Philosophy 208
The Language Revolution
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Hamilton College, Fall 2011

Kripke
The Revenge of 'Fido'-Fido

Ethics Bowl?

Cluster Descriptivism

CD1. Every name ‘n’ is associated with a cluster of properties: the properties that x believes are true of n.

CD2. x believes that these properties pick out a unique individual. (Feynman)

CD3. If y has most of these properties, then y is the referent of ‘n’. (Gödel)

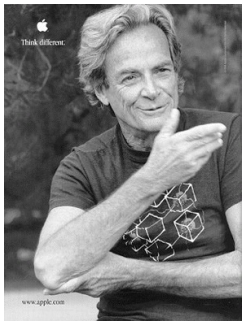
CD4. If nothing has most of these properties, ‘n’ doesn’t refer. (Jonah)

CD5. The sentence ‘n has most of these properties’ is known a priori by x. (Aristotle)

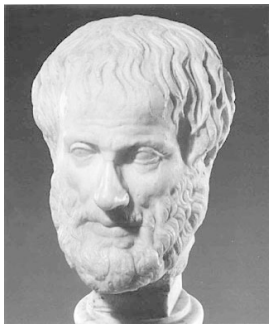
CD6. The sentence ‘n has most of these properties’ as uttered by x expresses a necessary truth. (Aristotle)

CDC. These properties must be chosen in such a way that there is no circularity. (The properties must not use the notion of reference.)

- Against CDC: the meta-linguistic theory of senses of names; see notes







Most Properties of Persons Are Contingent

It just is not, in any intuitive sense of necessity, a necessary truth that Aristotle had the properties commonly attributed to him. There is a certain theory, perhaps popular in some views of the philosophy of history...according to [which] it will be necessary, once a certain individual is born, that he is destined to perform great tasks and so it will be part of the very nature of Aristotle that he should have produced ideas which had a great influence on the western world. Whatever the merits of such a view may be as a view of history or of the nature of great men, it does not seem that it should be trivially true on the basis of a theory of proper names. It would seem that it's a contingent fact that Aristotle ever did *any* of the things commonly attributed to him today, *any* of these great achievements that we so much admire...

Rigid Designation

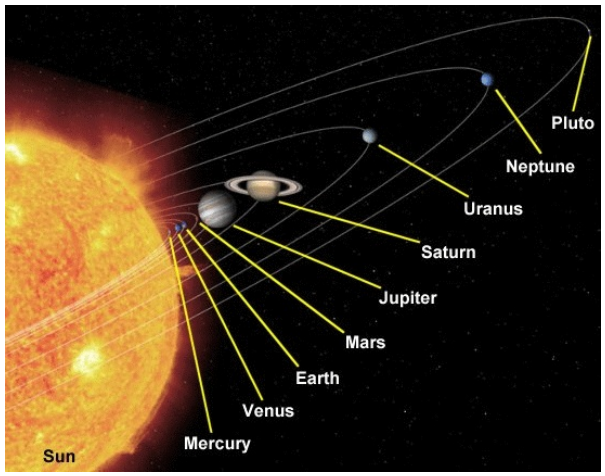
A rigid designator names the same object in all possible worlds, in all counterfactual circumstances.

- Ben Franklin is the inventor of bifocals.
  - ‘the inventor of bifocals’ refers non-rigidly
  - Ben Franklin’ refers rigidly
- ‘Feynman’, ‘Gödel’, ‘Jonah’, and ‘Aristotle’ all refer rigidly, too.

Rigid Designation and Counterfactuals

- The notion of rigid designation is no more contentious than the notion that we can say something coherently counterfactual about objects.
- ‘I would have been happier had you brought me a cheesecake.’
- There is another possible world, in which I exist, and in which you brought me a cheesecake.
- We stipulate other possible worlds under the assumption that we can refer rigidly.
  - “Generally, things aren’t ‘found out’ about a counterfactual situation, they are stipulated.”

Identity Statements



- Nine is greater than seven.
  - ‘nine’ and ‘seven’ rigidly designate particular numbers.
  - So, it’s true in all possible worlds
- The number of planets is greater than seven.
  - It might be false.
  - ‘the number of planets’ is not a rigid designator
  - In some possible worlds, there are fewer planets.
  - In other possible worlds, there are more planets.
  - ‘The number of planets’ thus non-rigidly designates a different number in different possible worlds.

Rigid Designation and Opaque Contexts

- Substitutivity works in some contexts
  - Nine is greater than seven.
  - Four plus five is nine
  - So, four plus five is greater than seven
- Even some that have modal operators
  - Necessarily, nine is greater than seven.
  - Four plus five is nine
  - So, necessarily four plus five is greater than seven
- But
  - Necessarily, nine is greater than seven.
  - The number of planets is nine.
  - So, necessarily, the number of planets is greater than seven.
    – Uh-oh!
- Modal operators form opaque contexts, just like the propositional attitudes.

Names and Worlds

- Identity statements between rigid designators must be necessary.
- If a is identical with b, where ‘a’ and ‘b’ are names (rigid designators), then, ‘a’ refers to a in any possible world, and ‘b’ refers to b in any possible world.
- There could be worlds in which ‘a’ did not refer to a.
  - Consider a world in which Katy Perrry is named ‘Priscilla G. Snodgrass’.
  - She would still be Katy Perrry.
  - The term, ‘Katy Perrry’, used in our world refers to Priscilla G. Snodgrass in her world.
- If a is identical to b, where ‘a’ and b’ rigidly designate, then there are no possible worlds in which a is not identical to b, nor where ‘a=b’ is false, if those terms refer as they do in our world.
- There are possible worlds in which ‘Ben Franklin is the inventor of bifocals’ is false, because ‘the inventor of bifocals’ refers, in any possible world, to the actual inventor of bifocals.
  - In some possible worlds, Franklin was not the inventor of bifocals.
  - But, in all possible worlds Franklin was Franklin.
- ‘Russell is Professor Marcus’ is true in all possible worlds, even though there are some possible worlds in which I did not become a professor.
  - We use ‘Professor Marcus’ in this world to refer to me, in all possible worlds.

Frege's Puzzle Revisited

- Contrast 'Hesperus is Phosphorus' with 'Hesperus is Hesperus'
- The first is a necessary truth, according to Kripke.
- We contrasted it with the second, which is knowable *a priori*.
- But the claim that the first is necessary does not entail that it has the same cognitive content as the second.
- A version of Frege's puzzle arises if we think that all necessary truths are knowable *a priori*.
- If the category of necessary truths were distinct from that of statements knowable *a priori*, or analytic claims, then this version of the problem of cognitive content does not follow.
- We can tell that 'Hesperus is Phosphorus' is not knowable *a priori*, even if it is necessary, since we could be in the same epistemic situation as we are, with Hesperus not being identical to Phosphorus.

Kripke on Hesperus and Phosphorus

The evidence I have before I know that Hesperus is Phosphorus is that I see a certain star on [sic] a certain heavenly body in the evening and call it 'Hesperus', and in the morning and call it 'Phosphorus'...There certainly is a possible world in which a man should have seen a certain star at a certain position in the evening and called it 'Hesperus' and a certain star in the morning and called it 'Phosphorus'; and should have concluded - should have found out by empirical investigation -that he names two different stars, or two different heavenly bodies... And so it's true that given the evidence that someone has antecedent to his empirical investigation, he can be placed in a sense in exactly the same situation, that is a qualitatively identical epistemic situation, and call two heavenly bodies 'Hesperus' and 'Phosphorus', without their being identical. So in that sense we can say that it might have turned out either way. Not that it might have turned out either way as to Hesperus's being Phosphorus, that couldn't have turned out any other way, in a sense. But being put in a situation where we have exactly the same evidence, qualitatively speaking, it could have turned out that Hesperus was not Phosphorus; that is, in a counterfactual world in which 'Hesperus' and 'Phosphorus' were not used in the way that we use them, as names of this planet, but as names of some other objects, one could have had qualitatively identical evidence and concluded that 'Hesperus' and 'Phosphorus' named two different objects. But we, using the names as we do right now, can say in advance, that if Hesperus and Phosphorus are one and the same, then in no other possible world can they be different.

Linguistics, Epistemology, Metaphysics

- Linguistics: analytic and synthetic claims
- Epistemology: a priori and a posteriori methods of justification
- Metaphysics: necessary and contingent claims

The Analytic and the Synthetic

- Analyticity and syntheticity concern concepts, whatever we take them to be.
- ‘Bachelors are unmarried’ is analytic.
- ‘Bachelors are unhappy’ is synthetic.
- Two kinds of analytic containment
  - Kant: beams in the house
  - Frege: plant in the seeds
  - The difference is in how much unpacking one needs to do.
  - For Frege, a statement is analytic if it follows using the rules of logic.
  - All of arithmetic is analytic, for Frege.

Apriority and Aposteriority

- A posteriori = empirical
- The analytic/synthetic distinction is independent of the distinction between *a priori* justifications and empirical ones.
- 'Snow is white' is empirical.
  - We need to see particular snow in order to know that snow is white.
- '2 + 3 = 5' is a priori
  - We need experiences with no particular objects in order to know that 2+3=5.
  - No empirical experiences with undermine that claim.
    - 2 cups of water plus 3 cups of salt
    - Two chickens added to three foxes

Necessity and Contingency

- Some claims hold necessarily, like mathematical claims.
  - Leibniz: true in all possible worlds
- Other claims are merely contingent, like the claim that snow is white.
  - Could be false

The Traditional View

- Necessity - apriority - analyticity
  - Claims are necessary only if they are believed *a priori*.
  - All *a priori* claims must be analytic.
    - One reasons to the truth of an analytic claim without appeal to experience.
- Contingency - aposteriority - syntheticity
  - A claim is contingent when it is justified by appeal to sense experience.
  - Contingent claims bring together concepts that are not necessarily related.
- Hume:
  - Relations of ideas are justified *a priori* and analytic.
    - and thus necessary
  - Matters of fact are justified empirically (by tracing ideas back to initial impressions) and synthetic.
    - and thus contingent

	A priori	Empirical
Analytic	Relations of Ideas	--
Synthetic	--	Matters of Fact

Kant's Big Claim

- All empirical claims are synthetic.
- But some synthetic claims are *a priori*.
  - Metaphysics
  - mathematics
  - some physics
- Still, the class of necessary claims is the same as the class of *a priori* claims.

	A priori	Empirical
Analytic	Logic/ Beams in the House	--
Synthetic	Most Mathematics, Metaphysics, and Some Physics	Empirical Judgments

Kripke's Cleavage

- We should distinguish
  - semantic claims (involving analyticity, syntheticity, and synonymy)
  - epistemic claims (involving apriority and aposteriority)
  - metaphysical claims (involving necessity and contingency).
- "It's certainly a philosophical thesis, and not a matter of obvious definitional equivalence, either that everything *a priori* is necessary or that everything necessary is *a priori*...They are dealing with two different domains, two different areas, the epistemological and the metaphysical."
- 'Hesperus is Phosphorus' is necessary but *a posteriori*.
  - The names are rigid designators.
    - The semantic value of the name is the object named.
  - But we solve the problem of cognitive content: it's *a posteriori*.

The Necessary *A Posteriori* 1

- ‘Heat’ and ‘molecular motion’ are rigid designators.
- ‘Heat’ is a rigid designator, since in counterfactual situations in which people, or Martians, did not feel warmth when putting their hands near fires, we would not say that they did not feel heat.
  - We would say that they get a different sensation from heat than the one that we get.
  - Even if there are no people to feel it, fire heats up the air around it.
  - Heat thus rigidly designates molecular motion.
- ‘Molecular motion’ is also a rigid designator, referring to the same thing, the motion of molecules, in all possible worlds.
- Thus, the identification of heat with molecular motion is necessary.

The Necessary *A Posteriori* 2

- Our discovery that heat is molecular motion is *a posteriori*
  - We discovered it empirically.
- That there are people who feel heat in a certain way is contingent.
- Our skin could be constructed differently, say made of asbestos.
- But we should not confuse the contingent property of heat (that people feel it in a particular way) with a necessary property of heat (that it is molecular motion.)
- That we discovered that heat is molecular motion is also a contingent fact.
- Contingent (epistemic) facts about our knowledge are irrelevant to the (metaphysical) fact about the nature of heat.
- Thus, the identification of heat and molecular motion is necessary, but known only *a posteriori*, in contrast to what everyone in the history of philosophy ever thought.

The Contingent *A Priori*

- That the standard meter bar is one meter is a contingent fact.
  - It could be longer or shorter.
- It is known *a priori* that the standard meter is one meter.
- So, 'the standard meter is one meter long' is contingent, but known *a priori*.
  - "Someone who thinks that everything one knows *a priori* is necessary might think: 'This is the *definition* of a meter. By definition, stick *S* is one meter long at t_0. That's a necessary truth.' But there seems to me to be no reason so to conclude, even for a man who uses the stated definition of 'one meter'. For he's using this definition not to *give the meaning* of what he called the 'meter', but to *fix the reference*... There is a certain length which he wants to mark out. He marks it out by an accidental property, namely that there is a stick of that length. Someone else might mark out the same reference by another accidental property. But in any case, even though he uses this to fix the reference of his standard of length, a meter, he can still say, 'if heat had been applied to this stick *S* at t_0, then at t_0 stick *S* would not have been one meter long'."

More Necessary *A Posteriori* Claims

- Water is H_2O .
- Lightning is electrical discharge.
- There is a contingent fact about how we experience heat, or lightning, or water.
- We pick out heat, or light, according to contingent facts about how they effect us.
- But, all theoretical identity statements are, in fact, necessary identities, not contingent identities.
- The necessity of these theoretic identification statements follows from the rigid designation of their terms.

Rigidity and the Philosophy of Mind

- The identity theory says that mental states are actually physical states: the mind is the brain.
- Kripke claims that pain is a rigid designator.
- Nothing could be a pain if it did not hurt in the way that pains do.
- Similarly, if ‘s’ designates a brain state, it does so rigidly.
- Since theoretical identity statements are necessary, according to Kripke, the identification of pain states with brain states must also be necessary.
- But, it seems clearly possible that pain could be something other than a particular state of the brain.
- If so, then the identity of the two must be contingent.
- So, the necessary identification must be false.
- That is, the identity can be neither necessary nor contingent.
- So, pain states must not be identical to mental states.

Kripke's Argument Against Identity Theory

I1. The identification of mental states and brain states must be either contingent or necessary.

I2. Since mental states and brain states refer rigidly, the identification can not be contingent.

I3. Since it is possible that mental states are not states of the brain, the identification can not be necessary.

IC. Thus, mental states and brain states must not be identical.