a/3b type properties is crucial and has been crucially overlooked in the literature. So long as there is *something* with the properties of the sun in virtue of which it pulls Terra through its elliptical trajectory and causes Terran tides—namely, something with a certain mass and at a certain distance from Terra—it does not matter whether it is *Sol*. The point is that there must—in the *nomological* sense of 'must'—be *something* that Terra is related to in order for it to behave Keplerianly.

(4) The same goes, *mutatis mutandis*, for the final pair of properties. It is the difference between *being related to something with an Elvis appearance* and *not being related to something with an Elvis appearance*, and not the difference between *being related to Elvis* and *being related to Twin Elvis* that affects the causal powers of Roxanne's thoughts. It is because Roxanne is related to someone that *looks like Elvis* that she asks him for an autograph and it is because, counterfactually, Roxanne is not related to someone with an Elvis appearance that she does not ask anyone for an autograph. Similarly, to shift again

to the natural kind case, unlike the difference between *being related to H₂O* and *being related to XYZ* the difference between *being related to a waterish liquid* and *not being related to a waterish liquid* does affect the causal powers of Ralph's thoughts. It is because Ralph's thought is related to a waterish liquid that he comes to believe there is something potable in front of him and reaches out to try to drink it. It is because, counterfactually, Ralph's thought is not related to any waterish liquid that he does not do any of these things. Of course, Ralph *could* have been brought to be in some internal state that was exactly like the one he is in when he actually spies a waterish liquid without him being related to any waterish liquid and so *could* have come to believe that there is something potable in front of him and to reach out for 'it' even though *nothing* is there. Ralph *could* have been hallucinating or subject to nefarious neuroscientists. Similarly, Roxanne *could* have been hallucinating Elvis and so *could* have been brought to behave in an autograph-asking manner. Nevertheless, if there *were* no waterish liquid at all to which Ralph was related, he *would not* have reached out; and if there *had not* been anyone with an Elvis appearance, Roxanne *would not* have engaged in autograph-asking behaviour (Stalnaker, 1989). When it comes to framing psychological laws it is the 'would's, and not the 'could's, that count. In the nearest possible world where there is no waterish liquid at all in front of Ralph, he does not hallucinate some or have his brain fiddled with by neuroscientists, and hence, does not reach out. In the nearest possible world in which Roxanne is not confronted with someone who looks like Elvis, she does not start hallucinating Elvis. Again, contrast these true counterfactuals with the following false ones: If the waterish liquid in front of Ralph had not been identical to H₂O then he would not have come to believe it was potable; if the person in front of Roxanne had not been Elvis she would not have asked him for an autograph. In the closest possible world where the waterish liquid in front of Ralph is not H₂O he still comes to believe it is potable and tries to drink it. In the closest possible world where the person with an Elvis appearance in front of Roxanne is not Elvis she still asks him for an autograph. We are able to evaluate these

counterfactuals thanks to our commonsense psychological knowledge that we behave towards things because of the observable properties they manifest to us.

To sum up, then, the lesson of Twin Earth is not that relational psychological properties do not affect causal powers. Rather, it is that certain relational psychological properties do not affect causal powers; in particular, those that make reference to facts that are beyond the threshold of human discrimination—for example, the individual or scientific essences of, respectively, things and stuffs. The problem with Putnamian and Burgean relational psychological properties is that they do make reference to these types of relational properties. The troublesome properties are 1a/b and 2a/b type ones. 3a/b and 4a/b type ones are perfectly in order. To generalise, we can formalise the latter properties using lambda notation:

$$(3a/4a) \lambda x[\exists y(Rxy \ \& \ Fy)]$$

$$(3b/4b) \lambda x[\sim \exists y(Rxy \ \& \ Fy)].$$

These are to be read as follows: the property of bearing a relation to something that has property F and the property of not bearing a relation to something that has F. In the psychological case regarding a stuff like water, we have a pretty good general idea of what kind of property F is: it is the observable property of being odourless, colourless, tasteless, etc.. which I have abbreviated as *having a waterish appearance*. In the case of individuals things are much trickier; it is much harder for us commonsense psychologists to say just which observable properties of individuals it is that we pick up on, especially when it comes to individuals that we know intimately such as our spouses and family members. Obviously, it is an empirical psychological question to be determined by experiment just exactly what aspects of things and individuals we do detect. In the astronomical case, F is something like *mass* or *distance*. In contrast there is:

(1a/2a) $\lambda_x[\exists y(Rxy \ \& \ y = a)]$

(1b/2b) $\lambda_x[\exists y(Rxy \ \& \ y = b)]$.

The former is the property of bearing a relation to something that is identical to a; the latter the property of bearing a relation to something that is identical to b. a might be Sol, Elvis, or H₂O; b might be Twin Sol, Twin Elvis, or XYZ. The conclusion we are drawn towards is that the difference between $\lambda_x[\exists y(Rxy \ \& \ Fy)]$ and $\lambda_x[\sim\exists y(Rxy \ \& \ Fy)]$ is a difference between causal powers in virtue of its being responsible for a certain difference between effects; whereas the difference between $\lambda_x[\exists y(Rxy \ \& \ y = a)]$ and $\lambda_x[\exists y(Rxy \ \& \ y = b)]$ is not. It follows that Fodor is right that Putnamian and Burgean twins belong to the same psychological natural kind.

Two final remarks are in order. First, the claim that the difference between $\lambda_x[\exists y(Rxy \ \& \ y = a)]$ and $\lambda_x[\exists y(Rxy \ \& \ y = b)]$ does not affect causal powers does not contravene the essential non-universal and environment-bound nature of the special sciences. That special sciences such as geology, biology, astronomy, and psychology presuppose a normal background of contextual relations in which things stand can be gratified at the same time as claiming that the Ralphs and Alfreds are the same psychological natural kinds. Second, we cannot be accused of illegitimately *a prioritizing* about the kind of taxonomy that the special sciences in general and psychology in particular are constrained to adopt (cf. Burge, 1986, 1989, 1995; Baker, 1995). For we have arrived at the very general view that properties like $\lambda_x[\exists y(Rxy \ \& \ Fy)]$ are candidates for natural kinds while properties like $\lambda_x[\exists y(Rxy \ \& \ y = a)]$ are not by reflection on the broadly empirical knowledge implicit in commonsense: Roxanne cannot tell the difference between Elvis and Twin Elvis and Ralph cannot tell the difference between H₂O and XYZ; Terra cannot tell the difference between Sol and Twin Sol. I conclude that the second alleged obstacle to giving *de re* ascriptions their rightful place in psychological explanation is not in fact an obstacle at all, and hence, that *de re* explanation remains standing.

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