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Reply to Critics of
Reference and Description:
The Case Against Two-Dimensionalism

Robert Stalnaker and David Chalmers

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Reply to Stalnaker

I begin with Bob's defense of what he takes to be a modest, nonsemantic version of two-dimensionalism – one that tries to illuminate instances of the Kripkean necessary aposteriori, without, as he puts it, factoring them "into a part that is necessary, but purely conceptual, and a part that is empirical but contingent." The key to this not-too-ambitious form of two-dimensionalism is its fidelity to Kripke's insight that we understand possibilities in terms of the objects and properties we find in the world. To the extent we are ignorant or mistaken about these, Bob reminds us, we will be ignorant or mistaken about the world-states we use them to define. I agree. We part company over how to understand such error and ignorance.

We are often ignorant of the properties, essential or accidental, of even those objects with which we are well acquainted, and have no trouble identifying. For example, some people who know my son Greg don't know that he was born in New Haven, which is accidental, or that I am his father, which we may take to be essential. As a result, one epistemic possibility, compatible with what they know, is that Greg was born in Princeton, and another is that someone other than me – my brother Steve perhaps – is his father. Despite the fact that the first is metaphysically possible, and the second is not, there is no intuitive *epistemological* difference between them. However, this is *not* how things turn out in Bob's 2D model. There, agents who don't know Greg's birthplace are *correctly* said to require evidence to rule out epistemic possibilities in which *he* was born in Princeton, while agents who don't know his parentage are *wrongly* said to require evidence to rule out possibilities in which *someone other than Greg*, who fits his description, is Steve's son. I see no justification for this asymmetry.

Suppose Greg himself is ignorant. It is then *correct* to describe him as lacking the evidence needed to rule out *both* possibilities in which he was born in Princeton and possibilities in which he is Steve's son. It is preposterous to claim that what he needs is evidence ruling out possibilities in which

someone else is Steve's son. He might have a *derivative* interest in the father of the person satisfying some description D, *provided he knows that he is that person*. But then, the possibilities compatible with his knowledge in which Steve is the father of the person satisfying D are possibilities in which Steve is *his* father – which, according to Bob, are no possibilities at all. This verdict is doubly dubious: Not only are the scenarios that Greg is trying to rule out judged to be those in which someone else, satisfying D, is Steve's son, but Greg's belief that *he* satisfies D is excluded from the account of what motivates him. That, after all the fancy footwork about *de re* beliefs, singular propositions, context sensitivity, and diagonalization, is where Bob's story leads. One who desires a different destination is well advised to reject Bob's *modest two-dimensionalism* and recognize epistemically possible world-states, over and above the metaphysically possible.

This conclusion results from features of the intuitive Kripkean picture that Bob endorses. Both types of world-state – the metaphysically, and the merely epistemically, possible -- are properties that the universe can coherently be conceived to have. Both are specified by stipulations about actual individuals and properties. Our knowledge, or ignorance, of both is, therefore, inherited from our knowledge, or ignorance, of those individuals and properties. It is precisely our ignorance of the metaphysical *impossibility* of certain *epistemically* possible states that generates the Kripkean necessary aposteriori. In these cases, empirical evidence about essential properties is needed to rule out epistemically possible world-states, the metaphysical impossibility of which we may be unaware. Once these world-states are recognized, the need for 2D diagonalization disappears.

Bob disputes this. Restricting world-states to the metaphysically possible, and identifying propositions with sets of such states, he recognizes only one necessary proposition, which everyone knows apriori, and one impossible proposition, which everyone knows to be false. Although this is independently problematic, Kripke's nonconceptual, metaphysically-based, account of modality adds a further challenge. When necessity and impossibility arise from the hidden nature of an object o, no

conceptualist guarantee of our ability to recognize the modal profiles of propositions about o seems possible. This is a problem for Bob, since his analysis predicts that when E is an essential property, the proposition that o has E is *already* known apriori, and no world-state in which o lacks E can coherently be conceived. How can this be?

The temptation is to answer this question by retreating to a private, epistemic world of strict Russellian acquaintance -- in which all knowledge about things the essential properties of which we may be ignorant of is "knowledge by description." There is, I think, more than a whiff of this retreat in some Lewisian, Jacksonian, and even Chalmerian, versions of two-dimensionalism -- but not in Bob's approach. How, then, does he meet the challenge of the necessary aposteriori? *Not* by adopting a thorough-going 2D *semantic* descriptivism -- which would factor each necessary aposteriori sentence S into a pair of semantically expressed propositions, one necessary, and the other aposteriori. Instead, Bob tries to extract a similar result from *a 2D-model of discourse* that treats S as semantically necessary, due to the essential properties of its Millian subject matter, while taking *what S is used to assert and convey* to be descriptive, empirical, and contingent. To test this strategy, one must look at what it says about such discourses.

My argument, illustrated by the example about my son, is that the strategy is unsuccessful. The same restrictions on propositions and possibility that make the necessary aposteriori a problem for Bob in the first place generate unacceptable results for his 2D model. It is no reply to note that these results will not be *deemed* unacceptable by one who antecedently accepts the restrictions. My claim is not to have *refuted* Bob by an argument even he must accept, but to have shown that his so-called *modest* 2D model depends on his *immodest* doctrines about propositions and possibilities. Because of this, the model can't perform the dialectical task for which it is needed. It can't explain away the counterintuitive consequences of his immodest doctrines, because it suffers those consequences itself.

Not a refutation, perhaps, but the stripping away of a defense of a theory that badly needs one – which is about as close to refutation as we typically get in philosophy.

I will illustrate this by walking through the example in which Dave and I are talking in my office. He notices a paperweight on my desk, and asks *"What is that?"* Picking up the paperweight, I answer, *"Are you talking about this?" "Yes*," he replies. *"Oh, this is a paperweight I got at Stanford*," I say, handing it to him. *"Its pretty heavy,"* he says, *"Is it metal?" "No,"* I answer, *"Its made of wood."* In the book, I argue that Bob's discourse model can't handle this case. In the model, an utterance of S is evaluated relative to a *context set* of world-states compatible with everything assumed or established up to that point in the conversation. Standardly, when agents understand S, the utterance will count as an assertion of the proposition p that S semantically expresses, provided that uncertainty about which world-state obtains doesn't prevent them from uniquely identifying p, and also that an assertion of p would satisfy other, independently motivated, conversational rules. These rules *are* satisfied prior to my remark about the paperweight's material composition. As a result, informative, contingent, singular propositions are established identifying *this object* as the paperweight Dave and I are talking about. This, in turn, ensures that every world-state in the context set is one in which Dave and I (rather than duplicates satisfying our descriptions) are discussing this very paperweight (instead of a qualitatively identical one). Thus, when I say, demonstrating the paperweight, *"It's made of wood,"* I assert a necessary truth the informativeness of which the model can't explain. What Bob *wants* to say is the model forces a diagonalized reinterpretation of my utterance, which renders it informative by virtue of eliminating world-states from the context set in which we are talking about *some other paperweight*. However, there are no such states to eliminate. Hence, the model can't handle the case.

Bob responds that such world-states *must* be present, without explaining how they can be. There are two options. According to one, genuine singular propositions about my paperweight are *not*

counted as assumed or established in the conversation prior to my remark about material composition, despite being semantically expressed by the sentences uttered. As a result, world-states in which other paperweights are under discussion are there to be exploited when I do make the remark. However, this is implausible. For one thing, none of the model's discourse rules explain why it should be so. For another, any reason for denying these singular propositions to be here asserted, assumed or established should apply equally to all discourses. But the claim that one *never* succeeds in asserting or believing singular propositions would undercut Bob's view that these propositions are the semantic contents of many sentences. Worse, it would force him into the radical Russellian retreat of denying direct, nondescriptive knowledge of, and discourse about, everything the essential properties of which we are ignorant. Finally, this option is inconsistent with Bob's recognition of our Kripkean ability to specify world-states directly, in terms of ordinary objects. Hence, the first option must be rejected.

The other option is no better—namely, to claim that, *prior* to my remark about material composition, world-states in which other paperweights are under discussion *are* eliminated from the context set, only to be *added back in* when I make my remark, so they can immediately be eliminated again by diagonalization. To even state this option is, I think, to show how implausible and unmotivated it is. It is implausible because, if it were correct, then when Dave asks, *"Is it made of metal?,"* it should be appropriate for me to respond, *"Oh, I see you are confused about which paperweight we are talking about. This paperweight is made of wood. Understand? This is the paperweight we have been talking about."* But this is not appropriate; it is bizarre. The option is unmotivated because, unlike other conversational rules, the *only* reason for adopting it is to retain Bob's immodest identification of propositions with sets of possible world-states, and epistemic possibility with metaphysical possibility. But, to rely on the problematic *immodest* theory to save the supposedly *modest* 2D model from refutation is to prevent the model from doing its dialectical job.

The Hesperus/Phosphorus example is similar, provided that, before the identifying utterance, agents have established singular propositions specifying the referent of each term – e.g. by having said in the morning, *"'Phosphorus' refers to that,"* demonstrating Venus, and having done the same for 'Hesperus' in the evening. Bob's 2D model will then face the same unpalatable options as before. The only difference is that in this case the problem *isn't* solved *simply* by recognizing epistemically possible world-states that are metaphysically impossible. Since the sentence 'Hesperus is Phosphorus' semantically expresses a singular proposition that *is* knowable apriori, there are no epistemically possible world-states in which it is false. Hence, although we do need to add descriptive information to the semantic content of the sentence to get what is asserted, 2D-diagonalization won't do the job. Since I have elsewhere given my own account of how the job is done, I won't repeat it here.[1] Instead, I conclude my reply to Bob by saying that although I disagree with him about the scope of epistemic possibility, the analysis of propositions, and the utility of the 2D model, I agree with his deeper insight that the key to understanding a number of important examples lies in a more sophisticated appreciation of the complex and nuanced connection between semantic content and assertion.

Reply to Chalmers

Dave thinks I misinterpreted some of his views, ignored changes in others, and adopted a system of my own that can be accommodated in the pluralist wing of his expanded 2D-mansion. Though I dispute some of the criticism, I too find potential for some agreement. I welcome his recognition (i) that there is a place for metaphysically impossible, but epistemically possible world-states, (ii) that apriority is *not* a matter of the *meaning* of a sentence guaranteeing its truth in all contexts, (iii) that names and natural kind terms have *constant* characters and unchanging *semantic* reference, despite having what he sees as different *epistemic* referents in different *scenarios*, and (iv)

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[1] *Beyond Rigidity*, (New York: Oxford), 2002; "Naming and Asserting," in Szabo, ed., *Semantics vs. Pragmatics*, (Oxford), 2005; "Why Incomplete Descriptions do not Defeat Russell's Theory of Descriptions," *Teorema*, XXIV/3,

that, as a result, primary intension is no longer taken to be a type of meaning akin to character. This movement away from earlier 2D theses does, I think, make room for some convergence in our views. I will show this by summarizing the 2D system of *The Conscious Mind*, highlighting later changes, and explaining why, despite certain commonalities, the attempt to make me a two-dimensionalist fails.

The Original System

In *The Conscious Mind*, two-dimensionalism is presented as a semantic system that splits Fregean sense into two types of meaning – primary intension, which is a function from worlds "taken as actual" to extensions, and secondary intension, which is a function from worlds "taken as counterfactual" to extensions. Dave says that the distinction between these two ways of taking worlds

> corresponds closely to Kaplan's (1989) distinction between the *context of utterance* of the expression and the *circumstance of evaluation*. When we consider a world w as counterfactual we keep the actual world as the context of utterance, but use w as the circumstance of evaluation. … But when we consider w as actual, we think of it as a potential context of utterance, and we wonder how things would be if the context of the expression turned out to be w. … The primary intension is therefore closely related to what Kaplan calls the *character* of the term, although there are a few differences, and the secondary intension corresponds to what he calls a term's *content*. (*CM* 60)

Only two differences between primary intensions and characters are noted. First, primary intensions are functions from contexts to extensions, while characters are functions from contexts to contents. But, since primary intensions are *derivable* from characters, this difference is inessential, the former being used, Dave says, only for symmetry. Second, for Dave, the characters from which the primary intensions of names and natural kind terms are derived are, like those of ordinary indexicals, *nonconstant* functions, while for Kaplan they are constant. Kaplan's reason for distinguishing names from indexicals is that he views their reference-fixing conditions as *presemantic* factors that determine what meanings they have– so that change in reference is change in meaning -- whereas the reference-determining conditions for indexicals are *semantic* – so that change in reference from context to context

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2005, 7-30; and "The Gap Between Meaning and Assertion," (2005) rcf.usc.edu/~soames.

is part of meaning. Dave takes no stand on this distinction, ignoring it as irrelevant to his purposes. In *The Conscious Mind*, primary intension is presented as a type of meaning, on a par with character.

Names and natural kind terms are seen as indexical, rigidified descriptions. Dave says,

> "water" is conceptually equivalent to "*dthat* (watery stuff)" where *dthat* is a version of Kaplan's rigidifying operator, converting an intension into a rigid designator by evaluation at the actual world. (59)

He adds: "'water,' … can be roughly analyzed as *dthat* (the dominant clear, drinkable liquid *in our environment*)." (61) Dave did *not* hold, nor did I take him to hold, that names and natural kind terms are always rigidifications of nonindexical descriptions *expressible in the speaker's language*. His claim was that there are descriptive, nonrigid, reference-fixing *intensions* that generate instances of the contingent apriori like 'Water is the dominant clear, drinkable liquid in our environment." But just as there is *no requirement* that these reference-fixing intensions be expressible in the speaker's language, so there is *no obstacle* to expressing them using *new* descriptive words, or *demonstratives* specifying perceptually or cognitively apprehended properties. With these resources, *The Conscious Mind* does take names and natural kind terms to be rigidified descriptions – where the descriptions themselves are purely qualitative, in the sense of being free of any further names or natural kind terms.

This analysis is central to the account of apriority and necessity, which, the book insists, are two types of "truth in virtue of meaning" -- the former, truth in virtue of primary intension, the latter truth in virtue of secondary intension. All differences between epistemic and metaphysical possibility are attributed to different evaluations of these intensions over the same class of worlds. The crucial point -- for Chalmers, Jackson, Lewis and other 2D theorists – was that every apriori conceivable world is metaphysically possible. The converse claim – that metaphysically possible worlds are epistemically possible – was gotten by abstracting away from our cognitive limitations. This identification of metaphysically and epistemically possible worlds, plus the resulting treatment of the necessary

aposteriori and the contingent apriori, and the account of names and natural kind terms as rigidified descriptions, were my main targets. All have now been modified, though not, I think, enough.

Subsequent Changes

In his (2002) paper, "On Sense and Intension," Dave speaks of epistemically possible *scenarios*, on which primary intensions are defined, and metaphysically possible *worlds*, on which secondary intensions are. The new terminology -- *scenarios* and *worlds* – signaled a reconsideration of a question to which a negative answer had been given by the unsound argument against strong necessity in *The Conscious Mind* (136-8). *Are there worlds which, for all we know apriori, might obtain, even though they are not metaphysically possible?* Dave's reconsideration of this question was prompted, not by second thoughts about Kripkean instances of the necessary aposteriori, but by the worry that the Continuum Hypothesis, and God's existence, might be necessary but not apriori. Though he ultimately disposed of this worry, and defended his old identification of epistemically possible scenarios with metaphysically possible worlds, he indicated that he no longer *ruled out* the possibility of developing a view in which that identification was given up. This was the state of play when my book went to the press. Although modifying the old view on conceivability and possibility had been considered, the official position remained intact, and the alternative was underspecified. [2]

A more pronounced change was a new and increasingly explicit epistemic, *as opposed to*, semantic treatment of primary intensions. The move was from public meaning to private thought. The idea, I take it, is that although we speak a common language L, we each have our own intentions governing our use of L in thought and conversation. Relative to these, sentences express thoughts which may, but need not, be the same as those they semantically express in L. This thought-generating system may be treated as a kind of private language-of-the-moment, with its own characters

and contents. Primary intensions, in the new epistemic sense, are derived by applying these characters to scenarios representing epistemic possibilities. Thus, when I give different answers, for different scenarios S, to the question, *"Supposing that S were actual, what would water, or Hesperus, be?,"* I do *not* give information about the characters of 'water' or 'Hesperus' *in L* – which, Dave suggests, are *constant* functions determining contextually unchanging referents. Rather, I give information about the *nonconstant* functions that are their characters and primary intensions in my private *thought-generating-system*. Apriority is guaranteed truth of primary intension in the private system.

Two aspects of this picture seem promising. First, it allows names and natural kind terms to be nondescriptive, nonindexical, and even Millian in L, even though we often use them to express richer thoughts. Second, questions of cognitive significance, including those involving apriority and aposteriority, can now be posed both for sentences, taken as bearers of semantic properties of L, and for uses of sentences in our private thought-generating systems. For example, in L 'Hesperus is Phosphorus' may semantically express a proposition that is knowable apriori -- even though it is not apriori in my private thought-generating system, since the thoughts I standardly use it to express require empirical justification. That sounds like progress.

Why I am not a two-dimensionalist

Nevertheless, I am not a two-dimensionalist. Take apriority. Its bearers are things that can be known and believed, that can be true or false, either necessarily or contingently, that can be expressed by sentences, and that are designated by clauses like *that S.* Call these things "propositions." For me, a semantic theory assigns propositions to sentences relative to contexts, thought of as Kaplanian perspectives. Details aside, any metaphysically possible world-state may be the world-state of a context. How about world-states that are only epistemically possible? Since we want to know what

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[2] This position is taken in "Does Conceivability Entail Possibility" (2002), "On Sense and Intension" (2002), and in Dave's 10/03 address, "The Nature of Epistemic Space," to the Northwest Philosophy Conference -- where I argued that some

propositions are semantically expressed in different genuinely possible situations -- rather than what propositions might mistakenly be taken to be expressed -- I don't see a need for metaphysically impossible contexts. Such world-states are, however, legitimate circumstances of evaluation. Propositions are evaluated with respect to *all* epistemically possible world-states. Propositions that are necessary, but not knowable apriori, are true at all metaphysically possible states, but false at some epistemically possible states. Those that are contingent, but knowable apriori, are knowable without evidence at the actual world-state, even though they are false at some metaphysically possible states.

That's my picture. By contrast, in the 2D system Dave attributes to me, primary intensions are defined over *epistemically* possible states, while secondary intensions are limited to the *metaphysically* possible. This is backwards, since for me contexts (which are relevant for primary intensions) are *metaphysically* possible, while circumstances (relevant for secondary intensions) are *epistemically* possible. It is only because of this departure from my views that Dave is able to claim that his *faux Soamesian system* is one in which S is necessary aposteriori iff its secondary intension always returns truth but, its primary intension doesn't. Using my real views, the result won't stand.

Consider my briefcase, "Briefy." One of its essential properties is that it was made from cow leather. Thus, the necessary proposition p expressed by sentence S1

S1. Briefy, if it exists, was made from cow leather

is true in all metaphysically possible states. However p is not knowable apriori, since there are other states, that we can't rule out apriori, in which Briefy was made from something else. How is this treated in the *faux Soamesian system*? Not as I would – by assigning S1 a proposition that is true in all metaphysically possible states, but false in some that are epistemically possible. Instead the primary and secondary intensions of S1 are gerrymandered to produce the desired 2D result. Since, in the (public) language I speak, 'Briefy' refers to the same thing at all possible world-states, including the

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epistemologically states are metaphysically impossible, and he argued the opposite. My book went to the press that month.

epistemic, the character of S1 should be a constant function. Thus, both the primary and secondary intensions of S1 return truth for every metaphysically possible state. The only difference between them is that, *contrary to my understanding*, Dave stipulates that secondary intensions aren't defined over metaphysically impossible states. When one eliminates this stipulation, the primary and secondary intensions collapse into one – and the 2D treatment of S1 evaporates.

The point can also be made indexically. My remark *"This briefcase (demonstrating Briefy) was made from cow leather, if it exists,"* is necessary aposteriori. Here, the different referents of the demonstrative in different contexts removes any danger of primary and secondary intension collapsing into one. But the aposteriority of my remark has nothing to do with that. It is aposteriori because empirical evidence is needed to rule out metaphysically impossible world-states in which Briefy is made from something else, -- *not* because evidence is needed to rule out contexts in which I demonstrate something else. The same is true of my remark *"If I exist, I was born with a body made of molecules."* What makes this necessary is one of my essential properties. What makes it aposteriori is that I need empirical evidence -- *not* to rule out contexts in which the pronoun "I" refers to someone else – but to rule out epistemically possible circumstances in which I lack the essential property.

The philosophical lesson here is that Kripkean examples of necessary aposteriority show there to be a type of necessity, distinct from analyticity, the source of which lies, not in linguistic or cognitive convention, but in essential properties that objects are known to possess only empirically. This is precisely what Chalmers, Jackson, and others have, in the past, used 2D-systems to deny. Their stated goal was to give a purely linguistic, nonmetaphysical explanation according to which necessity and apriority are two kinds of "truth in virtue of meaning." In allowing essentialist-generated necessity, plus epistemically possible world-states in which objects lack essential properties, the *faux 2D system* that David attributes to me implicitly repudiates this goal -- which is good. But then, there is no need to distort my views by trying to force them into a superficially 2D form.

Dave's *faux Soamesian system* runs into further problems with the sentence

S2. P iff actually P,

taken as expressing the proposition that P_S iff it is true at @ that P_S, where @ is the actual world-state. Since this proposition is contingent when "P" is, the secondary intension of S2 is false at some metaphysically possible world-state w. Because w is *also* epistemically possible, the primary intension of S2 is false at w, as well – thereby refuting the 2D thesis that apriority requires primary intension to always be true. So much the worse, I say, for taking me to be a two-dimensionalist.

Dave disagrees because he takes me to be committed to claims 1 and 2.

C1. A *proposition* is apriori iff it is true at all epistemically possible world-states.

C2. If, at @, S expresses a true, contingent, aposteriori proposition that P_S, then the necessary proposition that it is true at @ that P_S (expressed by ***Actually S)*** is knowable only aposteriori.

Given C1, plus the *contingent apriority* of the proposition that P_S iff it is true at @ that P_S, Dave thinks that I should deny that metaphysically possible world-states are epistemically possible. Given C2, he thinks I should admit that the *aposteriori* proposition that it is true at @ the P_S is false at some epistemically possible states – presumably those at which the proposition that P_S is also false. Once these moves are made, the primary intension of S2 will always be true, its secondary intension will sometimes be false, and the sentence will cease to be a counterexample to the 2D thesis about apriority. In sum, Dave argues, the best and most faithful interpretation of my remarks, correcting for obvious slips, makes me a two-dimensionalist who adheres to the standard theses, after all.

He is wrong. A metaphysically possible world-state is a properly maximal (categorical) world-describing property the universe could have had. An epistemically possible state is one we can't know apriori it doesn't have. Thus, to say that metaphysically possible world-states in which Dave is British are *not* epistemically possible is, in effect, to say that although the universe could have had the property of being one in which Dave is British, we can know *apriori* that it doesn't have this property,

and hence that Dave isn't British. That's absurd. We can't know apriori that Dave isn't British. Denying that metaphysically possible world-states are epistemically possible is not an option.

The reason Dave takes it to be is that he thinks it is suggested by my explanation of Kripkean examples of the necessary aposteriori. They are aposteriori because they are false in some epistemically possible states. To Dave, this suggests the truth of C1 . This is incorrect. Although C1 is *generally* true, its unrestricted version is *false*. The propositions for which it fails are contingent truths -- like the proposition that P iff it is true in @ that P -- which have the peculiarity of being inferable in @ from *apriori* propositions – like the proposition that P iff P. The reason they are inferable is, roughly, that agents in @, but not those in other world-states, can move apriori from any truth p in @ to the proposition that p is true in @, and vice versa, simply by identifying @ demonstratively, as "this very state that actually obtains." Because of this, the falsity, in *nonactual world-states*, of the proposition that P iff it is true in @ that P is irrelevant to its apriori knowability in @. Hence my rejection of the unrestricted version of C1 is compatible with my explanation of Kripkean instances of the necessary aposteriori. (*Reference and Description,* 120-22)

Does this create problems for other cases of the necessary aposteriori, involving the actuality operator? No, because there are no such cases. In short, I reject C2. When p is a contingent truth, the necessary truth that p is true at @ turns out to be *knowable apriori*. To see this, imagine a tiny universe consisting of two blocks side by side, with a third on top. The world-state, *Tiny*, imagined to be instantiated, is *the property of containing blocks 1 and 2 side by side, with block 3 on top*. Clearly, we can know, just by thinking about this property, that if it were instantiated, then block 3 would be sitting on blocks 1 and 2. So, when p is the proposition that block 3 is sitting on those blocks, we can know apriori that p is true at Tiny. The point generalizes to all world-states and propositions true at those states. Of course, the actual world-state is much more complex than Tiny. We can't grasp it in the discursive, nondemonstrative way we grasp Tiny. However, if, as is common, we abstract away

from such cognitive limitations, we must conclude that when p is any proposition true at @, the necessary proposition that p is true at @ can, *in principle*, be known apriori. Thus, the *necessary* truth that actually Dave is in Chicago *is knowable apriori* – even though our present knowledge of it is *aposteriori* – being derived from our knowledge of the aposteriori truth that he is in Chicago. In all standard cases like this, our knowledge that actually P is aposteriori, even though what we know can, in principle, also be known in another way.[3]

For these reasons, my views cannot be transposed into the key of 2D. Since I reject C1 and C2, and take metaphysically possible world-states to be epistemically possible, *the faux Soamesian system* that Dave attributes to me is untrue to my views, and any attempt to make it conform will falsify 2D theses about apriority. As for the necessary aposteriori, my metaphysical explanation -- in terms of essential properties of objects and epistemically possible world-states in which objects lack those properties -- contradicts the signature 2D vision, according to which no non-linguistic kinds or sources of modalities are needed. Even if that vision is given up, achieving mere technical compliance with 2D theses about the necessary aposteriori requires misconstruing my conception of contexts and circumstances of evaluation, and gerrymandering primary and secondary intensions in the process. In short, I am no two-dimensionalist. Trying to make me one is an exercise in futility.

Descriptions

I close with a word about descriptions. As I understand him, Dave is open to my view that simple proper names and natural kind terms are semantically nondescriptive, directly referential terms, with constant characters in our common language. For my part, I agree with him that when speakers use these terms in making assertions or expressing thoughts, these thoughts and assertions often include non-semantic, descriptive information. For me, the way to get these results is by pragmatic enrichment of the austere semantic contents of sentences in the common language. (See note 1) For

[3] *Reference and Description*, n16, 304-5; "Understanding Assertion," (2004), 14-16, rcf.usc.edu/~soames.

Dave, they are gotten by applying 2D concepts to private thought-generating-systems. We cannot settle here which theoretical perspective will be the most fruitful. However, I believe that Dave continues to place too much weight on descriptions. In my approach, the descriptive information added to the semantic content of a simple name or natural kind term need not uniquely determine the referent, nor even be accurate. For Dave, descriptive information in the term's primary intension in one's thought-generating system seems to be all one has. That, I think, is unrealistic.

This lack of realism is connected to his defense of Frank Jackson's argument that Kripkean thought experiments *support*, rather than disprove, descriptive reference-fixing -- because the ability to render verdicts in these experiments presupposes the use of criteria from which the needed descriptions could, in principle, be extracted. Because he accepts this argument, Dave is sanguine about the availability of descriptive primary intensions for names and natural kind terms. Since he no longer insists that these intensions reflect the *meanings* of terms, one of my previous criticisms is now moot. However, there is another worry. Kripkean thought experiments are *never* presented in Dave's canonical, neutral language. -- which is presumed to consist of purely phenomenal terms, plus foundational vocabulary of physical science, free of names, natural kind terms, and other "twin-earthable" expressions. For Dave, the role of this language is to express the scenarios on which primary intensions are defined. It is from this language that any reference-fixing descriptions must come.

Since two-dimensionalism requires *all* twin-earthable expressions to be assigned descriptive primary intensions, any such expression occurring in the reference-fixing description for another must be eliminable -- *so that no reference-fixing description contains any unanalyzed term*. The burden of Jackson's argument is to show that, contrary to Kripke's intent, his thought experiments, in fact, guarantee the existence of such purely qualitative, canonical descriptions. They don't. Since descriptions of Kripke's scenarios contain all sorts of names, natural kind terms, and related

expressions (sometimes including the very name being tested), nothing in the verdicts we reach *supports* Jackson's, or Dave's, ambitious thesis. I would like to say more about the *falsity* of the thesis, but the issue is complicated by its place in Dave's internalist, individualistic, and conceptualist philosophical vision – and there is no time for that.