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<sup>67</sup> Ibid., pp. 132-33; p. 779.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., p. 140; p. 779.

<sup>69</sup> Brandt, 1979, pp. 8-9.

<sup>70</sup> This example is Brandt's.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>72</sup> The real difficulty, of course, one that Brandt himself labored over in framing his reforming definitions, is to provide an adequate place for rational and cognitive constraints on the motivational factors invoked under NPR. I do not wish to suggest, however, that Brandt's reforming definitions are, in this regard, adequate as they stand.

<sup>73</sup> See Kelley, 1987.

<sup>74</sup> Daniels, 1979, pp. 277-78.

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# DEMONSTRATING IN MENTALESE

BY

JOSEPH LEVINE

1. Demonstrative thoughts pose a problem. On the one hand, the relation between the subject and the object demonstrated seems to be direct and unmediated by conceptual material. Yet, on the other hand, it seems possible to demonstrate the same object in distinct ways without realizing that it is the same object. This possibility suggests the need to posit a sense, or individual concept, or "mode of presentation" that mediates the subject's cognitive relation to the object demonstrated. The subject's ignorance of the fact that the objects of the two demonstrations are one and the same is then accounted for by her ignorance of the fact that the two senses pick out the same object. But this explanation works precisely by denying the first claim—i.e., that the demonstrative relation is direct and immediate.

Before proceeding further, let us fix our terminology. Suppose, while pointing at a red plastic circle pasted on a white background, I assert sentence (1) below:

(1) This is red.

Let us call the thought expressed by my utterance of (1) its "cognitive content". The cognitive content of 'this' (on a particular occasion of use)<sup>2</sup> is, therefore, that constituent of the cognitive content of (1) that corresponds to the term 'this'. Cognitive content is thus a psychological notion—the content of a psychological state.

Let us call the first view mentioned above the "pure-demonstrative" view. On the pure-demonstrative view, the cognitive content of a demonstrative is exhausted by its referent. It's not as if the referent is somehow literally in the head. Rather, it's just that there is nothing more to expressing the content of one's demonstrative thought, or to grasping the demonstrative thought of another, than knowing which object is demonstrated. On the pure demonstrative view, then, one may simply

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identify the content of a demonstrative thought with a singular proposition.<sup>3</sup>

Let us call the second view the "disguised-description" view. On this view, the cognitive content of a demonstrative is expressible by some definite description that picks out the object demonstrated. As I will elaborate below, there are really two versions of the disguised-description view. On one version, call it the "straight disguised-description view", we simply identify the cognitive content of a demonstrative thought with a fully-conceptualized proposition.<sup>4</sup> On the other version, call it the "modified disguised-description view", we treat a demonstrative thought as a three-term relation between the subject, a mode of presentation, and a singular proposition. The disguised description then enters into the analysis of the mode of presentation.

The disguised-description view is well-suited to explain certain cognitive phenomena, such as the informativeness of certain identity statements. However, it has been seriously challenged from many quarters, and it doesn't look as if it can survive.<sup>5</sup> The problem is that no suitable alternative to the disguised-description view has been found. In particular, the pure-demonstrative view continues to stumble over the problem of informative identity statements.<sup>6</sup>

In this paper I will propose an account of the cognitive content of demonstrative thoughts that combines features of both the pure-demonstrative view and the disguised-description view. I will argue that in order to account for the informativeness of identity statements involving demonstratives, we must retain the view that thinking of an object involves a three-term relation between the subject, the object, and the mode of presentation of the object. However, against the disguised-description view, I side with the pure-demonstrative view in claiming that a demonstrative mode of presentation must be non-conceptual, or non-descriptive.

The way I satisfy these two constraints is by identifying the cognitive content of a demonstrative with a mental representation—a symbol in the language of thought—that functions as a non-descriptive singular term. Identity statements are informative because they are represented in the language of thought (or "mentalese") by sentences of the form [ $\alpha = \beta$ ],<sup>7</sup> where [ $\alpha$ ] and [ $\beta$ ] are distinct symbols neither one of which is analyzable as a disguised definite description.

My argument will proceed in three stages. First, I will present a puzzle case involving demonstrative beliefs, one that exemplifies the need for an alternative to both the pure-demonstrative view and the disguised-description view. Second, I will investigate various ways of constructing the requisite alternative without recourse to the language of thought hypothesis (hereafter, LOT). Third, I will present the solution I favor. In the remaining two sections of the paper I will consider various objections to my view.

2. I borrow the puzzle case from Austin (forthcoming). It's called the "Two Tubes Puzzle". Imagine that I am looking through a binocular device, focusing each eye separately. I am presented with two qualitatively identical, but numerically distinct images, each one of a red circle against a plain white background. I think of the one I see through my left eye as "this one" and the one I see through my right eye as "that one". For all I know, I may be looking at the same piece of red plastic through each eye, or I may be looking at two different circles—it all depends on the angle of the two parts of the device. Let us suppose that, as a matter of fact, I am looking at the same object through each eye. I think to myself two thoughts, which I express with the following two sentences:

- (2) I believe that this = this.  
 (3) I neither believe nor disbelieve that this = that.

It seems to me that in the situation just described, both (2) and (3) are true. I therefore take it to be a constraint on a theory of demonstrative thoughts that it be compatible with (2) and (3). This constraint alone is enough to rule out the pure-demonstrative view, for on that view, the thought that this = this and the thought that this = that are one and the same.

On the (straight) disguised-description view, there is no conflict between (2) and (3). Since, on this view, the demonstratives 'this' and 'that' merely abbreviate for me the definite descriptions I use to pick out the object I'm demonstrating, (2) and (3) can be paraphrased in some way like (4) and (5):

- (4) I believe that the red circle I see through my left eye = the red circle I see through my left eye.  
 (5) I neither believe nor disbelieve that the red circle I see through my left eye = the red circle I see through my right eye.

Obviously (4) and (5) are not incompatible, so there is no reason to think that (2) and (3) are.

There are two sorts of objections that have been pressed against the (straight) disguised-description view: one metaphysical and the other psychological. The metaphysical problem concerns the identity of the propositions expressed by sentences containing demonstratives and their alleged paraphrases containing definite descriptions. For instance, on the disguised-description view, (6) expresses the same proposition as (1) above (when uttered in the Two Tubes situation):

- (6) The object I now see through my left eye is red.

Assuming propositions to be (or determine) functions from possible worlds to truth values, it doesn't seem correct to say that (1) and (6) express the same proposition. In a world where the very circle I'm now looking at (in

the actual world) were painted blue, but where I was looking at some other red circle through my left eye, (1) is false while (6) is true. As Kaplan (1977) puts it, the demonstrative is "directly referential"; once we fix the context of utterance, we take the object picked out in that context to be the relevant object for the evaluation of the sentence's truth or falsity across possible worlds.

In fact, an advocate of the disguised-description view could grant the metaphysical point and still retain the spirit of the view by moving to the modified version of the disguised-description view. One way to do this is to incorporate Kaplan's "dthat" operator into her analysis. The dthat operator is a logical operator that, essentially, turns a definite description into a directly referential singular term. For instance, the sentence

- (7) The first person born in the 21st century is (will be) male.

is true in every possible world in which the first person born in the 21st century is male, and false in those in which she is female. But the sentence

- (8) d(the first person born in the 21st century) is male.

is true in every possible world in which the person who, in the actual world, is the first to be born in the 21st century is male. In other words, (7) expresses a fully conceptualized proposition, but (8) expresses a singular proposition.

On the modified disguised-description view, demonstratives serve to abbreviate (or disguise) semantically complex terms composed of a dthat operator followed by the definite description under which the subject thinks of the object. We can think of the cognitive content of a demonstrative thought as composed of two elements: the mode of presentation, which is fully expressible by a sentence containing a definite description embedded inside a dthat operator, and the singular proposition which determines the thought's truth-conditions. Thus the proper paraphrase of (1), on the modified disguised-description view, is (6'),

- (6') d(the object I now see through my left eye) is red.

which does determine the same function from possible worlds to truth values as (1). Nevertheless (2) and (3) are both true, since they are paraphrased by (4') and (5'),

- (4') I believe that d(the red circle I see through my left eye) = d(the red circle I see through my left eye).

- (5') I neither believe nor disbelieve that d(the red circle I see through my left eye) = d(the red circle I see through my right eye).

The difference between the definite descriptions appearing on the right

side of the identity sign in (4') and (5') exhibits the difference between the two cognitive contents involved.

The real problems for the disguised-description view, then, come from the psychological side. There are three main arguments that together constitute the psychological (or, if you prefer, the epistemological) objection to the disguised-description view, which I will simply label arguments A, B, and C:<sup>8</sup>

A. I just may not be aware of any definite description under which I think of the object. After all, if (6') is supposed to directly reflect the cognitive content of the thought expressed by (1), I, who assert (1), ought to recognize it as such. Yet, even though I may acknowledge that the object I refer to as 'this' is indeed the object I now see through my left eye, there may be no clear sense in which this is what I had in mind when I asserted (1). Yet, if it isn't, in what sense does (6') capture the cognitive content of (1)? In what sense does the definite description capture the cognitive content for me of the demonstrative?

B. For any description of the form 'the F' one might propose, the sentence 'this is the F' (or 'this is d(the F)') seems to express something informative. Remember, it was precisely the intuition that certain statements expressed informative contents that provided the disguised-description view with one of its strongest arguments. Yet, if we are to take that intuition seriously, it seems to cut against the disguised-description view as well.

C. Suppose we do have some description in mind under which we think of the demonstratum. It seems perfectly possible that we might be mistaken in thinking that the object satisfies the description, while nevertheless succeeding in demonstrating that very object. Perhaps, due to some quite complicated experimental intervention, the image I take to be caused by the light coming through my left eye is really caused by the light coming through my right eye. In general, for any description one might propose as the description under which I pick out the object, it seems plausible that one could imagine a case in which the object failed to satisfy the description and I successfully demonstrate the object anyway.

It's important to be clear just what these arguments show (assuming they show something) and what they don't show. On the disguised-description view, the cognitive content of a demonstrative term is identical to the cognitive content of some definite description (perhaps with a dthat operator applied to it). Thus what I have in mind when I utter the term, and what I grasp when I understand someone else's utterance of the term, is given by the associated definite description. Therefore, it is no defense against arguments A through C above to claim that there may (or even must) be some complicated condition—perhaps one that I am not aware of—such that the satisfaction of that condition is necessary and sufficient for my successfully demonstrating the object. This may well be true. But

so long as I need not *represent* that condition to myself in order to demonstrate an object, no specification of that condition can serve as the cognitive content of the demonstrative term I use to refer to the object.<sup>9</sup>

By the same token, a theory is immune from objections A through C so long as the conditions it specifies for having a demonstrative thought are not ones that one must *represent* to oneself in order to demonstrate an object. For instance, perhaps some fairly complicated causal story involving the subject, the object, and the subject's representation of the object (call it 'condition D'), must be true in order for the subject to demonstrate the object. Thus, one might be tempted to claim that a definite description of the form 'the object satisfying condition D' serves to specify the cognitive content of the demonstrative, and therefore arguments A–C come into play. The point is that there is an important difference between the claim that condition D must be satisfied in order for the demonstration to take place and the claim that a description of condition D specifies the cognitive content of the demonstrative. So long as the subject need not represent condition D to herself, the theory in question is making only the first claim; while arguments A–C work only against the second claim. This point will become crucial later on when I take up various objections to my own view.

Three constraints on a theory of the cognitive content of demonstrative thoughts emerge from our discussion so far:

- I. Demonstratives must be directly referential.
  - II. It must be possible to demonstrate the same object in different ways without realizing it. In other words, statements (2) and (3) must be compatible.
  - III. Demonstratives do not abbreviate, or disguise, descriptively specified individuating conditions for the demonstratum.
- The disguised-description view easily satisfies constraint II, while the pure-demonstrative view easily satisfies constraint III. (Constraint I is not really at issue if we modify the disguised-description view as suggested above.) The problem of course is to construct an alternative that simultaneously satisfies both II and III.

I have focused so far on the problems with the disguised-description view and the arguments motivating constraint III. To be fair, then, I want to elaborate a bit on constraint II and the problem it causes for the pure-demonstrative view. As I noted above, as it stands, the pure-demonstrative view directly violates constraint II since, on that view, the thought that this = this and the thought that this = that are identical. Therefore, if (2) is true, (3) must be false.

What is required in order to satisfy constraint II—and what the pure-demonstrative view lacks—is a role for the psychological mechanism by which the demonstrative relation is established, for it is precisely a difference in psychological/functional role between the two demonstrations

(the one involving 'this' and the one involving 'that') that is responsible for the truth of (3) in the Two Tubes case. The most natural way to capture this difference is by positing a difference in the manner in which the two demonstrations are represented by the subject to herself. This is of course exactly what the disguised-description view does, which then brings it into conflict with constraint III. What we need, then, is to posit some difference in the manner in which the subject represents the two demonstrations to herself that does not involve her entertaining two different sets of individuating conditions for the demonstratum.

It is precisely here that I believe LOT can provide the necessary tools; i.e., provide us a way of making a psychological difference between two demonstrations of the same object without employing disguised definite descriptions. However, I want to consider next two alternatives that involve only an appeal to the semantic properties of terms in natural language. These two alternatives are suggested by Kaplan's work, and are worth considering here for two reasons: First, my own proposal will incorporate various features of these suggestions, and second, the failure of these alternatives to jointly satisfy constraints II and III will motivate all the more the move to LOT.

3. The first alternative I want to consider arises out of Kaplan's distinction between "content" and "character", which are both semantic properties of a term. The content of a term is its intension—which is (or, as Kaplan puts it, is "represented by") a function from possible worlds to denotations. The character of a term is (or is represented by) a function from contexts in which the term is uttered to contents. For most terms the character is a constant function, so we need not concern ourselves with it. However, for indexicals and demonstratives, the content changes from context to context (though, being directly referential, their content is constant—i.e., it always takes on the same object from world to world). The crucial point here is that it is the character of a term that most closely corresponds to what we normally think of as the meaning of a term, since it is character that remains constant across different contexts of use. What I grasp in knowing the meaning of 'I' is precisely how its referent is determined given a context.

So, we might try identifying the cognitive content of demonstratives with their character. When I think, in the Two Tubes case, that this = this but not that this = that, the difference is accounted for by the difference in the character of the demonstrative terms 'this' and 'that'. Now, in certain sorts of cases this might work. For instance, imagine that I see a reflection of myself in the mirror but don't realize that it is my reflection. I see in the reflection that a large object is about to fall on the person whose reflection I see. I think (9) but not (10):<sup>10</sup>

(9) He is about to get clobbered.

(10) I am about to get clobbered.

The difference between thinking (9) and thinking (10)—a difference with obvious psychological consequences—is plausibly captured by the difference in the character of 'he' and 'I'. Though they converge in their content in this case, it is the character which plays the psychologically significant role here.

But this sort of move will not work in our case.<sup>11</sup> For one thing, there is nothing in Kaplan's theory that allows us to distinguish the character of 'this' from the character of 'that'. But anyway, the original puzzle could have been stated with two 'this'es rather than with a 'this' and a 'that'. In fact, we can easily imagine a natural language that had only one demonstrative term (excluding personal pronouns and the like). After all, there is no obvious reason why one's ability to simultaneously demonstrate a number of objects should be limited by the number of demonstrative terms available in one's natural language.

The second alternative is suggested by Kaplan's treatment of what he calls 'the Fregean theory of demonstrations'. As Kaplan puts it:

... I regard my "dthat" operator as representing the general case of a demonstrative. Demonstratives are incomplete expressions which must be completed by a demonstration. . . . Thus each demonstrative, *d*, will be accompanied by a demonstration, *d[δ]*. The character of a complete demonstrative is given by the semantical rule:

In any context *c*, *d[δ]* is a directly referential term that designates the demonstratum, if any, of *δ* in *c*, and that otherwise designates nothing.<sup>12</sup>

Suppose, then, we incorporate the demonstration into the cognitive content of a demonstrative. Doing so would give us a way of distinguishing the cognitive contents even of two 'this'es, not to speak of a 'this' and a 'that'. After all, it is the fact that I can demonstrate the same object twice without realizing it that gives rise to the problem in the first place. So it just makes sense to locate the psychologically relevant distinction that grounds the truth of statement (3) in the demonstrations themselves.

There are two problems with this way of attempting to solve the puzzle. First of all, it's not clear what would count as the demonstrations in the Two Tubes case, since there is no finger pointing or the like going on. What's more, it's not as if demonstratives are normally tied to demonstrative acts either. Explicit demonstrative acts—like finger pointing—are not for the subject herself, but rather for those with whom she is communicating.<sup>13</sup> I don't use my finger to point out the object to myself; I already know which object I mean. Thus any demonstrative act that accompanies my use of a demonstrative term is clearly inessential to the cognitive content I express with the term.

Secondly, even if an explicit demonstrative act were somehow essentially involved in my use of 'this' and 'that', we would still lack a proper account of their cognitive contents. The difference in the cognitive contents of 'this' and 'that' is supposed to explain the difference in their

psychological effects—e.g., my belief that this = this but not that this = that. So the only way a difference in the demonstrative acts associated with 'this' and 'that' can help us is if this difference is somehow psychologically realized. But pointings and the like are motions of my arm, not states of my mind! The only plausible way a demonstrative act can be psychologically realized is by way of a description of that act. But then we are back with the disguised-description view, which we have already rejected.

One way to look at the two Kaplanesque alternatives just investigated is as follows. We want a way of distinguishing between the psychological roles of 'this' and 'that' (in the Two Tubes case) that does not involve treating them as disguised descriptions. One way of trying to do this is to focus on the very words themselves. Words can be distinguished by their formal properties, and therefore do not need descriptive contents to distinguish them. Of course, when we're dealing with natural language, it can't literally be the words themselves that distinguish the relevant psychological roles (unless we adopt some behaviorist analysis involving dispositions to utter certain noises in certain circumstances—a view that cannot be maintained for several thousand reasons). So we turn to character—what we grasp when we understand the term—which nevertheless has the same virtue of not being analyzable in descriptive terms as the word itself.

We can't make this move when it comes to demonstratives, since their character does not suffice to distinguish 'this' from 'that'. In fact, even the words themselves don't work, since we could have used two tokens of 'this' in the first place. But character is a function from context to intension (which, for demonstratives, amounts to denotation). If we can't use character to distinguish 'this' from 'that', perhaps we can use context. This is the point of the attempt to incorporate demonstrations into the cognitive content of demonstratives. However, this too doesn't work since we don't have a plausible psychological mechanism by which contextual features can make a psychological difference, except, of course, by way of a descriptive analysis, which violates constraint III.

It is precisely to overcome these difficulties with the strategy outlined above that I advocate pushing our analysis inside the head, where mentalese is spoken. My account will combine a focus on the formal distinction between the internal symbolic representations underlying the use of 'this' and 'that', together with a psychologically plausible way of incorporating the relevant contextual features into the account. In this way constraints I–III will all be satisfied.

4. On LOT, cognitive states are identified with computational relations to formulae in the language of thought—"mentalese".<sup>14</sup> Let us, for simplicity's sake, adopt the usual fairy tale that this computational relation takes the form of a "belief box" or a "desire box" within which sentences of mentalese are inscribed (and erased, as well). So, two beliefs can be

distinguished by reference to the difference between the relevant sentences of mentalese inscribed in the belief box. Similarly, the absence of a belief is explained by the absence of the relevant sentence of mentalese from the belief box.<sup>15</sup>

The question before us is the following: when I form the belief which I express with sentence (1), say, what is the form of the mentalese sentence inscribed in my belief box to which (1) corresponds? We can suppose for present purposes that there is a predicate in mentalese—[is red]—which expresses the same content as the English 'is red'. So the question comes down to the nature of the mentalese term that corresponds to 'this'.<sup>16</sup>

Let us suppose that mentalese contains a stock of initially uninterpreted singular terms—akin to unfilled variable addresses in a computer. When we encounter a new object—i.e., what we take to be a new object—one of these terms is pressed into service to serve as a label for it, like a hook on which to hang subsequently acquired information concerning the object.

Let  $[\alpha]$  and  $[\beta]$  be two such mentalese singular terms. Suppose that when I think of the object I see through my left eye as "this" I label it  $[\alpha]$  internally, and when I think of the object I see through my right eye as "that" I label it  $[\beta]$  internally. We can now explain how it is that (2) and (3) are both true. (2) is true because the mentalese sentence  $[\alpha = \alpha]$  is inscribed in my belief box, and (3) is true because  $[\alpha = \beta]$  is not.

That, in a nutshell, is the general form of my response to the Two Tubes puzzle. The psychological distinction between the two demonstrations of the same object comes down to a distinction between the two tokens symbols introduced to represent the object. However, in order to guarantee that we have satisfied constraints I–III, somewhat more must be said about the nature of these mentalese symbols. In particular, we need to know more about how they attach to their referents.

First of all, let's consider constraint I. Demonstratives must be directly referential. On my proposal, then, the mentalese terms  $[\alpha]$  and  $[\beta]$  must be directly referential. I see no problem here. We can just stipulate that singular terms in mentalese behave the way singular terms in natural language do in this respect. If we have reason to believe that a term in natural language is directly referential, we have as much reason to believe that its underlying mentalese correlate is directly referential.

Constraint II is satisfied by virtue of the computationally relevant difference between the mentalese sentences  $[\alpha = \alpha]$  and  $[\alpha = \beta]$ . In order to satisfy constraint III, however, it is necessary to elaborate our story further. The problem is that it's not enough just to say that  $[\alpha]$  and  $[\beta]$  serve as labels for the same object—that they are "pressed into service"—without specifying some mechanism by which they come to refer to the object in question. One possibility is that this is accomplished by an explicit reference-fixing definition, perhaps with the aid of a mentalese that operator.<sup>17</sup> But of course this would directly violate constraint III.

We want to use the difference in the mentalese terms underlying 'this' and 'that' to satisfy constraint II, but not by treating them as disguised definite descriptions. Therefore, we must look elsewhere for a reference-fixing mechanism.

The alternative mechanism I propose is similar in spirit to what Kaplan called 'the Fregean theory of demonstrations'. First, let us suppose that among the stock of initially uninterpreted mentalese singular terms is a group of what I will call 'pointers'. Pointers are mentalese demonstratives, and their referents are determined by a kind of computational relation that I will call a 'mental demonstration'. It is the fact that two distinct mental demonstrations, involving two distinct mentalese demonstratives, can converge on the same object, that accounts for the simultaneous satisfaction of constraints II and III. Let me explain what I mean by a mental demonstration.

I presume that our cognitive architecture is modular at least to the extent that we have relatively autonomous perceptual systems which take impinging stimuli as inputs and deliver perceptual representations—percepts—as outputs.<sup>18</sup> Percepts then serve as inputs to the more general "CPU", the system within which belief-fixation takes place. A mental demonstration is a particular kind of causal/computational relation between an expression of mentalese and a percept. The mentalese expression standing in this relation to a percept is a pointer. We can think of a pointer as an "internal finger" pointing at the percept, except that the ultimate object of the demonstration is not the percept "ostended" itself, but the external object it represents.<sup>19</sup> Of course "internal finger" is only a metaphor. The main point is that some computationally significant causal relation obtains between the mental representation corresponding to the use of a demonstrative and a perceptual representation<sup>20</sup> output from the perceptual module such that the former inherits its referent from the latter.<sup>21</sup>

A pointer, then, is a mentalese demonstrative that underlies my use of demonstratives in natural language. The canonical form of a pointer can be represented as follows:  $[\rightarrow(\alpha)]$ , where  $\alpha$  designates a percept. A pointer is a directly referential term, its referent being the object represented by the percept  $\alpha$ . So, suppose that  $p_l$  and  $p_r$  are the percepts formed by my looking through the left and right sides of the Two Tubes device, respectively. Then (2) is true because the mentalese sentence  $[\rightarrow(p_l) = \rightarrow(p_r)]$  is inscribed in my belief box, and (3) is true because  $[\rightarrow(p_l) = \rightarrow(p_r)]$  is not. Thus the difference in the cognitive contents of 'this' and 'that' comes down to a difference in mentalese representations, which ultimately turns on the distinction between the two percepts by which I perceive the circle.

This last point concerning the role of the two percepts is worth emphasizing. It seems clear that the crucial difference in the psychological

contents I express with 'this' and 'that' in the Two Tubes case somehow involves the distinct perceptual representations formed as a result of the light entering each eye. The problem is to characterize that involvement in the right way. For instance, it's not that what I'm really demonstrating are the two percepts themselves. This would account for the truth of (2) and (3), all right, but at the cost of denying that we ever demonstrate external objects. Similarly, it's not that I think of the object under the description 'the object represented by that percept', where the demonstrative inside the description demonstrates the relevant percept. This too would deny, in a way, that we ever demonstrate external objects, as well as run into all the troubles associated with the disguised-description view.

On my proposal, the percept plays a significant role in determining the demonstratum—as it should, so long as one holds any version of a representational theory of the mind—but it is not itself the demonstratum. I demonstrate the object, the red circle in the Two Tubes case, by "mentally pointing" at the percept which represents it. To be sure, the cognitive immediacy involved in demonstrative thought is located, on my view, in the relation between pointer and percept; i.e., wholly inside the mind. But then unless we are ready to deny that our perceptual access to external objects proceeds by way of a perceptual system which builds a complex perceptual representation of the object, there can be no genuine cognitively immediate access to external objects. My view gives us all the immediacy we can expect, while simultaneously explaining the informativeness of demonstrative identities like 'this = that'.

One final point before turning to objections. One might wonder why we need pointers at all; why not just say that percepts themselves can function as mental demonstratives?<sup>22</sup> The problem with saying this is that it doesn't capture the essentially *demonstrative* character of a demonstrative thought. I have many percepts in play at any one time, yet I do not demonstratively pick out each object of which I have a percept. The act of focusing my attention on one object within my perceptual field and thinking of it, "*this is red*", seems to involve a separate representation from the perceptual representation of the object itself. That is, there is the percept—present to mind, representing an object—and there is the act of pointing to it as a way of picking out the object it represents for selective attention. Collapsing the two together would miss that crucial demonstrative element that is precisely what my proposal is intended to capture.

5. In this section I will consider three objections to my view, all of which revolve around constraint III in one way or another.

(Objection 1) It seems possible that I might ask, in the Two Tubes case, whether *this* is the object represented by percept  $p_l$ . Or, to put it the other way, the statement that this is the object represented by  $p_l$  seems to be informative. Yet, on my view, such a statement should be totally uninformative.

(Objection 2) It may seem that I can be mistaken about the perceptual properties of the object I demonstrate. But one of the considerations motivating constraint III in the first place was the possibility that the object of my thought may fail to match the alleged means by which I pick it out. So, at least in one respect, my view is no better off than the disguised-description view.

(Objection 3) Since, on my view, the cognitive contents of demonstrations are partly individuated by percepts, a great burden is placed on the criteria of individuation for percepts, about which I have said nothing. Furthermore, it seems possible for me to wonder whether the object I'm looking at one instant is identical to what I'm looking at the next instant, even when I maintain the object in view throughout the relevant time interval (perhaps I'm wondering whether an evil demon is constantly switching objects before my eyes, too quickly for me to notice).<sup>23</sup> Must we say that different precepts are involved? But this commits us to far too fine-grained a criterion of individuation for percepts, which, after all, is a matter for perceptual psychologists to settle.

(Reply 1) One can take the claim that I can wonder whether *this* is the object represented by  $p_1$  in two ways. On one reading, it can be expressed as follows:

(11) I neither believe nor disbelieve that this is the object represented by  $p_1$ .

Certainly (11) is true, so long as I am not especially knowledgeable about both perceptual psychology and the particulars of my own perceptual system at any moment. But notice that the mentalese sentence whose presence in the belief box would make (11) false is not  $[\rightarrow(p_1) = \rightarrow(p_1)]$ , but rather something like  $[\rightarrow(p_1) = d$  (the object represented by the percept called ' $p_1$ ')]. The point is that I have no conscious access to my percepts *under their description as percepts*. My conscious access to them is restricted to, as it were, having them—i.e., perceiving.

The other reading of the question is not embodied in (11), but rather in (12):

(12) I do not believe that this is the object appearing to me this way.

By "appearing to me this way" I intend a demonstration of the visual scene presented to my left eye. I do admit to being committed to the falsity of (12) (so long as one doesn't equivocate on 'this'), but then I find that no embarrassment. One can't wonder of *this* whether it is the object being presented in this way, if, by hypothesis, it is its being presented in this way that brings me into cognitive contact with it. It would just be to wonder whether this is this, which is absurd (again, assuming no equivocation on 'this').

(Reply 2) The objector has in mind the standard sort of case where one

"refers" to someone as "the man over there drinking a martini" when in fact he is drinking water, or is not a man, or whatever.<sup>24</sup> Yet one is still thinking of that very person. I agree. But *how* is one thinking of that very person? Surely one must have at least *one* mental representation "in play", as it were, which designates him. In the standard case I presume the relevant representation, the one that successfully puts the subject in cognitive contact with the object, is a percept. I don't know how much information a percept contains, nor how much of it can be misinformation while still counting as a percept of that object. But there must be some answer to these questions, and however they come out, they determine the limits of our ability to pick out objects while misdescribing them.

(Reply 3) I plead guilty to not providing criteria of individuation for percepts, but then I don't see any reason to. On my view, indeed on any version of a representational theory of mind, cognitively significant distinctions demand distinct representations to subservise them. So whenever we find that one can perceptually discriminate objects, or presentations of objects, there must be distinct perceptual representations involved. In other words, I am prepared to let the data concerning our perceptual discriminatory abilities drive a theory of the individuation of percepts. Thus, the problem of individuation doesn't arise since we have to have as many percepts as we need to account for our perceptual discriminatory abilities.

What about the claim that I can wonder whether the object in front of me is the same from moment to moment? Again, if I *perceptually* distinguish what I see before me at  $t_1$  from what I see before me at  $t_2$ , then there must be different percepts involved. Of course, as  $t_1$  and  $t_2$  get arbitrarily close, the claim that there are different percepts involved becomes more and more implausible; but then so does the claim that I can make the relevant perceptual distinction.

This doesn't mean that I can't wonder whether the object in front of me is being replaced by an evil demon from instant to instant, since there are ways to distinguish between the two presentations other than perceptual ways. In particular, I can entertain the relevant fully conceptualized thought. Or, if you like, I can wonder whether  $d$ [the object I see in front of me at  $t_1$ ] =  $d$ [the object I see in front of me at  $t_2$ ], for  $t_1$  and  $t_2$  as close together as you please. This still doesn't entail that I can *demonstratively* pick out the object at  $t_1$  and  $t_2$ , for an arbitrarily small interval between them, and then wonder whether this one is that one. There is clearly a threshold on my discriminatory abilities, and it's one that an adequate perceptual theory will capture in its individuation of percepts.

Two points that emerge from the objections and replies just discussed, both of which concern constraint III, deserve emphasis. First, the view developed in this paper is based on three assumptions: (1) that our cognitive contact with the world is mediated by mental representations, (2)

that one form of such contact is perceptual, and, what I take to be the least controversial of the three, (3) that you *can't distinguish in thought what can't be distinguished in thought*. These three assumptions work together to limit the effect of constraint III, at least to the extent that this constraint expresses the intuition that demonstratives represent a form of cognitively immediate access to objects. I take the limitation on the extent of cognitive immediacy entailed by my view to be quite plausible, and it is consonant with the "individualist" approach in psychology that is a natural bedfellow of LOT.

Second, let me reiterate what I said above when first introducing constraint III. An account of demonstrative thought does not violate this constraint merely because it posits fairly complicated conditions on the relation obtaining between the thought and its object. *Only if a description of these conditions enters into an analysis of the content of the demonstrative thought*, does the constraint come into play. Since, on my view, there is no descriptive content to the mentalese representations underlying my use of the demonstratives 'this' and 'that', constraint III poses no problem for my view.

6. In this final section I want to briefly discuss the bearing of my view on questions concerning the semantics of belief attribution. The short answer is—very little, if any. But I realize that taking this position requires some defense.

There are two sorts of cases we need to consider: first-person attributions, like (2) and (3) above, and third-person attributions. The issues surrounding first-person attributions are more directly connected with the central thesis of this paper, so I will begin there.

First of all, one might object that my proposal involves a very counterintuitive analysis of first-person belief attributions. When I assert statement (3), am I asserting that the mentalese sentence  $[\rightarrow(p_1) = \rightarrow(p_1)]$  does not appear in my belief box? I certainly don't think that's what I'm asserting. We don't want to suggest, after all, that acceptance of LOT is a prerequisite for admittance to the community of belief attributors (though maybe it should be—let's put it to a vote).

This objection would be cogent if my proposal were intended as an analysis of the meaning of belief attributions. However, I intend no such thing. It is not part of my competence to use terms referring to my states of belief that I endorse LOT, or can taxonomize states of belief in terms of sentences of mentalese. Rather, my view is that, as a matter of fact (or, as a plausible hypothesis, at any rate) my believing or failing to believe that this = that in the Two Tubes situation is determined by the presence, or absence of the mentalese sentence  $[\rightarrow(p_1) = \rightarrow(p_1)]$  in my belief box. In general, the LOT account of belief is on a par with the chemical theory of water: in neither case is knowledge of the theory a part of one's competence to use or understand the relevant term, whether 'water' or 'belief'.

One might, however, attempt to press the objection along a slightly different line.<sup>25</sup> While it may not be the case that the theory presented here entails that one can *analyze* statement (3) as a statement about mentalese expressions, this theory does entail that I am capable of categorizing states of belief according to the sentences of mentalese which realize them. After all, if what makes (3) true is the absence from the belief box of a certain sentence of mentalese, then, if I can be said to know that (3) is true, I must be capable of detecting the presence or absence in my belief box of that mentalese sentence. We can use the above-mentioned analogy to the chemical theory of water to make the point. While it doesn't follow from the chemical theory of water that I would assent to the sentence "water is H<sub>2</sub>O", it does follow from the theory that when I detect the presence of water I am in fact detecting the presence of H<sub>2</sub>O. Similarly, though it does not follow from the LOT theory of belief that I would assent to any sentences that describe my internal computational relations to specific sentences of mentalese, it does follow that I am capable of telling (*de facto*) when I bear such relations to such sentences.

In fact, I take the point and see no reason not to endorse it readily. I have no theory of our epistemic access to our own states of belief, and thus have no theory regarding my specific grounds for uttering (3) in the circumstances of the Two Tubes case. In general, I know what I believe, but I can't say how I know. If the LOT story of belief is correct, and if, more particularly, the account of demonstrative belief presented here is correct, then when I know that I fail to believe that this = that, I somehow detect the absence of the mentalese sentence  $[\rightarrow(p_1) = \rightarrow(p_1)]$  from my belief box. The way I do this, or that what I do is describable in this way, may both be unknown to me, just as the fact that when I detect the presence of water I thereby detect the presence of H<sub>2</sub>O may also be unknown to me.

Finally, let me say a word about the question of third-person belief attribution. When we attribute beliefs to others, we certainly do attempt to represent their beliefs as much as possible the way they would represent them to themselves. So, I say that John believes that water is wet, not that H<sub>2</sub>O is wet, if I know that John is ignorant of the fact that water is H<sub>2</sub>O. However, when it comes to the use of demonstratives in third-person belief attributions, the situation becomes awfully complicated. Suppose that, in the Two Tubes case, another person, while observing me, were to assert sentence (13):

(13) He believes that this is red.

It seems pretty clear to me that we have to interpret the demonstrative in this case from the attributor's, rather than my, point of view. Exactly how

one works this into a systematic theory of the semantics of belief attribution, I don't know.

My main concern in mentioning these cases is to clarify the limits of my proposal in this paper. I am concerned to present a view about the nature of demonstrative thought. No doubt a theory of the nature of demonstrative thought is an essential component of a theory of the semantics of propositional attitude attributions involving demonstratives. But there is no reason to expect the former sort of theory to do all the work required of the latter sort of theory; and, happily for me, *that* work is beyond the scope of this paper.

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#### NOTES

- 1 An ancestor of this paper was delivered at the 1987 annual meeting of the Society for Philosophy and Psychology, under the title "Demonstrative Thought". My thanks to Laverne Shelton for her comments on that occasion. I would also like to thank Louise Antony, David Auerbach, David Austin, Kent Bach, Tom Blackson, Hal Levin, Georges Rey, and the members of the Triangle Area Mind and Language Study Group for comments on earlier drafts.
- 2 From now on I will omit this qualification, though it should be kept in mind that the cognitive content of demonstratives changes from utterance to utterance. Thus it is *tokens* demonstratives that have determinate cognitive contents. I thank Kent Bach for pointing this out.
- 3 I borrow the term 'singular proposition' from Kaplan (1979).
- 4 I take the term 'fully-conceptualized' from Burge (1977).
- 5 See Kripke (1980) for an attack on the disguised-description view of proper names, and Perry (1977, and 1979), Kaplan (1977) and Austin (forthcoming) for an attack on the disguised-description view of indexicals and demonstratives.
- 6 Salmon (1986) defends a version of the pure-demonstrative view, arguing that the problem of informative identities can be overcome. His view has the consequence, however, that when I sincerely claim not to believe that Hesperus is Phosphorus, I do believe it nonetheless (so long as I believe that Phosphorus is Phosphorus). I find this view quite counterintuitive, and one to be avoided if at all possible.
- 7 Hereafter, expressions of mentalese will be enclosed in brackets.
- 8 See the sources cited in note above for extended discussions of these arguments. I am especially indebted to Austin (forthcoming) for his presentation of these arguments as they apply specifically to demonstratives.
- 9 This point is made forcefully in Bach (1982) (see also Bach (1986)). In general, my account in this paper owes a great deal to his treatment of *de re* belief.
- 10 This is a variation on a case discussed in Perry (1979).
- 11 I owe this argument to Austin (forthcoming).
- 12 Kaplan (1977), page 55.
- 13 This point is implicit in Kaplan's remarks (Kaplan (1977), page 36f) where he says: "The same individual could be demonstrated by demonstrations so different in manner of presentation that it would be informative to a competent auditor-observer to be told that the demonstrata were one."

It's the informativeness to the *auditor-observer* that is explained, not the informativeness (if any) to the subject doing the demonstrating.

<sup>14</sup> For an elaborate defense of LOT, see Fodor (1975 and 1981, chapter 7), and Field (1981). For criticism of LOT, see Dennett (1978), chapter 6, and Loar (1983).

<sup>15</sup> To simplify matters, I am ignoring implicit beliefs, which presumably are not explicitly inscribed in the belief box, yet are believed all the same.

<sup>16</sup> In order to forestall a possible misunderstanding, let me remind the reader that I am assuming that it is the cognitive contents of *tokens* demonstrative thoughts that is at issue here. Thus it is not to be expected that the English word 'this' has a univocal translation into mentalese across contexts in the way that the English predicate 'is red' does.

<sup>17</sup> In fact, probably many instances of *de re* belief can be explained along these lines. For instance, I might form *de re* beliefs about the shortest spy in the following way. First, the mentalese sentence [ $\alpha = d(\text{the shortest spy})$ ] is used to fix a reference for one of the initially uninterpreted constants; it now directly refers to whoever, in the context, is the shortest spy. Further beliefs about this individual are now realized by inscribing mentalese sentences containing  $\alpha$  in my belief box. If this is right, it turns out that there is nothing really special about the cognitive relation underlying *de re* thoughts; i.e., they need not involve the subject's being in any way *en rapport* with the object. Kaplan (1979, page 397) makes the same point, explicitly rejecting his earlier view in Kaplan (1968).

<sup>18</sup> See Fodor (1983) for a defense of a rather strong modularity hypothesis. While I find his argument there quite plausible, my argument here does not presume the correctness of his view. In particular, I don't need to assume that perceptual systems are informationally encapsulated in the way he suggests.

<sup>19</sup> Thus, to use Quine's (1960) phrase, a mental demonstration is a kind of "deferred ostension".

<sup>20</sup> Actually, I see no reason to limit the type of representation mentally demonstrated to percepts. It seems quite plausible that imagistic representations, memory traces, and the like could serve as well, assuming that I can demonstratively designate objects by way of such representations. I focus on perceptual representation because this seems to represent the canonical case of demonstrative designation, as well as the particular means by which I pick out the circle in the Two Tubes case.

<sup>21</sup> The pointers I have in mind bear a certain resemblance to pointers in computer languages. That is, computer languages often distinguish between variables which store values and those which store a reference to another variable. Thus, in Pascal, when a procedure is defined with a "var" declaration, when a variable is passed to the procedure as a parameter in the main program, the procedure treats its internal variables as pointers to the variables declared in the main program. One can think of the pointer as demonstrating its target variable, or, better, as demonstrating the value stored in the target variable.

<sup>22</sup> Indeed, several people who read earlier versions of this paper asked this very question.

<sup>23</sup> I would like to thank David Auerbach for this objection. Thanks David.

<sup>24</sup> See Donnellan (1966). I don't mean to endorse the view that one can actually use the phrase 'the man drinking a martini' to pick out a man drinking water. Rather, suppose I say 'him, the guy over there drinking a martini'. My use of 'him' may still refer to the man in question, even though he fails to satisfy the description I used to identify him.

<sup>25</sup> My consideration of this objection was caused by a question from Stephen Schiffer at the colloquium talk where the aforementioned ancestor of this paper was delivered. I don't know whether I have adequately captured the gist of his remarks.

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