



## Philosophical Review

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Source: *The Philosophical Review*, Vol. 87, No. 2 (Apr., 1978), pp. 171-200

Published by: [Duke University Press](#) on behalf of [Philosophical Review](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2184751>

Accessed: 04/09/2014 18:20

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## NAMES AND INTENTIONALITY

Michael McKinsey

I have two main objectives in this paper. First, I wish to show that a certain type of causal theory of names is false. Second, I wish to sketch a new theory of names which does justice to important intuitions which underlie both causal and description theories of names. The sort of causal theory I wish to refute is false, I shall argue, because it incorporates an anti-descriptionist theory of having an object in mind, that is, it holds that one can have in mind an object which one is not experiencing at the time, even though there is no property which one believes to be uniquely satisfied and which is in fact uniquely satisfied by the object in question. Given that this anti-descriptionist view is false and given that one's use of a name denotes an object only if one has that object in mind in using the name, it follows that one basic intuition which underlies description theories of names like Russell's and Searle's is correct.<sup>1</sup>

### I. TWO REASONS FOR HOLDING A CAUSAL THEORY OF NAMES.

A theory of name reference is an attempt to provide a statement of the condition which any use (utterance or token) of a proper name and any object satisfy if and only if the former denotes the latter, where denotation is understood to be a many-one semantic relation. Thus theories of name reference may be assumed to have the following form:

(1) If  $\alpha$  is a token of a proper name uttered by a speaker  $s$  at a time  $t$ , then  $\alpha$  denotes  $x$  if and only if  $x = (\exists y)\Phi$ , where  $\Phi$  is a formula containing  $\alpha$ ,  $s$ ,  $t$ , and  $y$  as its only free variables.

I suggest the following as a first approximation of the sort of condition which, by serving as an instance of ' $x = (\exists y)\Phi$ ' in (1) would yield a correct theory of name reference:

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<sup>1</sup> See Bertrand Russell, *The Problems of Philosophy* (Galaxy Books, 1959), Chapter V, and John Searle, "Proper Names," *Mind*, LXVII (1958), pp. 166-173.

- (2)  $x$  = the one and only individual  $y$  such that:
- (i)  $s$ 's utterance of  $\alpha$  at  $t$  is an instance of a proper-name practice involving  $y$  and the name-type of which  $\alpha$  is a token; and
  - (ii)  $s$  has  $y$  in mind (in a proper-name-appropriate manner) in uttering  $\alpha$  at  $t$ .

If this suggestion is correct, then an adequate theory of name reference would have to provide true and illuminating answers to these questions:

- (3) What is a "proper-name practice"? That is, what sort of practice involving a proper name and an individual must a use of that name be an instance of, in order for that use to denote that individual?
- (4) What is it for a use of a proper name to be an "instance" of a proper-name practice?
- (5) In what manner must a speaker have an object in mind in uttering a name-token, in order for that token to denote that object?

As far as I know, no writer on the subject has yet proposed a condition of name reference having precisely the structure of (2). But (2) does fit plausible intuitions about names which have often been expressed. For instance, it is natural for one who takes seriously the fact that names are token-reflexive to think that a name is *disambiguated* on a particular occasion of use by the mental states of the speaker.<sup>2</sup> On this sort of suggestion, a given individual is selected out of a perhaps large list of possible candidates as the denotation of a name use by virtue of the fact that this individual is the one member of the list which the speaker has in mind (in a certain way) on the occasion in question.

But those who note that a speaker must have an object in mind in order for that object to be the denotation of a name-use also usually note that satisfaction of this condition is not *sufficient* for an object to be the use's denotation. It is often suggested, correctly I think, that in addition an object must *bear the name* in order to be the denotation of (a token of) that name on a given occasion.<sup>3</sup> If

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, Michael Devitt, "Singular Terms," *The Journal of Philosophy*, LXXI, 7 (April 18, 1974), pp. 183–205.

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, Tyler Burge, "Reference and Proper Names," *The Journal of Philosophy*, LXX, 14 (August 16, 1973), pp. 425–439.

we further note that for an object to bear a name is for there to exist a certain kind of practice involving the object and the name, we capture a further part of the motivation behind (2). It is less often pointed out that a name use must be an instance of this kind of practice in order for this use to denote an object. But the fact that an object happens to bear a name is irrelevant to the question of whether a use of the name denotes that object, unless there is some *connection* between the use and the practice by virtue of which the object bears the name, where it is this connection which is necessary to make the use an instance of this practice.<sup>4</sup>

By dividing (2) into two separate clauses, I do not mean to suggest that these two clauses are independent of one another. It might well (and I believe it will) turn out that satisfaction of clause (i) of (2) entails satisfaction of clause (ii), because it might be that a name use is an instance of a proper-name practice involving an object, in the requisite sense, only if the speaker of the use has the object in mind, in the requisite sense. I have written these clauses down separately in order to draw attention to the fact that associated with these two clauses are two different sorts of considerations which might motivate one to endorse a causal

<sup>4</sup>To see the point more clearly, consider the following case of misidentification described by Saul Kripke (in "Naming and Necessity", in D. Davidson and G. Harman [eds.], *Semantics of Natural Language* [Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1972], pp. 253–355):

Two men glimpse someone at a distance and think they recognize him as Jones. "What is Jones doing?" "Raking the leaves." If the distant leaf-raker is actually Smith, then in some sense they are *referring* to Smith, even though they both use "Jones" as a name of Jones. [p. 343]

I think it is clear in this case, as Kripke suggests, that the speakers' uses of "Jones" do not denote the leaf-raker. Now suppose that the distant leaf-raker who in this example is called "Smith" happens to also be named "Jones," though he is not the Jones whom the speakers know and with whom they confuse the leaf-raker. (Suppose, say, the leaf-raker was born to parents named "Jones," and was abandoned at an orphanage where he was later given the new name "Smith.") Then it is obvious that the situation remains essentially unchanged: unless there is some connection between the speakers' uses of "Jones" and the practice by virtue of which the leaf-raker is named "Jones," the mere fact that he happens to be named "Jones" is irrelevant to the question of whether or not the speakers' tokens of "Jones" denote him. This shows that a certain view of names (proposed by Burge, *op. cit.*, p. 435) is false, namely, the view that an object is denoted by a name-token if and only if the speaker of the token refers to the object and the object bears the name.

theory of names, and consequently there are two different respects by virtue of which a theory of names may be termed a “causal theory.”

One of these motivations, the one associated with clause (i) of (2), is based on the intuition that part of what it means for a use of a proper name to be an instance of a proper-name practice is that the use is *causally* connected with the practice. I believe that this is the primary intuition which lies behind Saul Kripke’s sketch of a causal theory of names.<sup>5</sup> According to this sketch, a given name use’s denotation is typically determined by a causal chain of communication reaching back from the use to an initial baptismal act in which an object, the name use’s denotation, is given the name. The intermediate links in such causal chains are points at which one speaker acquires a way of using a name from another person, by witnessing the other’s use and by forming an intention to use the name to refer to the same thing as does the other person.

One way of conceiving the causal connection between a given name use and the point at which the speaker acquired a way of using the name from another speaker, is that this connection provides a link between the name use and a social practice involving the name, a link without which the use would not be an instance of a proper-name practice. That Kripke thinks of his sketch as describing such a link is suggested by his remarks to the effect that his sketch is meant to capture the “social character” of the use of proper names.<sup>6</sup>

The second motivation for a causal theory of names, the one associated with clause (ii) of (2), results from combining the intuition that it is those mental states of a speaker which give rise to his name use that serve to disambiguate the use, with the idea that what these mental states are *about*, or *of*—what the speaker has in mind—is determined by a causal chain linking the states with what they are about or of. A theory of names at least partly motivated by this sort of consideration has been proposed by Michael Devitt.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>5</sup> In “Naming and Necessity.”

<sup>6</sup> See the “Addenda” to “Naming and Necessity,” p. 768, for instance.

<sup>7</sup> In “Singular Terms.” A similarly motivated causal theory has also been

On Devitt's view, the denotations of name-uses are determined by chains of communication of a Kripkean sort which typically link the uses to their denotations. But Devitt adds a new twist to Kripke's original sketch by holding that these same chains determine what speakers have in mind in using names. This twist is accomplished *via* the following principle, which Devitt offers as an analysis of *having an object in mind in using a name*:

- (6) For any  $x, y$ , and  $z$ ,  $x$  had  $y$  in mind in uttering a token of the name type  $z$  ( $x$  meant  $y$  in uttering a token of the name type  $z$ ) if and only if  $x$  had an ability to designate  $y$  by  $z$  and that ability was exercised in the production of that token of  $z$ ,<sup>8</sup>

where Devitt understands that an ability of this sort typically results from a Kripkean causal chain of communication involving the name.

Devitt's view, then, incorporates *both* of the motivations for a causal theory that I have mentioned. But it is important to keep these distinct motivations separately in mind. For I now wish to argue that views like Devitt's are made false by their endorsement of a causal theory of having an object in mind. But even if I am right about this, there will remain a motivation for holding a causal theory of names, since it may still be necessary to give a causal account of a name use's being an instance of a proper-name practice.

## II. A CAUSAL THEORY OF INTENDING TO REFER.

The first difficulty which a view like Devitt's needs to overcome is raised by the simple fact that a speaker may have two distinct objects in mind in using a name, even though only one of the objects is the use's denotation. In short, though Devitt's view is in part motivated by the need to provide a principle of disambiguation for names, his view does not provide such a principle.

To see this, it suffices to consider any of a number of cases of

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proposed by Gareth Evans in "The Causal Theory of Names," Part I of a symposium with J. E. J. Altham, *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, Supplementary Volume XLVII* (1973), pp. 187–208.

<sup>8</sup> "Singular Terms," p. 189.

misidentification such as the following (considered by Devitt himself).<sup>9</sup> Suppose a speaker *S* owns a cat whom he has raised from a kitten and whom he calls (and we may call) “Nana.” Returning home with a friend one day, *S* sees a cat which looks just like Nana sitting on the kitchen floor. This cat is not Nana, but is instead one of Nana’s progeny, who is named Jemima. However, *S* takes the cat he sees to be Nana and introduces her to his friend, saying “This is Nana.” Clearly, *S* intends to refer to Jemima with “Nana,” since he intends to refer to the cat before him with “Nana” and this cat is in fact Jemima. *S* also of course intends to refer to Nana with “Nana.” (The singular terms in these “intending”-contexts are to be construed as having large scope.) Thus, *S* has both Jemima and Nana in mind in uttering his token of “Nana” in “This is Nana,” and so given Devitt’s interpretation of (6), there are two causal chains of an appropriate reference-determining type linking *S*’s use of “Nana” with two distinct cats. Under such circumstances, we cannot very well say that *S*’s use of “Nana” denotes *two* cats (since surely, denotation is a many-one relation), so we must conclude that on Devitt’s theory this use denotes *neither* cat.<sup>10</sup>

But this consequence is clearly false of our example. It is clear that when he says “This is Nana” *S* is falsely identifying the cat before him as Nana, and he could not do this unless his token of “Nana” denotes Nana, as it obviously does. Thus Devitt’s view does not provide a correct principle of disambiguation for names. We cannot tell which among the possible candidates is the denotation of name-use merely by consulting “what the speaker has in mind” in using the name, for the speaker may have many different objects in mind in using the name, even though only one of these is the use’s denotation.

However, it is not difficult to see how a theory like Devitt’s can be repaired to overcome this problem, once we note that in cases of misidentification involving names, the conflicting intentions by virtue of which the speaker has different objects in mind are in

<sup>9</sup> See “Singular Terms,” p. 200.

<sup>10</sup> Strictly, Devitt would say that the use “partially designates” each cat. But this does not help to make his view any more plausible. I give a more detailed criticism of Devitt’s view in “Divided Reference in Causal Theories of Names,” *Philosophical Studies*, XXX, 4 (October, 1976), pp. 235–242.

general not on a par, *causally* speaking. Suppose for instance a speaker *S* of “Shakespeare was Bacon” uses “Shakespeare” with two conflicting intentions which we can ascribe to him by saying “*S* intends to refer to Bacon with ‘Shakespeare’ ” and “*S* intends to refer to Shakespeare with ‘Shakespeare’.” Then it is clear that of these two conflicting intentions, *S*’s *primary* intention is that of referring to Shakespeare with “Shakespeare.” *S* intends to refer to Bacon with “Shakespeare” *just because* he intends to refer to Shakespeare with “Shakespeare” and believes that Shakespeare was Bacon. But it is *not* because *S* intends to refer to Bacon with “Shakespeare” and believes that Shakespeare was Bacon that he intends to refer to Shakespeare with “Shakespeare.” When a person’s having a given intention is a part of the explanation of the person’s having another intention, but not *vice versa*, I will say that the former intention is *primary* with respect to the latter or equivalently, that the latter is derivative from the former.<sup>11</sup>

In the case of “This is Nana,” the speaker would utter “Nana” with some intention which is about Jemima; perhaps, say, the speaker intends to refer to the cat before him with “Nana.” But this intention would be derivative from one or more of his other intentions that are about Nana, for instance, his intention to refer with “Nana” to the cat he raised from a kitten.

The distinction between primary and derivative intentions allows us to suppose that in cases like those we are considering, some of the speaker’s intentions to refer can play a disambiguating role in determining reference even though in general the speaker’s intentions conflict; for it is a reasonable hypothesis that when two such intentions conflict and one is derivative from the other, then the derivative intention plays no disambiguating role in determining reference. One reason why this hypothesis is reasonable is that it yields the intuitively correct results in cases of misidentification, like that of “This is Nana.”

But can this distinction be used to construct a causal-theoretic

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<sup>11</sup> In the above paragraph, I am indebted to conversations with Lawrence Powers. On the distinction between primary and derivative intentions, see H.-N. Castañeda, “Intentions and the Structure of Intending,” *The Journal of Philosophy*, LXVIII, 15 (August 15, 1971), p. 459. The singular terms in the “intending”-contexts here and below must be construed as always having small scope, for a reason to be given below.



account of how name-reference is secured in, say, the “Nana”-case? One difficulty in the way of constructing such an account is raised by the fact that among the intentions to refer which are nonderivative from other such intentions, and with which the speaker *S* of “This is Nana” might have used “Nana,” many are ascribable to *S* by use of *definite descriptions* which denote Nana. Suppose for instance that disambiguation of “Nana” in *S*’s use of the name at time *t* was accomplished by the intention we would ascribe to *S* by saying

- (7) At *t*, *S* intended that he then refer with “Nana” to the cat he raised from a kitten.

If *S*’s use of “Nana” is disambiguated by the intention ascribed to *S* in (7), this must be accomplished by virtue of what this intention itself is about (what it is an intention to refer to). But since this intention’s content is expressible by a definite description, what the intention is about is not determined merely by a causal connection between the intention and a given object. Rather, if this intention is about anything, it must be about whichever object uniquely satisfies the property of being a cat which *S* raised from a kitten.

Now all the causal theories of names so far proposed have been explicitly *anti-descriptionist*, in the sense that according to them, when a name-use denotes an object, that use would have denoted that object even had the object failed to uniquely possess *all* of the properties which the speaker believed are uniquely possessed by the referent of his use. But this means that an anti-descriptionist causal theory cannot appeal to a speaker’s primary intentions to refer as the means whereby the speaker’s use of a name is disambiguated, unless the intentions in question are *other* than those of the sort ascribable by use of a definite description in a sentence like (7). The difficulty, then, is: what kind of primary intention to refer could an anti-descriptionist causal theory propose as the kind of intention to refer by which name-uses are disambiguated, if these intentions are not like the one ascribed by (7)?

The only reasonable answer to this question which I can see that a causal theorist might propose is that name-uses are always disambiguated by nonderivative intentions to refer whose contents are *not* expressible by use of definite descriptions, but

which are instead special intentions that can be ascribed, and only be ascribed, to a person  $p$  by saying something of the form

(8) At  $t$ ,  $S$  intends that he then refer with  $u$  to  $\alpha$

where  $t$ ,  $S$ , and  $u$  are singular terms denoting a time, the person  $p$  and a proper name (or name-token), respectively, and where  $\alpha$  is a *proper name* (perhaps the name denoted by  $u$ ).

To complete such an account, it would be necessary to describe the type of causal chain by virtue of which an intention of the sort ascribed by instances of (8) is an intention to refer to a given object which would be the denotation of the name-use in question. Let us call this account which incorporates a causal view of intending “(CI)” for short. Though only a sketch in need of completion, (CI) is at least an improvement upon Devitt’s view, and at the same time is in the spirit of this view. On (CI), we can say that a person has a given object in mind by virtue of a causal connection between his state of mind and the object, but we can also allow that a person can have more than one object in mind in using a name, even when in fact only one of these objects is the name’s denotation.

I now wish to argue that (CI) is false.

### III. INTENTIONS THAT ARE ESSENTIALLY ABOUT THE OBJECTS THEY ARE ABOUT

It is important to stipulate that on (CI) to be an intention-ascription of the form (8), the proper name replacing the variable “ $\alpha$ ” in the ascription *must have small scope*. Otherwise, the instance would be equivalent to an instance of

(9)  $(\exists x)(x = \alpha \ \& \ \text{at } t, S \text{ intends that he then refer with } u \text{ to } x)$ ,

and an instance of (9) does not ascribe any *particular* intention to a person, let alone a nonderivative intention which is ascribable only by use of a proper name. An instance of (9) tells us at most that there is at least one true proposition of the form

(10) At  $t$ ,  $S$  intends that he then refer with  $u$  to  $\beta$ ,

where  $\beta$  is a small-scope singular term denoting what the instance of “ $\alpha$ ” denotes. Obviously, there might be various derivative and nonderivative intentions with different contents that  $S$  has by virtue of which *some* proposition of the form (10)

is true of *S*, and so (9) ascribes to *S* no particular such intention.

Now, what sort of intentions are the special intentions ascribable only by instances of (8) supposed to be on (CI)? The idea is that they are made special by the fact that they are ascribable only by sentences which contain a proper name in place of “ $\alpha$ ,” so we should ask, what sort of intention (or mental state in general) would on (CI) only be ascribed by use of a small-scope name?

Consider a slightly simpler sort of sentence, for example,

(11) *S* intends that he refer to Cicero

and suppose that (11) ascribes to *S* a particular intention, which we may call “*I*.” What characteristic does (11) tell us that *I* has which distinguishes *I* from other intentions to refer that *S* might have? Well, perhaps (11) tells us that *I* is an intention to refer which is about *Cicero*. But this is not sufficient to distinguish *I* from other intentions which *S* might have, for instance the one ascribed by

(12) *S* intends that he refer to the Roman senator who first denounced Catiline,

since this intention might surely also be an intention to refer which is about Cicero.

Perhaps we should say that (11) tells us that *I* is an intention which is distinguished by its specific propositional content, namely, the content expressed by the speaker’s words “he refer to Cicero” in (11). If there were such a content, it would be the proposition, or proposition-like entity, which *S* would express in English by saying (in the way of expressing an intention):

(13) I shall refer to Cicero.

But now what, on a causal theory of names, would be the propositional content expressed by a sentence like (13)?

On causal theories of names, proper names are supposed to have no descriptive content, and thus (to borrow an insight of Frege’s) it seems that the only semantic contribution that “Cicero” could make to the expression of (13)’s content would be its denotation. One version of (CI) which a causal theorist might find congenial, then, is obtained by combining the following two theses: (i) the only semantic contribution which a proper name makes to the expression of the content possessed by a sentence in which it appears is its denotation; and (ii) an

instance of (8) asserts, and only asserts, that a person has an intention with a given propositional content, namely, the content expressed by the clause following “intends that” in the instance. Let us call this version of (CI), “(CI-1).”

A difficulty for (CI-1) arises from the fact that on this view, (13) should express the same content as

(14) I shall refer to Tully

when spoken by *S*, given that “Cicero” and “Tully” have the same denotation in these utterances. Hence, on (CI-1) (11) would ascribe the same intention to *S* as does

(15) *S* intends that he refer to Tully.

Yet inferences of the sort from (11) and “Cicero is Tully” to (15) are notoriously invalid, so that the present suggestion, on which inferences of this sort turn out to be valid, surely seems mistaken.

A similar difficulty for (CI-1) is created by the fact that, if a proper name’s only contribution to the content expressed by a sentence is its denotation, then it seems that a sentence like

(16) I shall refer to Zeus

expresses no propositional content, if “Zeus” has no denotation. Now according to (CI-1) a sentence of the form (8) says that a given person has an intention with the propositional content expressed by the clause following “intends that” in the sentence. But suppose the clause in question, like (16), expresses no propositional content, as in

(17) *S* intends that he refer to Zeus.

If the (CI-1)-theorist holds that every intention must have a propositional content, then on his view (17) is false, and in general on his view every sentence containing a nondenoting name in the scope of “intends that” is false; but surely this consequence is mistaken. On the other hand, if the (CI-1)-theorist holds that there may be intentions which have no propositional content, he can allow that a sentence like (17) may be true. But he can allow this only at the cost of also allowing that (17) is true if and only if the result of replacing “Zeus” in (17) by any other nondenoting name, for instance

(18) *S* intends that he refer to Pegasus

is also true (since (17) and (18) both ascribe to *S* intentions with

the same—that is, null—propositional content); and this consequence also seems mistaken.

Now the two sorts of difficulty just mentioned show that the (CI-1) proposal for interpreting instances of (8) does not preserve the meanings which such instances actually have in natural languages. Thus it cannot be assumed that we have any intuitive understanding of the special sorts of intentions which on (CI-1) are supposed to be ascribable by instances of (8). But let us ignore this difficulty; let us allow the (CI-1)-theorist to have the form (8) as a piece of canonical notation with which he proposes we can ascribe the special sort of intentions he has in mind.

Even so, (CI-1) is faced with a further serious difficulty. For (CI-1) requires us to suppose that the primary intentions to refer with which persons produce nondenoting name-utterances are of an entirely different sort (have an entirely different sort of content) than those primary intentions to refer with which persons produce name-utterances that do have denotations. This is so because the former sorts of intentions must either have no propositional content at all, or will have a propositional content not expressible by use of a proper name; otherwise, the intentions in question would be about the objects denoted by the names which could be used to express their contents, and hence on (CI) the name-uses produced with these intentions would have denotations after all. But that denoting and non-denoting name uses are made with such different sorts of intentions is, I should think, obviously false.

Suppose that as a matter of fact all my uses of “Homer” (to refer to the author of the *Iliad*, say) have a given denotation (a certain poet of ancient Greece). It is obviously possible that there should be another set of circumstances  $w$  in which I exist and in which the whole history of my mental life is qualitatively indistinguishable from the history of my mental life in the actual world, so that in  $w$  all the intentions with which I use “Homer” have the same content as the intentions with which I use this name in fact, *even though in  $w$  these uses have no denotation*. Hence, even if (CI-1) is correct in its claim that there are in-

tentions ascribable by instances of (8) which are such that they could not exist (could not have the content they have) without their being about given objects, it is clear that such intentions cannot serve as final links in chains which determine the reference of proper names. For it is in general true that the denoting uses of proper names are such that they could have been nondenoting even if the intentions with which they were made had remained the same. Thus (CI-1) is clearly false.

#### IV. INTENDING AND KNOWING WHAT YOU INTEND TO DO.

A more plausible interpretation of (11) might be proposed by a (CI)-theorist who makes use of the fact that on his sort of view, a meaningful name-use always has a significant semantic property whether or not it has a denotation, and that, of course, is its associated causal chain. Thus it might be suggested that an occurrence of "Cicero" in (11) has more to contribute to the meaning of (11) than just its denotation; it also has its causal chain.

Now of course a speaker of (11) would not be ascribing to *S* an intention brought about by the *same* causal chain as that which determines reference for the speaker's use of "Cicero" (since the chains in question would invariably be distinct). What, then, could the causal chain associated with this use of "Cicero" contribute to the whole of the meaning of (11)?

The only possibility which I can see is the following. Perhaps *there is a certain feature F* possessed by the chain which determines reference for the speaker's use of "Cicero" in (11), so that a part of what (11) asserts is that *S* has an intention which is brought about by a causal chain having *F*. But what sort of feature might *F* be? It cannot just be the individual at which both chains terminate, since obviously, reference-determining chains may terminate at *no* individual. But the sort of feature in question must be such that if two chains share it and if each chain terminates at an individual, then each will terminate at the same individual. After all, a use of (11) could hardly ascribe an intention which is about an individual *distinct* from the referent of "Cicero" in that use.

So far, note, the type of feature which would serve behaves structurally very much like Frege's notion of *sense*, according to which a name may have a sense but no denotation, and also on which if two names have the same sense and each has a denotation, then they have the same denotation.<sup>12</sup>

Let us suppose, then, that there is a type *T* of feature such that: (i) every reference-determining chain has a feature of type *T*; (ii) a chain may have a feature of type *T* without terminating at an individual; and (iii) if *F* is a feature of type *T* and two chains have *F*, then if the two chains terminate at individuals, they terminate at the same individual. (For example, one candidate for a feature of such a type might be the feature which two chains share of having the same initial segment.)

If a (CI)-theorist had a specification of such a type *T* (let us just assume he has and call it "*T*"), then he could say that there is a feature *F* of type *T* possessed by the chain associated with the speaker's use of "Cicero" in (11), and that part of what (11) asserts is that *S* has an intention brought about by a chain having *F*. Thus we have a rough idea of what a (CI)-theorist could say to explain how the intention ascribed by (11) is to be distinguished from other intentions which *S* might have. Moreover we can now see how a (CI)-theorist might go about explaining how (11) can be true even if (15) is false when "Cicero" and "Tully" have the same denotation. To explain this, the (CI)-theorist needs only to specify *T* in such a way that two name-uses may be connected to the same object by chains which share no feature *F* of type *T*. (This is a correlate of Frege's view that two names may have the same denotation but different senses.) Call this interpretation of (CI) "(CI-2)."

The foregoing account seems to me the only way remaining in which a (CI)-theorist could go about explaining the special intentions that are supposed to be ascribed by instances of

(8) At *t*, *S* intends that he then refer with *u* to  $\alpha$ .

But if (CI) incorporates this account, the resulting theory (CI-2) is false, as I will now argue.

There is a serious difficulty connected with the assumption

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<sup>12</sup> Kripke credits Hartry Field with the idea that "for some of the purposes of Frege's theory, his notion of sense should be replaced by the chain which determines reference." "Naming and Necessity," p. 346, n. 22.

that persons ever have, or even could have, intentions of the sort which according to the present interpretation of (CI) are ascribed to them by instances of (8). The difficulty derives from the fact that any intentions of this sort are such that in order for a person to *know* that he has such an intention, he must also know something about the chain of events by which this intention was brought about. For instance, suppose that a given use of the following sentence is true of some speaker *S* and time *t*:

(19) At *t*, *S* intends that he then refer with "Cicero" to Cicero.

According to (CI-2), part of what a use of (19) would assert is that *S* has an intention which was brought about by a chain having a given feature, namely, the feature *F* of type *T* which in fact is possessed by the chain determining reference for the speaker's use of "Cicero" in (19). Let *F* be the feature in question, and let the proposition that *P* be the whole of what such a use of (19) asserts. Then in order for *S* to know that *P*, *S* must know that he has an intention which was brought about by a causal chain having *F*. In other words, on (CI-2), for *S* to know at *t* that he then intends to refer to Cicero with "Cicero," *S* must know that he has an intention brought about by a chain having *F*.

The reason I say that this is a difficulty for (CI-2) is that I think it is evident that, for any type of action *A*, it is at least *possible* for persons to know that they intend to do *A*, without knowing anything about how they came to intend to do *A*. For instance, any person's intention to do *A* is a state which he might come to be in merely by *deciding* to do *A* (since deciding to do *A* is just a way of coming to intend to do *A*). But, for any type of action *A*, it is surely possible that a person who at a time *t* has decided to do *A* knows (or should come to know) that he has then decided to do *A*, without engaging in an empirical investigation which goes beyond consideration of his mental states. Of course, it does not follow from this either that it is always *easy* for us to know what we have decided, or that we are never mistaken about what we have decided. All that follows is that it is *possible* for us to know what we have decided, without engaging in such an investigation.

Now I take it to be obvious that *whatever* specification of type *T* a causal theorist might propose and whatever feature *F* of type



*T* we consider, it will not be possible for a person to know that his present decision to do an action *A* was brought about by a chain of events having *F*, unless he engages in a (perhaps extensive) empirical investigation of the past. But we have seen that it is possible for one to ascertain what he has decided to do without engaging in such an investigation. Thus for any type of action *A*, it is possible for a person to know at *t* that he has then decided to do *A* without knowing that this decision was brought about by a chain of events having *F*; and in these same circumstances, the person can correctly deduce that he then intends to do *A* without learning any more about the chain of events which caused his decision, that is, which caused his coming to have this intention. Hence, if it is at all possible to have intentions of the sort which on (CI-2) are ascribed by (19), it is also true that:

- (20) It is possible that: at *t*, *S* knows that he then intends to refer to Cicero with "Cicero," even though at *t* *S* does not know for any feature *F* of type *T*, that his intention to refer to Cicero with "Cicero" was brought about by a chain of events having *F*.

But as we have seen, it is a consequence of the (CI-2) interpretation of instances of (8) that (20) is false. Hence (CI-2) is false; not only are there no, but there *cannot* be, true instances of (8) interpreted in the (CI-2) manner.

We are also now in a position to see that a stronger result holds concerning (CI-1) than the results we obtained earlier. Earlier, I argued that instances of (8) are not in fact used in English to ascribe intentions of the sort which on the (CI-1) interpretation they ascribe, and also that intentions of the latter sort cannot be final links in causal chains that determine reference. But now we can see in addition that there *cannot be* intentions of this sort. Consider again what, on (CI-1), (11) says: it says that *S* has an intention with a certain propositional content, namely, the content that (13) expresses. Now on (CI-1) this content essentially involves the man Cicero, and so if *S* is to know that he has an intention with such a content, he must know that he has an intention *which is about Cicero*. But for *S* to know the latter, according to (CI), is for *S* to know that his intention was brought about by an appropriate causal chain which terminates at

Cicero, and the latter kind of knowledge cannot be obtained without an extensive empirical investigation of the past. Thus, for the same reason that (CI-2) is false, there also cannot be any intentions of the sort which on (CI-1) are ascribed by instances of (8).

These arguments against (CI-1) and (CI-2) are easily generalizable to other cognitive attitudes besides deciding and intending. For instance, we can similarly show that there are no special judgments or beliefs ascribable by use of small scope proper names as interpreted by either (CI-1) or (CI-2). Since we have exhausted the possible causal-theoretic interpretations of such cognitive attitude ascriptions, we have the general result that *there neither are nor can be special cognitive acts or states that are ascribable by use of the cognitive attitude verbs and by use of small-scope names, when these names are interpreted causal-theoretically.*

#### V. THE GENERAL DIFFICULTY AND A PROPOSAL

The reasons I have given why (CI) is false point up a general difficulty in the way of constructing a causal theory of names which is both anti-descriptionist and which also holds that a name-use is disambiguated by the cognitive states of the speaker. Any such theory will hold that a necessary condition of a name-token's denoting an object is that the speaker of the token bear some cognitive relation to the object. For instance, proponents of such theories often endorse a principle similar to the following:<sup>13</sup>

(21) That a token  $\alpha$  of a proper name uttered by  $S$  at  $t$  denotes  $x$  entails that at  $t$   $S$  intends to refer to  $x$  with  $\alpha$ .

But faced with such a principle as (21) we ought to immediately ask ourselves: *What are* these intentions by virtue of which, whenever a token  $\alpha$  of a name uttered by a person  $p$  at  $t$  denotes  $x$ , then at  $t$ ,  $p$  intends to refer to  $x$  with  $\alpha$ ? Surely, if an object  $x$  and a name-token  $\alpha$  are such that  $p$  intends to refer to  $x$  with  $\alpha$ , it is (at least in part) because there is some true proposition of the form

(22)  $S$  intends that he refer to  $\beta$  with  $u$ ,

<sup>13</sup> See, for instance, the view of Evans in "The Causal Theory of Names."

where  $S$ ,  $\beta$  and  $u$  are singular terms denoting  $p$ ,  $x$  and  $\alpha$ , respectively, and where  $\beta$  and  $u$  are essentially in the scope of "intends that."

But then the further question arises: what sort of singular term replacing " $\beta$ " in instances of (22) could be used to ascribe intentions of the sort in question? As we saw earlier, an anti-descriptionist proponent of (21) is precluded from supposing that we can ascribe these intentions with sentences of the form (22) wherein *definite descriptions* replace " $\beta$ ."

An anti-descriptionist might suggest that *sometimes* the intentions in question might be ascribed by use of a *demonstrative* singular term replacing " $\beta$ ," as when the speaker himself says "I intend that I refer to *that cat, there*, with 'Nana'." But this would hold only of those relatively rare occasions on which the denotation of a name-use is perceptually present to the speaker. What sort of intention would the speaker have on other occasions?

The only remaining alternative seems to be that the intentions in question must be those which are ascribable by use of *proper names* replacing " $\beta$ ," where these names are interpreted causal-theoretically (as opposed to being interpreted, say, as short for definite descriptions). But we have seen that this alternative is not really open, either; for we have seen that there are no true propositions of the form ' $S$  intends that he refer to  $\beta$  with  $u$ ', where  $\beta$  is a small-scope name interpreted causal-theoretically.

Thus an anti-descriptionist proponent of (21) is faced with a difficult trilemma. He must hold either: (A) that there are intentions by virtue of which a person can intend to refer to an object with a name *other than* the intentions I have mentioned; in this case, his view is mysterious and incomplete until he produces an example, or at least a definition, of such an intention; or (B) that sometimes the intentions in question are ascribable by definite descriptions, in which case his view is inconsistent; or (C) that sometimes these intentions are ascribable by use of proper names interpreted causal-theoretically, in which case his view is false. This trilemma is faced by any causal theory of names which is anti-descriptionist and on which name-uses are disambiguated by the cognitive states of the speaker.

In my view, such theories cannot escape this trilemma. The only possible means of escape is through alternative (A): a kind of intention (or other kind of cognitive state) must be found other than the ones I've mentioned. But I think it is very unlikely that such a kind of cognitive state will be found. It is more likely, it seems to me, that the theories in question are just false.

I propose that the best response to this situation is simply to abandon the anti-descriptionist point of view, and to hold instead that typically, the intentions by virtue of which a person intends to refer to an object with a name are those ascribable by use of definite descriptions replacing " $\beta$ " in (22). That this is the correct view is suggested by my examination of (CI-1) and (CI-2), because it seems that the only way to avoid the kinds of difficulties faced by those theories, is to hold a view on which any singular term that replaces " $\beta$ " in a true intention-ascription of the form (22), must have some *descriptive content* (at least when the person in question is not perceptually aware of the object of his intention).

So I propose that one who holds that a name-use is disambiguated by the mental states of the speaker should not be an anti-descriptionist. If he endorses (21), for instance, he should also endorse:

- (23) If  $S$  utters a token  $\alpha$  of a proper name at  $t$ , and  $S$  is not perceptually acquainted with  $x$  at  $t$ , then  $\alpha$  denotes  $x$  only if there is a property  $F$  such that: (i)  $x$  is the one and only individual that is  $F$ ; (ii) at  $t$ ,  $S$  intends to refer to the  $F$  with  $\alpha$ ; and (iii) the property of being  $F$  is not question-begging with respect to  $S$  at  $t$ .<sup>14</sup>

Of course causal theorists so far have all been anti-descriptionists, so they would not find my proposal very congenial.

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<sup>14</sup> I borrow the terminology "question-begging" from Donnellan, who uses it in "Proper Names and Identifying Descriptions," *Synthese*, XXI (1970), pp. 335–358. An example of a question-begging property which is especially relevant in the present context would be the property of being an individual to which  $S$  intends to refer with  $\alpha$  at  $t$ . For further motivation of clause (iii) and a definition of "property which is question-begging with respect to  $S$  at  $t$ ", see my "The Reference of Proper Names" (Ph. D. dissertation, Indiana University, 1976), pp. 68–71.

They have been anti-descriptionists, because they have been persuaded by certain arguments of Kripke and Donnellan (to the effect) that descriptionist principles like (23) are false.<sup>15</sup> However, I have shown elsewhere that Kripke's arguments against such principles are inconclusive.<sup>16</sup> Also, in my opinion, Donnellan's arguments to this effect have been shown inconclusive as well.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, we now have good reasons for expecting that any such argument should be inconclusive. For we have good reasons for thinking that any anti-descriptionist theory of names is false.

It is time to give description-theories of names a renewed hearing. I now wish to sketch a theory of names along the lines of the proposal (2) given above. This theory is descriptionist in that it endorses (23). But it also resembles some causal theories in its treatment of the notion of being an instance of a proper-name practice.

## VI. A NEW DESCRIPTION THEORY OF NAMES.

The central concept of the theory I will propose is that of *speaker-reference*, where this is understood to be a primarily psychological concept that is not the same as the semantic notion of name-reference, or denotation. I assume that the concept of speaker-reference is that of a psychological relation expressed by the following form (in at least one of its senses):

(24)  $S$  refers to  $x$  with  $\alpha$  at  $t$ .

Also, I assume that, in this sense, it is possible for (24) to be satisfied, even though the token  $\alpha$  in question does *not* denote the object  $x$  in question.<sup>18</sup>

The concept of speaker-reference is central to my account in two

<sup>15</sup> See Kripke's "Naming and Necessity," and Donnellan's "Proper Names and Identifying Descriptions."

<sup>16</sup> In Chapter Four of "The Reference of Proper Names." I describe the basic flaw in Kripke's arguments below, footnote 28.

<sup>17</sup> By Steven Boër, in "Reference and Identifying Descriptions," *The Philosophical Review*, LXXXI, 2 (April, 1972), pp. 208–228.

<sup>18</sup> The distinction between speaker reference and semantic reference is by now well known, so I will not rehearse the reasons for making it here. For further discussion, see Kripke, *op. cit.*, pp. 342–343, note 2, and Burge, *op. cit.*

respects. First, the explication of this concept which I shall give will also explicate the manner in which, I suggest, the mental states of a speaker serve to disambiguate his name-uses. Thus this explication will be my answer to question (5). And second, the concept of speaker-reference, as I shall explicate it, will provide the crucial concept which I maintain is necessary to use in explicating the notions both of a proper-name practice and of an instance of such a practice, that is, in providing answers to questions (3) and (4).

I wish to suggest that whether a speaker *S* is referring to an object *x* with a name-token  $\alpha$  at *t* is determined by the cluster of properties which *S* associates with  $\alpha$  at *t*. In other words, I suggest that the correct theory of *speaker-reference* is a cluster theory similar in structure and content (though perhaps not in intent) to the cluster theories of *name-reference* proposed by John Searle, and, most clearly, by N. L. Wilson.<sup>19</sup>

The first problem which any such cluster theory must solve is, How are the clusters of properties which speakers "associate" with their name-uses to be defined? My proposal is that we define the cluster of properties associated by a speaker *S* with a token  $\alpha$  which *S* utters at *t* as the class of those non-question-begging properties *F* such that at *t*, *S* utters  $\alpha$  with the intention of then referring to the *F* with  $\alpha$ . However, this definition has an unfortunate air of circularity about it. We are to define what it is for *S* to refer to *x* with  $\alpha$  in terms of clusters of properties. How then can we turn around and define these clusters in terms of *S*'s intentions to *refer*?

Nevertheless, I think that speaker-reference should be defined in terms of speakers' intentions to refer; for the circularity here, I suggest, is only apparent. To refer with a name, in the psychological sense, is to utter the name with certain intentions. But notice that to *intend* to refer with a name is *not* to intend to utter the name with certain intentions. Thus what one intends to do when he intends to refer with a name, is *not* to refer in the psychological sense. Rather, I suggest, what one intends to do when he intends to refer to an object, is

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<sup>19</sup> See Searle, "Proper Names," and Wilson, "Substances Without Substrata," *The Review of Metaphysics*, XII (1959), pp. 521-539.

to refer in the *semantic* sense, where for a person to refer to an object with a name in this semantic sense is for the person to produce a token of the name which refers to (denotes) that object. Thus, I suggest that to intend to refer to  $x$  with  $\alpha$  is to intend that  $\alpha$  refer to (denote)  $x$ , or in other words, that to mean  $x$  by  $\alpha$  is to intend that  $\alpha$  mean (denote)  $x$ .

Hence I propose to define the cluster of properties associated with a token  $\alpha$  by a speaker  $S$  at  $t$  (or 'C <sub>$\alpha,S,t$</sub> ', for short) as follows:

- (25) The property of being  $F$  is a member of C <sub>$\alpha,S,t$</sub>  if and only if: the property of being  $F$  is not question-begging with respect to  $S$  at  $t$  and at  $t$ ,  $S$  utters  $\alpha$  with the intention that  $\alpha$  denote the one and only individual that is  $F$ .<sup>20</sup>

Now that we have a way of constructing the clusters of properties which speakers associate with their name-uses, the next problem is how these clusters may be used to determine what speakers are referring to with names on particular occasions. One possibility is that we should apply the criterion of "best fit." On this idea,  $S$  is referring to  $x$  with  $\alpha$  at  $t$  if and only if  $x$  uniquely satisfies more of the properties in C <sub>$\alpha,S,t$</sub>  than any other individual.<sup>21</sup> However, this criterion does not work, for there are cases involving misidentification in which it is clear that a speaker is referring to different individuals on different occasions with the same name, even though the clusters of properties associated with the different uses of the name *are the same*.<sup>22</sup>

This fact suggests that a speaker may attach differing *weights* to

<sup>20</sup> It might seem that such a definition will still eventually involve us in vicious circularity. This is because (25) is to be used in defining speaker-reference, a concept which then is to be used in expressing the correct condition of name reference (denotation) in an instance of (1). However, to suppose that this result is problematic is to controversially assume that a theory of the form (1) must be true by definition of denotation. But I think that it is a serious mistake to think that a theory of name reference should be true by definition of denotation. (For my reasons, see "The Reference of Proper Names," pp. 9–12.) In this connection, note that a theory of the form (1) cannot *be* a definition of denotation, since its scope is confined to the denotation-condition of proper names alone.

<sup>21</sup> Wilson makes this suggestion in "Substances Without Substrata," p. 532.

<sup>22</sup> A good example of this is provided by Donnellan's "Aston-Martin"-case which he describes in "Proper Names and Identifying Descriptions," pp. 370–372.

the members of a cluster associated with a name on different occasions, and that what is being referred to depends on these weights.<sup>23</sup> Intuitively, the idea is that, though a speaker may use a name on different occasions with the same semantic intentions—that is, those sorts of intentions mentioned in (25)—the speaker may place greater or less priority on the fulfillment of given intentions on one occasion than he does on another, depending on what the *point* of his name-use on the occasion in question is.<sup>24</sup>

Thus we need a weighting procedure for clusters before we can tell how speakers' referents are selected out of them. Such a procedure is ready at hand in the distinction mentioned above between derivative and nonderivative intentions. On this distinction, we recall, a given intention of a person is derivative from another of his intentions, if the person's having the latter intention is a part of the explanation of his having the former, but not *vice versa*. For any cluster  $C_{\alpha,S,t}$  there will be a subset of  $C_{\alpha,S,t}$  all and only of whose members are those properties  $F$  in  $C_{\alpha,S,t}$  such that at  $t$   $S$  utters  $\alpha$  with the intention that  $\alpha$  denote the  $F$ , and where this intention is nonderivative with respect to all the other semantic intentions with which  $S$  utters  $\alpha$  at  $t$ . I will call such a subset of a cluster  $C_{\alpha,S,t}$  the set of nonderivative properties in  $C_{\alpha,S,t}$ . I say that an object  $x$  *dominantly satisfies* a cluster  $C_{\alpha,S,t}$  if and only if there is a nonempty subset  $C^*$  of  $C_{\alpha,S,t}$  consisting of all and only the nonderivative properties in  $C_{\alpha,S,t}$  such that  $x$  uniquely satisfies more of the members of  $C^*$  than any other individual.

I propose that we select a speaker's referent out of a cluster by applying the criterion of best fit to the set of nonderivative properties in the cluster. In other words, I propose to define speaker-reference as follows:

(26)  $S$  refers to  $x$  with  $\alpha$  at  $t =_{df}$   $x$  dominantly satisfies  $C_{\alpha,S,t}$ .

The sense of speaker-reference defined by (26), I suggest, provides the correct principle of disambiguation for proper names.<sup>25</sup> Thus

<sup>23</sup> As Boër points out in "Reference and Identifying Descriptions."

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Donnellan, *op. cit.*, p. 371.

<sup>25</sup> I intend the variable  $\alpha$  in both (25) and (26) to range over *all* singular term tokens, not just those of proper names.



my answer to question (5) is that a speaker must have an object in mind in uttering a name-token in the manner defined by (26), in order for that token to denote that object.

The concept of speaker-reference is also of crucial importance in explaining both the notions of a proper-name practice and of a name-use's being an instance of such a practice. I would now like to provide a brief sketch of how I think such an explanation could be constructed so as to yield a complete theory of name-reference.

Earlier, in section I, I suggested that a proper-name practice involving a name and an object is a practice by virtue of which that name is a name of that object. But certain qualifications must be made to this suggestion. For instance, one might think that to bear a name, an object must have been *given* the name in some sort of ceremony. But of course this is false, since objects often acquire names just by being referred to with these names. (The acquisition of a nickname is a paradigm of this means of acquiring a name.) Nor need there be any generally recognized convention on the part of the speakers of a language that an object is to be referred to with a given name, in order for that object to bear the name. Consider a lonely hermit who has a pet rat for company, and he continually uses a name to refer to the rat (the hermit talks to himself and to the rat). During the whole of the rat's life, no one refers to it at all except the hermit, but surely the rat had the name with which its master referred to it.

In general, in my view, it is necessary and sufficient for an object to bear a name that there be at least one person such that the name is one of *that person's* names for the object. And for a name to be one of a person's names for an object, it seems to me, is for that person to have a relatively stable propensity to (in certain circumstances) *refer* to that object with (tokens of) that name. Thus, if I were to give a definition of a name's being one of a person's names for an object, it would look like

- (27)  $\beta$  is a name of  $x$  for  $S =_{df} S_i$  has a relatively stable disposition to (in certain circumstances  $C$ ) refer to  $x$  with tokens of  $\beta$ ,

where “refer” is understood as defined in (26). ((27) is only a definition schema, not an actual definition.)

Thus in answer to question (3), I propose that we identify the notion of a proper-name practice involving an object and a name with the notion of a person’s disposition to refer in certain circumstances with the name to the object. And in answer to question (4), I propose that we understand that a person’s use of a name is an *instance* of a proper-name practice involving the name and an object if and only if the use is an *actualization* of that disposition by virtue of which the name is a name of that object for that person. When a dispositional mental state is actualized by overt behavior, this behavior manifests, or *expresses*, the state; and in my view, the expression of mental states by overt behavior always involves a causal connection between the mental state and the behavior.<sup>26</sup> Thus I understand that for an act *A* to be an actualization of a disposition to engage in a type *T* of act, *A* must be of type *T* and the disposition must play a crucial causal role of a certain sort in the production of *A*. So to be an instance of a proper-name practice involving a name and an object, a person’s act must be an act of referring to the object with a token of the name, and the practice must have played a causal role in the production of the act.

As a further and closer approximation to a correct theory of name-reference, then, I propose

(28) If  $\alpha$  is a token of a proper name uttered by *S* at *t*, then  $\alpha$  denotes *x* if and only if *x* is the one and only individual *y* such that (i) *S* refers to *y* with  $\alpha$  at *t* and (ii) *S*’s referring to *y* with  $\alpha$  at *t* is an actualization of *S*’s stable disposition to refer (in certain circumstances) to *y* with tokens of the same type as  $\alpha$ .

(Clause (i) of (28) is entailed by clause (ii), but I leave it in for facile reading.) (28) has the structure which I earlier suggested any correct theory of names must have, and it thus does justice to the intuitions with which I began in section I. Clause (i),

<sup>26</sup> This is a view of expressing which has been urged in several places by Wilfrid Sellars. See for instance his “Language as Thought and as Communication,” *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, XXIV (1969), pp. 506–527.

understood as defined in (26), provides the sense in which a speaker must have an object in mind in order for his use of a name to denote that object. Clause (i) makes it a further necessary condition of a name-use's denoting an object, that the object bear the name—in the sense of (27)—and also that there be some real connection between the use and a practice by virtue of which the object bears the name. This connection is explicated in clause (ii) through the notion of a disposition's actualization, and so on (28) this connection is a causal one. (28) thus does justice to one of the motives for holding a causal theory of names which I mentioned in section I. Finally, the fact that clause (i) does not entail clause (ii) allows (28) to capture the intuitively correct distinction between speaker-reference and name-reference.

It will help to further explain as well as motivate my proposal of (28) if we consider one possible source of misunderstanding. It might be pointed out that a speaker *S* might regularly refer to a given individual *x* with a demonstrative pronoun, say, "he." Then it might be said that, in some sense, *S* has a propensity to refer to *x* with "he." But surely we would not say in such a case that "he" is a *name* of *x* for *S*.

Though this point is correct, it is not an objection to my proposal as I mean it. For in the sense I intend, a use of a demonstrative pronoun is, if correct, not an actualization of a disposition to refer to any *particular* thing; rather it is the actualization of a general disposition on the part of the speaker to refer to *objects* in his presence with the pronoun. Thus the fact that a person happens to refer regularly to an individual with a demonstrative is not a sign that he has a dispositional mental state of the sort I mean whose actualizations are necessarily references to *that individual*, and *not* to any other individual.

In fact, part of the motivation behind (28) is that I think it helps to capture an important difference in the reference-rules for proper names on the one hand, and demonstrative pronouns on the other. One way of putting this difference is that a use of a proper name, to be correct, must evince a *commitment* on the part of the speaker to regularly refer to a given object with the name, while this is not true of demonstratives. The point of having the convention we have for proper names is, of course, so that we

can communicate with others about objects which are not present in the context of communication. But for this to be possible, those with whom we communicate must be able to make well-founded inferences about what we are referring to with the names we use. The rule of reference for names, as I have expressed it in (28), guarantees that a name-use by a speaker is correct only if it is true that the speaker would not have referred with the name to the object he did refer to, unless the speaker had a stable disposition to refer to that object with the name. It is our knowledge of each others' name-using propensities, plus our mutual commitment to this rule, which enables each of us to make reasonable inferences about what others are referring to with the names they use.

## VII. A COMPARISON WITH KRIPKE'S VIEW

The theory just sketched, since it is a description theory of names, differs significantly from the sort of causal theory which Kripke has described. Nevertheless, there are some respects in which my theory bears a resemblance to Kripke's. These resemblances provide support for my proposal, since they show that it can capture some of the same intuitions which motivated Kripke's proposal.

One of the important points which Kripke has made about proper names is that an object may be the referent of a name-use even though it uniquely satisfies none of the properties which are most commonly associated with the name. Kripke gives several good examples to support this claim, one of which is his Gödel-Schmidt case. Practically the only thing many people have heard about Gödel is that he discovered the incompleteness of arithmetic; but as Kripke points out, it makes perfectly good sense to suppose that such people would succeed in referring to Gödel with "Gödel" even if it had not been Gödel, but an unknown Viennese named "Schmidt," who actually discovered the incompleteness of arithmetic.<sup>27</sup>

The theory I have proposed is consistent with this intuition, and in fact my theory has a feature which can be used to

<sup>27</sup> "Naming and Necessity," p. 294.

explain why this intuition should be correct. For even a user of “Gödel” who has heard of Gödel only that he was the logician who discovered the incompleteness of arithmetic, would typically not want *merely* to say something about the discoverer of incompleteness, whoever that may be; he also would want to say something about a logician named “Gödel” of whom he has heard others speak, of whom he has read in textbooks, and so on. Thus among the intentions with which such a speaker could be expected to use “Gödel,” would be those of intending to refer to the only logician to whom he has heard others refer with “Gödel;” of intending to refer to the only man named “Gödel” of whom he has heard that he discovered the incompleteness of arithmetic, and so on. A speaker of this sort would have such intentions as the latter because he would want to use the name “Gödel” in conformity with others’ uses, and in the absence of any other clues concerning the speaker’s intentions, we naturally assume that intentions of this sort are *primary* with respect to the speaker’s intention to refer to the discoverer of incompleteness. Thus, in Kripke’s case, it is Gödel, not Schmidt, who we assume dominantly satisfies the cluster of properties which the speaker associates with his use of “Gödel.” The theory I have proposed, then, can account for the sort of intuition which Kripke has expressed concerning this case and others like it.<sup>28</sup>

The sort of reference intentions which it is natural to assume

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<sup>28</sup> Kripke also seems to claim that these cases show that description-theories of names are all false, because they show that a speaker may refer with a name to an object which uniquely satisfies *none* of the properties which the speaker associates with the name. (See for instance “Naming and Necessity,” p. 295, where he seems to be making such a claim.) But in order for the Gödel cases to show this, it must be assumed that the speaker associates with his use *only* the property of having discovered the incompleteness of arithmetic. However, given this assumption, Kripke’s claim that Gödel is the use’s referent becomes intuitively wrong. For on this assumption, the speaker does not intend to refer to someone to whom he has heard others refer with “Gödel” (otherwise this latter property would be in the cluster associated with the use). So if the speaker is using “Gödel,” it must be because he has happened to pick the name “Gödel” and decided to use it to refer to whoever is the discoverer of incompleteness. But then in this case, contrary to Kripke’s claim, it is intuitively obvious that the speaker’s use of “Gödel” denotes *Schmidt*, and not Gödel. For fuller discussion of this point and others related to Kripke’s objections to description theories, see “The Reference of Proper Names,” Chapter Four.

are primary in the Gödel-Schmidt case depend for their satisfaction by an object upon the success of references to this object by other speakers. Thus in such cases, in order to determine which, if any, object is the denotation of a speaker's name-use, we must trace back along a chain of communication until we reach a point at which we find one or more speakers whose primary reference intentions are not parasitic upon other references. If, as the Gödel-Schmidt case suggests, speakers' primary reference intentions are typically parasitic upon other persons' references, then which, if any, object is the denotation of a name-use is, on my theory, typically determined in part by a chain of communication reaching back into the past. Thus the view I have proposed is consistent with one of the main facts which has motivated causal theories of names.

There is one final piece of support which I should like to offer for the theory I've proposed, and that is the ease with which this theory accounts for the phenomenon of reference-shift in proper names. One nice example of such a shift has been reported by Kripke, who heard the example from Gareth Evans.<sup>29</sup> Our uses of the name "Madagascar" derive from Marco Polo's, who used this name to refer to the island Madagascar, and who also mistakenly believed that in so using the name he was following native usage. However, the natives from whom Polo acquired the name referred with it to a part of the African mainland. So it seems that on Kripke's original sketch of a causal theory, Polo's uses of "Madagascar" denoted a part of the mainland, and since our uses derive from his, they must also denote the mainland and thus fail to denote the island; but of course our uses of "Madagascar" do in fact denote the island and not the mainland.

But on the view I've proposed, it is easy to explain such shifts of reference. In fact, it is easy to explain how it was possible for Marco Polo's very first uses of "Madagascar" to denote the island.<sup>30</sup> For while Polo, in his first uses of "Madagascar" after returning from his travels, no doubt intended

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<sup>29</sup> See the "Addenda" to "Naming and Necessity," p. 768.

<sup>30</sup> I have argued that this was possible in "Divided Reference in Causal Theories of Names."

to refer with this name to the same place the natives referred to, this intention might well have not been his *primary* intention in these uses. It is easy to imagine that, not caring to communicate with the natives, his primary intention was to refer to the island. Thus, Polo could easily have acquired a stable disposition to refer to the island with “Madagascar,” so that “Madagascar” became his name for the island, and as a result his uses of the name denoted it.

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I have tried to sketch and provide support for a theory of names which does justice to those insights which I take to be correct in both description and causal theories of names. I of course do not make any claim for the final truth of this sketch. What I mainly hope to have done is to provide good reasons for thinking that *some* theory of this sort is the true one. In particular, I hope to have made it plausible that the basic insight of description theories, reflected in the principle (23), is an insight which one cannot afford to ignore in constructing a theory of reference.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> For their helpful comments on previous versions of this paper, I would like to thank Richard B. Angell, Barbara Humphries, Lawrence Lombard, Lawrence Powers, and the editors of *The Philosophical Review*.