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Problems for a Quantificational Theory of Complex Demonstratives

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Speakers use the simple demonstratives 'this' and 'that' to refer to individual objects. Thus many semantic theorist think that they are *singular terms*: expressions that refer to individuals, with respect to contexts. Some of these same semantic theorists hold that the semantic content of a simple demonstrative, in a context, is simply the individual to which it refers, in that context.

Complex demonstratives are linguistic expressions of the form "that *N*" or "this *N*", where *N* is a common noun phrase (an N′ or NP, according to some syntactic frameworks). Examples include 'this dog' and 'that woman wearing a red cap'. Speakers also seem to use complex demonstratives to refer to individuals. This suggests to many theorists that complex demonstratives, like simple demonstratives, are singular terms, and that their semantic contents, in contexts, are individuals.

But syntax suggest otherwise to some theorists. Occurrences of 'that' in complex demonstratives seem to function syntactically as determiners, like the quantificational determiners 'some' and 'every'. So in syntactic form, complex demonstratives resemble *quantifier phrases*, such as 'some man' and 'every woman'. But quantifier phrases are not singular terms. Moreover, complex demonstratives seem to *describe* objects, and so it is natural to think that complex demonstratives function semantically somewhat like definite descriptions.

(This is why some theorists call them *demonstrative descriptions*.) Bertrand Russell (1905) argued that definite descriptions are quantifier phrases, not singular terms, and many have found his arguments convincing. If complex demonstratives are quantifier phrases, then their semantic contents (in contexts) are not individuals.

Jeffrey King (2001) maintains that complex demonstratives are quantifier phrases. He presents many ingenious arguments in favor of his view, and many challenging arguments against competing views. Anyone who wants to assess the prospects of quantificational theories of complex demonstratives must consider King's theory.[1]

I remain unconvinced by King's view and arguments. I continue to hold (as I did in Braun 1994) that complex demonstratives are singular terms whose semantic contents, in contexts, are simply objects. In another paper (Braun, in submission), I respond to King's arguments against theories like mine. In this paper, I present objections to King's theory. For reasons that will become clear at the end of this paper, I do not maintain that my objections to King's theory are knockdown. Nonetheless, I believe that my objections to King's theory, together with my replies to King's objections to theories like mine, make it reasonable to favor a

[1]Others have endorsed quantificational theories: see Taylor (1980), Barwise and Cooper (1981), and Keenan and Stavi (1986). Neale 1993 presents one quantificational theory, while Neale 2004 offers another quantificational theory. Lepore and Ludwig (2000) present a hybrid view, on which complex demonstratives are synonymous with definite descriptions containing the singular term 'that'. Wolter (2006) holds (roughly speaking) that complex demonstratives have semantic contents much like those of domain-restricted definite descriptions, but on her view, definite descriptions and complex demonstratives are singular terms whose scopal properties differ from those of standard quantifiers. An assessment of her view will have to await another occasion.

theory like mine over his.[2]

1. A Short Introduction to Direct Reference Theories and My Theory

Before turning to King's view, it will be useful to have before us a *direct reference theory* of the sort that King opposes. The term 'direct reference' comes from David Kaplan (1989). Direct reference theories of complex demonstratives say (roughly) that their semantic contents, in contexts, are individuals. I call my particular version of direct reference the *Singular Content Theory*.[3]

On my theory, many (though not all) contexts have an associated *demonstratum*. The semantic content of "that *N*" in a context *c* (if any) is the demonstratum of *c*, if the demonstratum of *c* satisfies *N* in *c* with respect to the world of *c*. The semantic content of a sentence containing "that *N*" in such a context is a *singular proposition* containing the demonstratum of *c* as a constituent. If *c* has no demonstratum, or *c* has a demonstratum that fails to satisfy *N* in *c* in the world of *c*, then "that *N*" has no semantic content in *c*. The semantic content of a sentence containing "that *N*" in such a context is a *gappy proposition* (see Braun 1993, 2005).

Suppose, for example, that Natasha points at Boris and utters 'That spy is smart'. She is

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[2]All page references below are to King 2001. I use single quotes to mention linguistic expressions. I use italicized letters, such as '*N*', as metalinguistic variables. I use double-quotes in place of corner-quotes. I also sometimes use double-quotes for direct quotation and scare quotes.

[3]This theory is an elaboration of the one presented in Braun 1994 and 1995. Kaplan (1989) briefly mentions complex demonstratives and says that they are directly referential. Schiffer (1981), Recanati (1993), and Perry (1997) say (or assume) that their semantic contents are individuals. Borg (2000), Salmon (2002), and Corazza (2003) explicitly advocate direct reference theories of complex demonstratives.

thinking of Boris and wishes to speak of him. Then there is a context *c* in which Natasha is the agent and Boris is the demonstratum. If Boris is a spy in the world of *c*, then the semantic content of 'that spy' in *c* is Boris himself, and the semantic content of the sentence 'That spy is smart' in *c* is the singular proposition that Boris is smart, which we can represent with the *n*-tuple <Boris, being smart>. If Boris is not a spy in the world of *c*, then 'that spy' has no semantic content in *c*, and the semantic content of 'That spy is smart' in *c* is the gappy proposition <___, being smart>. In contexts in which there is no demonstratum, 'that spy' (again) has no semantic content, and the semantic content of 'That spy is smart' is the previous gappy proposition.

This is a very rough sketch of the view. For details, and replies to King's objections to direct reference theories, see Braun (in submission).

2. King's Theory of Complex Demonstratives

On King's theory, 'that' expresses a *four-place* relation among properties. We can roughly represent the lexical meaning of 'that' with (1) (p. 43).

(1) ___ and ___ are uniquely ___ in an object *x* and *x* is ___.

The meaning of a sentence of the form of (2), apart from any context, is roughly the same as that of (3).

(2) That *F* is *G*

(3) Being *F* and ___ are uniquely ____ in an object *x* and *x* has being *G*.

Thus the contents of *F* and *G saturate* two of the places in the four-place relation represented by (1). The other two slots are saturated by properties determined by context, and in particular by the intentions of the agent in the context. The first of the remaining open slots is filled by an

ordinary property of objects, while the second is filled by a relation between properties.

In a *perceptual use* of a complex demonstrative, the agent is perceiving object *b* and is focused on *b*: as King would put it, *b* is the object of her *perceptual intention*. King holds that in such perceptual uses, the speaker's intentions determine that the properties that fill the second and third slots of (1) are the property of being identical with *b* and the property of being jointly instantiated in *w* and *t*, where *w* and *t* are the world and time of the speaker's context. Thus a sentence of the form of (2) semantically expresses, in such a context, roughly the same proposition as that expressed by (4).

(4) Being *F* and being identical with *b* are uniquely jointly instantiated in *w* and *t* in an object *x* and *x* has being *G*.

This is King's informal way of specifying the proposition expressed.[4] His more formal representation (5) makes clearer that his theory treats 'that' as a quantifier.

(5) $[\text{THAT}_{=\text{b, J}wt}\ x : Fx][Gx]$

Here '$\text{THAT}_{=\text{b, J}wt}$' expresses the content of the English 'that' in the context we are considering. Its content is a binary relation between properties, just like 'every' and 'some'.[5] '$\text{THAT}_{=\text{b, J}wt}$' ranges, at a world w' and a time t', over the objects that exist at w' and t', in just the way that the

[4]We can see that (4) only roughly conveys the semantic content of (2) in the context we are considering by noticing that the extension of *F* is a set, whereas the extension of the gerund phrase "being *F*" is a property. Thus *F* and "being *F*" have different semantic contents. The semantic content of (2) contains the semantic content of *F*, not "being *F*".

[5] I follow King's notation in his formal appendix, rather than the notation he uses in his main text, except that I insert a colon. It is crucial to distinguish between (a) the semantic content of '$\text{THAT}_{=\text{b, J}wt}$' on King's view and (b) the function THAT_{c} on my view (Braun, in submission). The former is a binary relation between properties. The latter is a partial function from properties to individuals.

ordinary quantifiers 'every' and 'some' do.[6] (4) and (5) are true at a world w' and a time t' iff: there is a unique object x in w' and t' that is F in w and t (the world and time of the speaker's context) and identical with b in w and t, and x is G in w' and t'. So the proposition expressed by (5) is *modally equivalent* to the proposition expressed by (6) in the speaker's context.

(6) [the x : actually now (Fx and x=b)] Gx

We can express this proposition in more ordinary language with (7).

(7) The thing that is actually now both (F and identical with b) is G.

Furthermore, the contribution of "that F" to the proposition expressed by (2) is modally equivalent to the contribution made by definite description (8) to the proposition expressed by (7).

(8) The thing that is actually now both (F and identical with b).

The semantic content (or semantic contribution) of the complex demonstrative on King's theory is not identical with the semantic content (or semantic contribution) of (7). Rather, the two expressions are modally equivalent in the following sense: if we substitute the definite description for the complex demonstrative in a given sentence, then the resulting sentence will express a proposition in a context in w that is modally equivalent to the proposition expressed by the first sentence (I here ignore substitutions in attitude ascriptions and quotational contexts).

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[6] If b is a constituent of the proposition expressed by (5), then (2) and (5) semantically express a singular proposition on King's view, though a different singular proposition from the one that the Singular Content Theory says that (2) expresses. However, I am unsure whether b is a constituent of the proposition semantically expressed on King's view. I am similarly unsure whether the actual world w, time t, the property of being identical with b, and the property of being jointly instantiated in w and t are constituents of the proposition expressed by (5). Some passages suggest that they are (pp. 31, 33-34, 35, 38, and 43), but King's official notation is compatible with denying this.

"Actualized" definite descriptions of this sort are convenient for roughly conveying the semantic contents that sentences containing complex demonstratives have on King's theory. I will drop 'now' and all references to times from here on, because I will be ignoring time and tense throughout this paper.

On King's view, a complex demonstrative of the form "that *F*" is a quantifier phrase, and does not have an individual as its extension.[7] But King does allow that such a use of a complex demonstrative may *determine* an individual with respect to a world. In the above case, the use of the complex demonstrative determines, at any world, the individual that has the property of actually (being *F* and identical with *b*). At most one thing has this property at any world, namely *b*. (At worlds where *b* does not exist, nothing has it.) So "that *F*" on this perceptual use determines the same individual with respect to all worlds in which it determines any individual at all. King calls such uses of complex demonstratives *rigid uses*.

King thinks that in some contexts complex demonstratives have *non*-rigid uses. Simple cases arise where the speaker is not intending to refer to something that he is perceiving, is not demonstrating any object, and is not speaker-referring to any object. King calls these 'no demonstration no speaker reference' uses, or *NDNS* uses, for short. King presents the following as an example (pp. 9-10). Suppose that Scott is considering hominid inventions and discoveries, and comes to believe that there was a unique hominid who discovered how to start fires. Scott then utters (9).

(9) That hominid who discovered how to start fires was a genius.

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[7]In fact, King's official theory assigns *no* extension to complex demonstratives, nor to any quantifier phrases. However, on a trivially modified version of his theory, the extensions of quantifier phrases and complex demonstratives would be sets of sets.

King holds that this is an NDNS use of 'that hominid who discovered how to start fires', because Scott is not demonstrating any object and is not speaker-referring to any object. King thinks that the semantic content of this sentence, in Scott's context, is true iff there is a unique hominid who discovered how to start fires, and he was a genius. (Assume that the world of Scott's context is the actual world.) Suppose that Homey was the one and only hominid who discovered how to start fires, and he was a genius. Then the semantic content of Scott's sentence, in his context, is true. Further, King thinks that the semantic content of this sentence, in Scott's context, is true at any *other* world *w′* just in case the hominid who discovered how to start fires *in w′* is a genius in *w′*, regardless of whether Homey is the discoverer in *w′*. E.g., the semantic content of that sentence is true at a world in which Hubert is the hominid who discovered how to start fires in that world, and Hubert is a genius in that world. King accounts for these non-rigid uses in the following way. We first take (1) and saturate the first and last slots with the properties explicitly expressed by the predicates (in Scott's context) to get (10).

(10) Being a hominid who discovered how to start fires and ___ are uniquely ____ in an *x* and *x* was a genius.

King says that Scott's intentions do not determine any property of individuals beyond that expressed by the common noun phrase in the complex demonstrative. So the second slot is filled with the same property as the first, as shown in (11).

(11) Being a hominid who discovered how to start fires and being a hominid who discovered how to start fires are uniquely ____ in an *x* and *x* was a genius.

The remaining slot should *not* be filled with the property of being jointly instantiated in *w*, for if it were, then the use of the complex demonstrative would turn out to be rigid, and would

determine Homey at all worlds (in which Homey exists). So King holds that in such cases, the remaining slot is simply filled with the property of being jointly instantiated. The result is:

(12) Being a hominid who discovered how to start fires and being a hominid who discovered how to start fires are uniquely jointly instantiated in an *x* and *x* was a genius.

In more official notation, we get (13).

(13) [THAT$_{\text{discovered how to start fires, J}}$ *x* : Discovered-how-to-start-fires *x*][Genius *x*]

(13) is true at a world *w* iff there is a unique object *x* in *w* such that *x* is a hominid who discovered how to start fires in *w*, and was a genius in *w*, regardless of whether he is Homey. So the semantic content of this is modally equivalent to the semantic content of (14).

(14) The hominid who discovered how to start fires (and was a hominid who discovered how to start fires) was a genius.

The definite description in (14) is not a rigid designator.

In the above case, the property filling the second slot is *redundant*: it is exactly the same as the property expressed by the common noun phrase. King says that in such cases the speaker's intentions are redundant. But King holds that there are NDNS uses on which the speaker's intentions are *non-redundant* (pp. 70-1). Suppose that Larry is a lobbyist who has heard that a Senator is testifying in favor of lobbying reform, but suppose he has no other information about that Senator. Then Larry might utter

(15) That Senator will get no money from me.[8]

King holds that, Larry's context, this sentence expresses a proposition that is equivalent to the

[8]In King's original example, the lobbyist utters 'I am going to kill that Senator'.

proposition expressed by (16) in Larry's context.

(16) Being a Senator and testifying in favor of lobbying reform are jointly instantiated in an object *x* and *x* will get no money from me.

In official notation:

(17) [THAT$_{\text{testifying in favor of lobbying reform, J}}$ *x* : Senator *x*][Will-get-no-money-from-me *x*].

(17) expresses a proposition in Larry's context that is true at a world *w* iff the proposition expressed by (18) in Larry's context is also true at *w*.

(18) The Senator who is testifying in favor of lobbying reform will get no money from me.

Here Larry's intentions are not redundant, for they saturate the second slot of the meaning of 'that' with a property that is not expressed by the predicate 'Senator'.

This completes my description of King's theory. I turn now to criticizing it. I have two different sorts of objections. First, I have modal objections. King's theory predicts that certain modal sentences have truth values that they do not, in fact, have; it also predicts that some modal sentences have several truth-conditionally different readings, when they do not; and it incorrectly predicts the truth-values of the readings on which the complex demonstrative takes narrow scope. Second, I have objections involving attitudes and attitude ascriptions. I begin below with the modal objections.

3. An Objection from Modal Existence Sentences and Perceptual Uses

My first modal objection focuses on King's theory of rigid, perceptual uses of complex

demonstratives. Suppose that Sally points at Matti and utters (19).[9]

(19) It could have been the case that that man failed to exist.

(19) is true in Sally's context. It has no whiff of falsehood. There is no reasonable way to understand it so that it is false in this context. However, on King's theory, (19) is false in the above context, on the natural reading of it on which the complex demonstrative takes narrow scope with respect to the modal operator. For on King's view, 'that' is a quantifier which, at any possible world, quantifies only over the objects that exist *at that world*.[10] Consequently, the sentence embedded inside (19), namely 'That man fails to exist', is false at all worlds, given this context. A bit more slowly: on King's view, (19) expresses the same proposition in our (actual world) context as does (20).[11]

(20) Possibly: [THAT$_{=\text{Matti, J@}}$ x : x is a man] x fails to exist.

Here I use '@' to refer to the actual world. Now let w be an arbitrary world . The sentence embedded inside (20) is true at w iff: some object x **in** ***w*** is such that x uniquely jointly-instantiates-in-@ being identical with Matti and being a man, and x fails to exist in w. Notice that 'some' here is restricted to quantifying over objects in w, and these are the objects that exist

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[9]Assume that Matti is a man. I use 'failed to exist' rather than 'did not exist' so as to cut down on the number of scope ambiguities we have to consider. Using 'failed to exist' simulates use of 'not' with narrowest possible scope. (19) is equivalent to the following sentence that uses 'it is not the case' instead of 'fails': 'Possibly: that man is such that it is not the case that he exists'.

[10]See p. 187, note 2, and p. 191, note 15.

[11]Using negation rather than 'fails to exist', the relevant reading of (19) is given by 'Possibly: [THAT$_{=\text{Matti, J@}}$ x : x is a man] ~x exists'. On views like King's, in which quantifiers quantify at a world over the things that exist at that world, '~x exists' is modally equivalent to '~$\exists y\ y{=}x$', and the preceding sentence is modally equivalent to 'Possibly: [THAT$_{=\text{Matti, J@}}$ x : x is a man] ~$\exists y\ y{=}x$.

in *w*. So the embedded sentence is true at *w* only if there is something that exists in *w* that also fails to exist in *w*. But there is no such object in *w*. So the sentence embedded in (20) is false at *w*. Since *w* was arbitrarily chosen, the embedded sentence is false at all possible worlds. So (20) is false. So (19) is false in the above context.

We can reasonably compare 'that man' on King's view with certain definite descriptions. "The *F* fails to exist" is false at all worlds because 'the' quantifies only over objects that exist at that world. Rigidification of the definite description with 'actually' makes no difference: "The thing that actually is *F*" still quantifies at a world only over things that exist at a world, so "The thing that actually is *F* fails to exist" is also false at all worlds.[12] On King's view, (19) expresses a proposition in the above context that is modally equivalent to that expressed by (21) in the same context.

(21) Possibly: the thing that actually (is a man and is identical with Matti) fails to exist.

So (19) is false in the above context, on his view.

Most semantic theories say that when 'he' is used demonstratively, its semantic content in a context is simply an object. Combining this common view of 'he' with King's theory of complex demonstratives gives us another odd result. On the common theory of 'he', (22) is true

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[12]Thus on King's view, complex demonstratives mimic merely *persistent* rigid designators but do not mimic *obstinate* rigid designators. (See Salmon 1981 for the distinction.) This is the root of the above modal problem, and those in the next section. Using negation rather than 'fails to exist', the relevant readings of the sentences in this paragraph are given by (a)-(d), assuming that 'Exists *x*' can be symbolized with '$\exists y\ y{=}x$'.

(a) [The x : Fx]~x exists
(b) [The x : Fx] ~$\exists y\ y{=}x$
(c) [The x : Actually Fx]~x exists
(d) [The x : Actually Fx] ~$\exists y\ y{=}x$

All are false at all possible worlds, if 'the' quantifies at each world over the things that exist at that world (the things over which '$\exists$' quantifies).

with respect to a context in which Sally demonstrates Matti.

(22) It could have been the case that *he* failed to exist.

Yet on King's view, (19) is false with respect to Sally's context (on its narrow scope reading). This divergence in truth-value between (19) and (22) is also counter-intuitive.

An advocate of King's view might admit that (19) is false in the above context, on the reading in which the complex demonstrative takes narrow scope, but he might claim that the reading of (19) that is most natural and immediately available is one on which the complex demonstrative takes wide scope. This reading is indicated in (23) below, and formalized in (24).

(23) That man is such that it could have been the case that he failed to exist

(24) [$\text{THAT}_{=\text{Matti, J@}}$ x : x is a man] Possibly (x fails to exist).

(24) is true on King's theory, and so the advocate may claim that (19) is true on the natural (wide scope) reading of it.

I doubt that the wide scope reading of (19) is the most immediately available one. But even if it is, we can set up a discourse context in which the narrow scope reading of (19) should be strongly preferred. Consider the following scenario.

(25) (Scenario: a philosophy colloquium in a room full of philosophy professors and philosophy graduate students. Tom, Brian, Matti, and Sally are in the room. Sally utters the following sequence of sentences.)

It could have been the case that some people in this room are non-philosophers. It could have been the case that the man sitting next to Tom is a coal miner. It could have been the case that the man sitting next to Brian is a businessman who failed to pay his income taxes.

All of the sentences in this discourse seem true in this context. The discourse encourages hearers (and readers) to read the quantifiers in these sentences with narrow scope. (I am assuming, with King, that definite descriptions are quantifiers.) Let us now consider two different continuations of the above discourse.

(26) It could have been the case that the man sitting next to Matti failed to exist.

(27) It could have been the case that that man [points at Matti] failed to exist.

(26) sounds quite strange given the previous discourse. It should, because it is false in the above context on the reading in which the definite description takes narrow scope, and this is the reading that is strongly preferred in the above discourse. (27) sounds much better as a continuation. However, on King's view, (27), which is just (19) again, is false on the narrow scope reading of the complex demonstrative. But this reading should be strongly preferred in the above discourse. So his theory predicts that (27) should sound as bad as a continuation of (25) as (26) does. But it does not.

In reply, an advocate of King's view might claim that, even in this discourse context, the most strongly preferred (or only available) reading of (27) is the one on which the complex demonstrative takes wide scope. But if this is so, then complex demonstratives behave significantly differently with respect to scope than do standard quantifiers, even standard quantifiers that contain singular terms, such as 'the man sitting next to Tom', for in the above discourse it is natural to understand such standard quantifier phrases as taking narrow scope with respect to the modal operators. This difference in behavior would be a strike against a quantificational view of complex demonstratives.

There are further, closely related, modal objections to King's view, and replying to these

objections by appealing to scope distinctions is even less attractive. Consider a context in which Sally utters one of the following while pointing at Matti.

(28) The proposition that that man fails to exist is contingently false.

(29) The proposition that that man fails to exist is false, but only contingently so.

(30) The proposition that that man fails to exist is false, but could have been true.

(31) The proposition that that man fails to exist is true with respect to some possible worlds.

All of these seem to be true in Sally's context. But on King's theory, they are all false in Sally's context, on readings in which the complex demonstratives take narrow scope. Moreover, these narrow scope readings are (at the very least) strongly preferred, because the complex demonstrative appears inside the noun phrase 'the proposition that that man fails to exist' and "scoping out" of such noun phrases is (at the very least) difficult. For comparison, consider 'The proposition that every bachelor in Britain is unmarried is necessarily true': the (alleged) reading on which 'every bachelor on Earth' takes wide scope (and on which the sentence is false) is either nonexistent or extremely unnatural. In any case, we can bypass all concerns about scope by using a method recommended by Kripke (1980). Consider (32).

(32) That man fails to exist.

Suppose that Sally utters (32) while pointing at Matti (knowing that she says something that is false). The proposition expressed by (32) is clearly false in the world of this context. But consider a world in which Matti does not exist. Is the proposition true at such a world? Intuitively, the answer is a clear 'yes'. Yet on King's view, the proposition that (32) expresses in this context is false at all worlds.

One more related point: King's theory says that (33) is scope ambiguous, with readings indicated by (34) and (35) (=(19)) below.[13]

(33) That man could have failed to exist.

(34) That man is such that it could have been the case that he failed to exist.

(35) It could have been the case that that man failed to exist.

In a context where Matti is the object of the speaker's perceptual intention, King's view entails that (34) is true while (35) is false. Yet (33) seems to have no reading on which it is false in this context.

4. An Objection from Modal Identity Sentences and Perceptual Uses

Similar points hold for modal identity sentences, such as (36) in a context in which Sally points at Matti.

(36) Necessarily, that man is identical with Matti.

(36) is true in this context, on the natural reading in which 'that man' takes narrow scope.[14] However, on King's view (36) is false in this context, on this reading, because Matti fails to exist

[13]The following sentences using negation are logically equivalent to (34) and (19), respectively, as I intend them to be understood.

(a) That man is such that: possibly, it is not the case that he exists.

(b) Possibly: that man is such that it is not the case that he exists.

[14]Of course, there are contexts in which Sally utters 'that man' while pointing at someone other than Matti. But that is irrelevant to our concern here. We are asking whether (NID1) and (36) express true propositions *in Sally's context*. We are *not* asking whether they express truths in other contexts. For more on the distinction between truth-in-all-contexts and necessary truth, see Kaplan 1989, Braun 1994, and Braun in submission.

at some worlds and 'that' quantifies, at any world, only over the things that exist at that world.[15] An advocate of King's view might say that the narrow scope reading of 'that man' is not the preferred reading. In reply, we can set up a discourse context in which the narrow scope reading is strongly preferred, as we did for (19) using (DC), and we can consider the sentence 'The proposition that that man is identical with Matti is necessarily true'. Further, (37) below is scope ambiguous, between the narrow scope reading given by (36) above and the wide scope reading given by (38) below.

(37) That man is necessarily identical with Matti.

(38) That man is such that: necessarily, he is identical with Matti.

Since the narrow scope reading is false in this context while the wide scope reading is true, King's theory seems to predict that we will find (37) ambiguous. But we do not.

Analogously, (39) is false in the above context, on the reading where the complex demonstrative takes narrowest scope, whereas King's theory says that it is true on this reading.

(39) Possibly, it is not the case that that man is identical with Matti.

King's theory also predicts that (40) is three-ways scope ambiguous, with two false readings given in (40) and (41) below, and one true reading given by (39) above.

(40) That man is such that: possibly, it is not the case that he is identical with Matti.

(41) Possibly, that man is such that: it is not the case that he is identical with Matti.

So King's view predicts that we should find (40) truth-conditionally ambiguous. But (40) seems

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[15]Moreover, the sentence obtained by substituting 'he' for 'that man' in (36) is true in Sally's context. The difference in truth-value is counter-intuitive. Similar divergences in truth value hold when 'he' is substituted for 'that man' for many of the other identity sentences mentioned below.

unambiguously false in the above context.[16]

5. A Modal Objection Concerning Redundant NDNS Uses

King's theory says that there are NDNS uses of complex demonstratives that are non-rigid. My next two objections point to the counter-intuitive consequences of this claim. The first I borrow from Ernest Lepore (unpublished) and concerns reference failure.

Suppose that Karen is at a party in Washington, DC. She is told by someone she trusts that at 10:00 pm a spy will walk through a certain door into the party they are attending. She is not told the name of the spy, or given any other identifying information, so she has no particular spy "in mind". As it happens, she is facing away from the door at 10:00 pm. She looks at her watch, notices the time, and utters (42).

(42) It could have been the case that that spy behind me wore a blue hat.

Now suppose that, in fact, there is no spy behind Karen. Then (42) is not true in her context, on its narrow scope reading. (Perhaps it is false, or perhaps it is neither true nor false. In any case, it is not true.[17]) However, King's theory entails that (42) is true in Karen's context, on the natural

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[16]The objections in this section and the last assume that 'that' quantifies at a world over the objects that exist at that world. In response, a theorist attracted to a quantificational view of complex demonstratives might want to claim that 'that' is a possibilist quantifier, that is, a quantifier that quantifies, at every possible world, over all possible objects, whether or not they exist at that world. If 'that' were such a possibilist quantifier, then the above objections would be ineffective. But an advocate of a quantificational view should hesitate to suggest this modification of King's original view. If the modified view says that *all* quantifiers are possibilist, then we get counter-intuitive results concerning sentences containing standard quantifiers, such as 'every'. If the modified view says that only 'that' is a possibilist quantifier, then it would be semantically unlike any determiner.

[17]Of course, in another possible world Karen could have demonstrated a spy with 'that spy'. But that is irrelevant here, for we are asking whether (42) is true in Karen's context.

reading in which the complex demonstrative takes narrow scope. For on King's view, Karen's use of 'that spy behind me' is a redundant NDNS use. So (42) is modally equivalent to (43), when the definite description takes narrow scope.

(43) It could have been the case that: the spy behind me wore a blue hat.

(43), on its narrow scope reading, expresses a true proposition in Karen's context, for there is a possible world in which there is exactly one spy behind her and he is wearing a blue hat. So King's theory predicts that (42) is true, on the natural reading on which the complex demonstrative takes narrow scope. But that is incorrect.[18]

6. Another Modal Objections Concerning Redundant NDNS Uses

Suppose that Scott is at work and hears from a colleague that Fred has a single table in his living room and it is red. Now suppose Scott utters (44).

(44) It could not have been the case that that red table in Fred's living room is completely green.

(44) is not true in Scott's context: there are (for instance) worlds in which that table has been painted green. Yet on King's view, (44) is true in Scott's context, on the natural reading in which 'that red table in Fred's living room' takes narrow scope. For on King's view, Scott's use of the complex demonstrative 'that red table in Fred's living room' is an NDNS use, and so (44) in Scott's context expresses a proposition that is modally equivalent to the proposition that (45)

[18]In reply to this objection, an advocate of King's view could claim that the reading on which the definite description takes wide scope is the only one that is easily available. This seems incorrect to me, but in any case, we can set up discourse contexts in which the narrow scope reading is preferred, as we did in the case of 'It could have been the case that that man failed to exist'.

expresses in that context.

(45) It could not have been the case that the red table in Fred's living room is completely green.

But (45) is true in Scott's context. So King's view entails that (44) is true on Scott's NDNS use of it. Parallel problems arise with (46).

(46) It is necessary that that red table in Fred's living room, if it exists, is red.

(46) is not true in Scott's context, but King's view entails that it is modally equivalent to (47), which is true in Scott's context.[19]

(47) It is necessary that the red table in Fred's living room, if it exists, is red.

7. A Modal Objection to Non-Redundant NDNS Uses

King's theory entails that, on *non-redundant* NDNS uses, the semantic content of a complex demonstrative contains properties that are not explicitly expressed by the common noun phrase inside the complex demonstrative. This view leads to modal problems. Consider Larry the lobbyist again (from section 2 above). Suppose that Larry goes on to utter (48).

(48) It is necessarily true that that Senator, if he exists, is testifying for lobbying reform.

Intuitively, Larry says something false when he utters (48), and the sentence he utters expresses a false proposition in his context. But on King's theory, (48) semantically expresses a true

[19]On the Singular Content Theory, these sentences express untrue propositions in their contexts. If Scott can have singular thoughts about the table, then the sentences express false singular propositions in Scott's context. If Scott cannot have singular thoughts about the table, then the sentences express gappy propositions in Scott's context, and these gappy propositions are either false or neither-true-nor-false.

proposition in Larry's context, on the natural reading on which the complex demonstrative takes narrow scope. Larry's use of the complex demonstrative is an NDNS use, and he has non-redundant intentions: the non-redundant property is that of testifying for lobbying reform. Therefore, on King's theory, Larry's sentence (SP), on its narrow scope reading, expresses a proposition in his context that is modally equivalent to the proposition expressed by (49), on its narrow scope reading, in that same context.

(49) It necessarily true that the Senator who is testifying for lobbying reform, if he exists, is testifying for lobbying reform.

This last sentence expresses a true proposition in all contexts (taking the definite description with narrow scope). So on King's view, (48) expresses a true proposition in Larry's context. But that is highly counter-intuitive.

The same problem can arise for any modal sentence containing a complex demonstrative, on King's view. For instance, there are contexts in which both of the following are true.

(50) Necessarily: that table (if it exists) is red.

(51) Necessarily: that spy (if he exists) wears a blue hat.

In some NDNS context, 'that table' has a semantic content that is modally equivalent to that of 'the red table in Fred's living room', and 'that spy' has a semantic content that is modally equivalent to that of 'the spy who is wearing a blue hat'. All of this is highly counterintuitive.

This ends my modal objections. A defender of King's view might reply to many of them by claiming that the relevant complex demonstratives take wide scope with respect to the relevant modal operators. But if the defender is forced to take this line, then we who are evaluating the theory should consider an obvious alternative explanation for the alleged lack of

narrow scope readings, namely that complex demonstratives are directly referential. On direct reference views, if the relevant complex demonstratives refer in a context, then the wide scope and narrow scope readings of the above sentences are modally equivalent. So direct reference theories predict the intuitively correct truth-values for the narrow scope readings.

8. An Objection from Attitude Ascriptions

My next objection concerns attitude ascriptions. To present it, I use a variant of an example from one of my earlier papers (Braun 1994). Suppose Tom is at a fine restaurant. He asks his waiter John for a wine recommendation. He accepts John's recommendation, and is pleased with the wine he gets. So he utters (52) while addressing John.

(52) You recommended a good wine.

Tom does not know that John has a large tattoo on the back of his neck. Another patron at the same restaurant, Susan, has overheard Tom utter (52) to John. She and her dinner companion can see John's tattoo. Susan utters (53) while nodding in John's direction.

(53) Tom believes that that waiter with a tattoo on his neck recommended a good wine.

(53) seems to be true in Susan's context. On King's theory, (53) is scope ambiguous.[20] On one reading, given in (53_1) below, the complex demonstrative takes narrow scope, whereas on another reading, given in (53_2) below, the complex demonstrative takes wide scope.

(53_1) Tom believes that: that waiter with a tattoo on his neck recommended a good wine.

[20]King discusses such cases on pp. 109-116.

(53_2) That waiter with a tattoo on his neck is such that: Tom believes that he recommended a good wine.

King's view entails that (53_2) expresses a true proposition in Susan's context. However, his view entails that (53_1) expresses a false proposition in Susan's context. For on his view, (53_1) expresses (roughly) the same proposition as (54) in Susan's context.

(54) Tom believes that: [THAT$_{=\text{John, J}w}$ x : x is a waiter with a tattoo on his neck] x recommended a good wine.

But (54) is true only if Tom believes that John is a waiter with a tattoo on his neck. Tom believes no such thing, so (54) is false.[21]

I do not detect any difference in truth value between (53_1) and (53_2): I believe that both (53_1) and (53_2) are true in Susan's context.[22] Further, I think that the most natural reading of (53) is its narrow scope reading, and I think that those who initially judge that (53) is true in Susan's context are making judgments about that narrow scope reading. Thus, in my opinion, King's theory is incorrect in its prediction that (53) has a reading on which it is false in Susan's context.

Intuitions about belief ascriptions are notoriously slippery. Though I think that many

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[21]An advocate of King's view might claim that the semantic content of (54) does not have John as a constituent, and so does not require that Tom believe that John is a waiter with a tattoo on his neck. This raises issues about the constituency of the proposition of (54) that I mentioned in note x, and which I will not try to settle here. We can modify the example so as to avoid this reply. Imagine that Tom has never seen, heard about, or read about tattoos. He is, in that sense, incapable of having thoughts about tattoos. If this is so, then (54) is false, and so King's theory entails that (53_1) is false. But (53_1) is true.

[22]I discussed the possibility of scope ambiguities in a closely analogous belief ascription in note 18 of my 1994. Back then, I resisted the claim that attitude ascriptions containing complex demonstratives are scope ambiguous. But I claimed that if such sentences are scope ambiguous, then they are true on both of their relevant readings.

theorists share my intuitions, I am sure that some do not. I suspect that the contrary intuitions are due to a widespread tendency of speakers and hearers to think that a sentence of the form "*A* believes that *S*" is true only if the referent of *A* would assent to *S* (or a conventional translation of *S*). Tom clearly would not be willing to assent to 'That waiter with a tattoo on his neck recommended a good wine' in his context, and so some speakers may have some tendency to reject (53) and (53_1), when understood on their natural narrow scope disambiguations.

9. An Objection from Attitudes and Actuality

On King's theory, if a speaker in an actual world context uses a sentence containing a complex demonstrative, and he has a perceptual intention as he does so, then the semantic content of the sentence in his context partly concerns the actual world. Suppose, for instance, that Sally points at Matti and utters (55).

(55) That man is smart.

On King's theory, sentence (55) in Sally's context expresses the proposition expressed by (56), which is modally equivalent to the proposition that (57) expresses in an actual world context

(56) [$\text{THAT}_{=\text{Matti, J@}}$ x : x is a man] x is smart.

(57) The thing that actually (is a man and is identical with Matti) is smart.

This proposition has as a constituent either the actual world or the property of being actually the case. It is about the actual world in that sense.[23] Now consider another possible world *w* in

[23]I am here skirting around issues concerning propositional constituency in King's theory. Is the actual world a constituent of the proposition expressed by "[$\text{THAT}_{=\text{Matti, J@}}$ x is a man] x is smart"? If so, then (55) on King's view expresses a proposition in my context that is about actuality in very much the way that (57) is. If the actual world is not a constituent of King's proposition, then it still contains, as a constituent, a relation that "involves" the actual world, in a

which everything in Sally's history and the history of the rest of the universe is *very* much the same as in *w*: the most salient difference between *w* and the actual world is that there are a few more electrons in the Andromeda galaxy. In *w* Sally utters (55) just as she does in the actual world, while focusing on Matti and pointing at him. But since *w* is not the actual world, on King's view sentence (55) semantically expresses a different proposition in that context than it does in the actual world context, a proposition about *w* rather than the actual world. We can *pretend* to express it here (in the actual world) by using the King-ian sentence (58) or its ordinary variant (59).

(58) [THAT$_{=\text{Matti, J}w}$ *x* is a man] *x* is smart.

(59) The thing that *w*-ly(is a man and is identical with Matti) is smart.

But notice that we have not really fixed a reference for '*w*': we used it as a variable ranging over many worlds fitting a certain description.

So in every context in *w* (55) semantically expresses a different proposition than it does in any context in the actual world. Further, Sally asserts a proposition in *w* that she does not assert in the actual world. But this is counter-intuitive. The presence of a few more electrons in a remote area of the Andromeda galaxy in *w* should not have the result that Sally asserts a different proposition in *w*.[24]

I presented an objection like this to King before he published his book, and he discusses it

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sense of "involves" that I will not attempt to define here.

[24]My argument is modeled on a similar argument by Greg Fitch's (1981) against the view that proper names are synonymous with descriptions of roughly the form "the *F* in @". Soames (2002) presents a similar argument against views that hold that proper names are synonymous with 'actually' rigidified definite descriptions. Stanley's (2002) review of King's book mentions that King's view is vulnerable to a variant of Soames's objection.

in a note (pp. 183-5, note 28). He admits that on his view, the propositions semantically expressed and asserted in the two worlds are distinct. But he holds that we do not have any pre-theoretic intuitions about propositions *in the philosopher's technical sense*, and so we do not have any pre-theoretic intuition that the same technical-proposition *should* be semantically expressed and asserted in the two worlds. We do have the pre-theoretic intuition that the speaker *says the same thing* in the two worlds. But King says that the technical-propositions that the speaker asserts in the two worlds are similar enough that he does count as saying the same in both worlds by ordinary, pre-theoretic standards.

In reply, I say that the above objection does not rely so much on intuitions about *saying the same thing* as it does on intuitions about saying *different* thing*s* (emphasis on the plural).[25] Sally probably asserts (says) *several things* (propositions) in both worlds when she utters (55). So King could plausibly hold that, though (55) has different semantic contents in the two contexts in the two worlds, there are some things that Sally asserts (says) in both worlds (e.g., that Matti is smart). King could perhaps plausibly maintain that this accounts for the ordinary intuition that Sally says *the* same thing (singular) in both worlds. Nevertheless, if Sally asserts the semantic content of (55) in both worlds (which she surely does, since she is speaking literally), then King's view entails that there are some things Sally asserts (says) in one world that she does *not* assert (say) in the other, simply because there are a few more electrons in the Andromeda galaxy. So, she says different things in the two worlds. This consequence is counter-intuitive.

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[25]I cannot recall whether the objection I originally presented to King relied on the notion of *saying the same thing*. If so, then the above objection is different from the one that King addresses in his book.

I shall not dwell on this point further here. Instead, I will argue that King's theory has other problems with actuality and assertion. His theory has counter-intuitive consequences for certain sentences concerning assertion about which we have very clear, pre-theoretic intuitions.

To present my first new objection, I need a modal assumption: no one in another possible world can refer to, or otherwise uniquely single out, the actual world, and no one in another world can express the property of being actual. In the actual world, speakers can refer to the actual world with 'the actual world', and express the property of being actual with 'actual' or 'actually', but speakers at other worlds cannot use these phrases for these purposes. (They also cannot use definite descriptions for these purposes, for they do not know enough about the actual world to single it out uniquely with a definite description.) With this assumption in mind, consider sentence (60).

(60) It could have been the case that: Sally asserted that that man is smart though there were a few more electrons than there actually are.

(Put a bit more colloquially: Sally could have asserted that that man is smart though there were a few more electrons than there actually are.) Suppose that Harold utters (60) sentence while pointing at Matti. Now concentrate on the reading of this sentence in which 'that man' takes narrowest scope. Our strong intuition is that it is true in this context on this reading: Sally *could* have asserted that that man [pointing at Matti] is smart though there were a few more electrons than there actually are.[26] But on King's view, (60) in this context (on its natural narrow scope reading) expresses the proposition expressed by (61).

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[26]Furthermore, (60) does not seem to be ambiguous, or to have readings on which it is false.

(61) It could have been the case that Sally asserted that [THAT$_{=\text{Matti, J@}}$ x : x is a man] x is smart, though there were a few more electrons than there actually are.

But (61) (on its most natural reading) is false. There is no possible world different from actuality in which Sally asserts a proposition that concerns actuality. (Here I rely on my earlier modal assumption.) Therefore, King's theory entails that (60) (on its most natural reading) is false in the above context. But that is counter-intuitive.[27]

This objection, unlike the earlier one, does not rely on any intuitions about when speakers *say the same thing* or *say different things*. Rather, the objection appeals directly to our intuitions about the truth value of a certain modal sentence, namely (60), in a certain context, and points out that King's theory entails that it has the opposite truth value.

The preceding objections rely on a fairly strong modal assumption: that in no world other than the actual world do speakers assert propositions about the actual world. You might worry that some superhuman being in another world could do this, or that some ordinary human could do so by using by some sort of trick. My next criticism relies on a weaker modal assumption.

Suppose that Sam is choosing an apple from a bowl of fruit. He reaches for an apple that I can see has a large bruise. I try to warn him before he bites into it, but he interrupts me. After he bites into the apple and makes a face, I utter (62).

(62) If you hadn't interrupted me, I would have told you that that apple is badly bruised.

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[27]Another odd consequence of King's theory is that the sentence obtained by substituting 'he' for 'that man' in (60) is true in Sally's context (assuming the widely accepted view that the semantic content of a demonstrative use of 'he' in a context is just an object). The divergence in truth-value between this sentence and (60) is unintuitive.

(62) is true in my context, on the most natural reading in which 'that apple' takes narrowest scope. But according to King's theory, (62) in my context expresses the proposition expressed by (63) in my context (where '*a*' refers to the apple Sam bit).

(63) If you had let me get a word in edgewise, I would have told you that [THAT$_{=a,\,\mathrm{J@}}$ x : x is an apple] x is badly bruised.

(63) is false, for in no nearby world in which I am uninterrupted do I assert a proposition about the actual world. (This is my weaker modal assumption. Even if, in some possible world, some extraordinary person uses extraordinary means to assert something about the actual world, surely I do not do so in *nearby* possible worlds where I do nothing out of the ordinary.) So on King's theory, (62) also expresses a false proposition in my context. But this is incorrect.

10. An Objection from Attitude Ascriptions and Non-Redundant NDNS Uses

My final objections concern assertion ascriptions and NDNS uses: King's theory of NDNS uses clashes with our normal practices of reporting people's assertions when they utter sentences containing complex demonstratives. Recall Larry the lobbyist. Someone tells Larry that exactly one Senator is testifying in favor of lobbying reform before the Senate Ethics committee. Imagine that John witnesses this event. He then hears Larry utter (64).

(64) That Senator will get no money from me.

Now suppose that Senator Smith is the Senator who is testifying. Then it seems that John could truly utter (65) and Senator Smith could truly utter (66).

(65) Larry said that you will get no money from him. [Said by John while addressing Senator Smith]

(66) Larry said that I will get no money from him. [Said by Senator Smith]

(65) seems to be true in John's context and (66) seems to be true in Senator Smith's context. The sentences embedded inside (65) and (66) semantically express singular propositions in their respective contexts. So this is evidence in favor of views (like mine, Braun [in submission]) that say that Larry does assert a singular proposition about Smith when he utters (64). But on King's theory, sentence (64) in Larry's context expresses the *non-singular* proposition expressed by (67), which is modally equivalent to (68).

(67) [$\text{THAT}_{\text{testifying for lobbying reform, J}}$ x : x is a Senator] x will get no money from Larry

(68) The Senator who is testifying in favor of lobbying reform will get no money from Larry.

Further, King holds that Larry does not assert a singular proposition about Senator Smith. But that is exactly what (65) and (66) attribute to Larry, in their respective contexts. So King's theory incorrectly entails that (65) and (66) are false in their respective contexts.

There is a related problem for King's theory when a reporter uses a complex demonstrative inside a 'that'-clause. Suppose that Fred also witnesses Larry's being told about the testifying Senator, and also hears Larry utter (64). Then Fred can truly utter (69) while pointing at Senator Smith.

(69) Larry said that that Senator will get no money from him. [Said by Fred as he points at Senator Smith]

(69) seems to be true in Fred's context, even on the reading of it in which the complex

demonstrative takes narrow scope. My theory agrees, for on my theory Larry asserts a singular proposition when he utters (64), and (69) semantically expresses a proposition that attributes assertion of this proposition to Larry. But this example is problematic for King's theory. On King's theory, Fred's use of 'that Senator' is perceptual, so Fred's utterance of (69), on its narrow scope reading, expresses the same proposition as (70), on its narrow scope reading.

(70) Larry said that [$\text{THAT}_{=\text{Smith, J@}}$ x : x is a Senator] x will get no money from Larry.

But Larry did not use 'that Senator' perceptually, so (on King's theory) Larry did not assert the proposition expressed by the sentence embedded in (70). So on King's theory, (69) is false in Fred's context, on its narrow scope reading. Furthermore, the reading of (69) on which the complex demonstrative takes wide scope is also false in Fred's context, on King's theory, for the wide scope reading attributes to Larry an assertion of a singular proposition, and King's theory denies that Larry asserts a singular proposition.

A similar problem arises if there is a non-redundant NDNS use of a complex demonstrative by a speaker, and an unrelated non-redundant NDNS use of a complex demonstrative by a person reporting on what the prior speaker said. To illustrate this problem, I need a fairly elaborate example. Larry hears about the testifying Senator and utters (64), just as in the preceding examples. Moreover, Senator Smith, and only Senator Smith, cursed at the Vice President, but Larry never hears about this. Tom is correctly told that exactly one Senator cursed at the Vice President, but is not told that the Senator who cursed at the Vice President was Smith, and is given no further information about the cursing Senator. Tom is never told about a Senator testifying for reform. However, Tom is *incorrectly* told that Larry heard about the curse and that Larry uttered (64) immediately after hearing about the curse. Thus Tom believes that Larry

thinks that exactly one Senator cursed at the Vice President, and that Larry has resolved not to give money to the Senator who did so. Tom utters (71), while thinking about the Senator who cursed at the VP.

(71) Larry said that that Senator will get no money from him.

Tom's reasons for thinking that (71) is true are incorrect, because Larry never heard about the cursing. Nevertheless, Tom seems to speak truly when he utters (71), and (71) seems to express a true proposition in Tom's context, for Larry did say, of the Senator who (in fact) both testified for reform and cursed at the Vice President, that he would get no money from Larry, and that is what (71) seems to say. My theory (Braun, in submission) agrees with all of this.

But on King's theory, (71) does not express a true proposition in Tom's context, on any reading of it. Tom's use of 'that Senator' is a non-redundant NDNS use. (71), on the reading of it in which the complex demonstrative takes narrow scope, expresses in Tom's context the same proposition as (72), on the latter's narrow scope reading.

(72) Larry said that [$\text{THAT}_{\text{cursed at the VP, J}}$ x : x is a Senator] x will get no money from Larry.

But Larry did not assert the proposition expressed by the sentence embedded in (72), for Larry knew nothing about the cursing. So King's theory incorrectly entails that Tom's ascription is false in Tom's context, on its narrow scope reading. Furthermore, on King's theory, (71) is also false in Tom's context on the reading in which the complex demonstrative takes wide scope, for the wide scope reading attributes assertion of a singular proposition to Larry, and on King's view, Larry did not assert a singular proposition.

11. A Conclusion and a Comparison

I have presented a number of objections to King's theory. In another paper (Braun, in submission), I present my version of direct reference (the Singular Content Theory) in more detail than I do here, and I reply to King's objections to direct reference theories like it. I believe that the arguments presented here and in that other paper make it reasonable to favor the Singular Content Theory over King's theory. But much more could be said about these views and the evidence for and against them. I will conclude this paper by mentioning some issues that need further discussion and by comparing the debate about complex demonstratives with a familiar debate about definite descriptions. (Thanks to Lynsey Wolter for discussion of some of the issues below.[28])

Suppose that Natasha utters 'That spy is smart' as she points at Boris. Direct reference theorists say that the semantic content of the sentence in her context is the singular proposition that Boris is smart. This proposition does not have spy-hood as a constituent. But direct reference theorists should admit that Natasha asserts, or at least pragmatically conveys, the proposition that Boris is a *spy*. After all, Natasha entertains that proposition when she utters the sentence; that is one reason why she chooses to utter 'that spy'. She also wants her auditor to consider whether Boris is a spy, so that he can figure out who she is talking about. Furthermore, the complex demonstrative would not refer or have a semantic content in her context if Boris were not a spy, so she is committed to that proposition's being true, in a way appropriate for asserting or pragmatically conveying it. In addition, as Natasha utters 'That spy is smart', she

[28]Wolter's (2007) comments at the Cornell workshop on complex demonstratives, and my subsequent discussions with her, have strongly influenced my discussion in this section. See also Neale (2004) for discussion of similar matters.

may also entertain the descriptive proposition that the spy who is identical with *him* (Boris) is smart. If so, then she may also assert or convey that descriptive proposition, though it is not the semantic content of the sentence she utters in her context.

Quantificational theorists, such as King, should make mirror-image concessions. On King's view, the semantic content of 'That spy is smart' in Natasha's (perceptual) context is (roughly) the proposition that the thing that is actually a spy and identical with Boris is smart. But if this is correct, then surely Natasha asserts, or at least pragmatically conveys, the (simpler) descriptive proposition that the spy who is identical with Boris is smart. Moreover, she surely asserts, or at least pragmatically conveys, the singular propositions that Boris is smart and that Boris is a spy, even if neither of these is the semantic content of the sentence in her context, for she surely entertains these singular propositions, and wants her hearer to do so as well, and she is also committed to their truth in a way appropriate for asserting or conveying them.

We earlier considered how a defender of King's theory might reply to my criticisms by claiming that certain narrow scope readings of the relevant sentences are unavailable. (King himself makes such claims about certain cases in his book.) We can now see that such a defender could try another sort of reply, at least in some cases: he could appeal to the above (apparent) facts about assertion and pragmatic conveyance of singular propositions. In the examples in which King's theory allows the speaker to believe a singular proposition, a defender could claim that, though the semantic content of the sentence is a descriptive, quantificational proposition, the speaker asserts or conveys a simple singular proposition. He could claim that this confuses our intuitions about the cases. This line of defense has problems. Such a defender would have to explain why the problematic narrow scope readings are so stubbornly unavailable.

Moreover, this strategy will not help a defender with the problems facing King's theory of NDNS cases, for King's view says that the speakers in such cases do not entertain, assert, or convey a singular proposition. Nevertheless, this pragmatic defense deserves a more extended discussion than I can give it here.

A quantificational theorist who took this pragmatic strategy *very* seriously might want to defend a simpler quantificational theory than King's. On a *simple quantificational* theory, the semantic content of "That *F* is *G*", in a context in which (roughly speaking) "that *F*" is used to refer to object *o*, is the descriptive proposition expressed by "The thing that is both *F* and identical with *o* is *G*".[29] Such a theorist would (probably) want to be more liberal than King about the conditions under which speakers entertain and assert singular propositions. But in exchange, such a theorist could avoid the problems that King's theory has with assertion and actuality. He could say that intuitions about the truth conditions of narrow scope readings of sentences containing that "that *F*" are incorrect and are due to the fact that speakers who utter "That *F* is *G*" often assert or convey the singular proposition expressed by "*o* is *G*". He could say that the propositions that King claims are semantically expressed by NDNS uses are really merely asserted or conveyed, and thus avoid King's semantic problems with NDNS uses.

The dispute among advocates of these three theories (King's theory, the simple quantificational theory, and my theory) is, to a large degree, a dispute over the division of labor between semantics and pragmatics. If these theorists agree that a certain speaker entertains a

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[29]This view is close to Ludwig and Lepore's (2000). Such a view would have to contend with King's arguments (pp. 67-78) that complex demonstratives are not synonymous with definite descriptions. Neale (2004) suggests that complex demonstratives are synonymous with corresponding *in*definite descriptions: "that *F*", when used to refer to object *o*, is synonymous with "an *F* that is identical with *o*". His theory might avoid King's arguments.

singular proposition as she utters "that *N*", then they will (almost) entirely agree about which propositions the speaker asserts and conveys. Their disagreements will (almost) entirely concern which of these propositions is semantically expressed.[30] Therefore, to evaluate their theories we must consider their total semantic and pragmatic "packages" and how they divide the linguistic labor between semantics and pragmatics.

The disagreements among these theorists is reminiscent of disagreements among theorists of referential uses of definite descriptions.[31] Ambiguity theorists and strict quantificational theorists agree that definite descriptions can be used to assert or convey both quantificational propositions and singular propositions. But ambiguity theorists hold that the semantic content of a sentence containing a definite description on one reading (in some contexts) is a singular proposition, whereas quantificationalists think that such a singular proposition is not semantically expressed, but merely asserted or conveyed. Future debate about complex demonstratives is likely to recapitulate much of the long and intricate debate about the semantics and pragmatics of definite descriptions.

I think direct reference theories of complex demonstratives offer more attractive semantic and pragmatic packages than do quantificational theories. (See Braun, in submission, for my package.) But if the history of debates over definite descriptions is any indication, we should not

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[30]I say that these theorists will *almost* agree on asserted and conveyed propositions because I doubt that descriptive propositions are always asserted or conveyed.

[31]Wolter (2007) points out some of the parallels between these disagreements. For a small sample of the debate over referentially used definite descriptions, see Donnellan 1966, Wettstein 1981, Salmon 1982 and 2004, Neale 1990 and 2004, Bach 2004, and Devitt 2004. I am here ignoring views on which complex demonstratives are ambiguous. Such views might be more closely comparable to ambiguity views of definite descriptions.

expect the disagreements about complex demonstratives to be resolved anytime soon.[32]

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