Saving substitutivity in simple sentences

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1. In 'Substitution and Simple Sentences' (1997), Jennifer Saul presents some cases of apparent substitutivity failure in 'simple sentences' – cases, that is, in which different sentences, involving no quotational, psychological, or modal notions, seem to have different truth-values even though they differ only in containing distinct, but co-referring names. Among Saul's most interesting examples are the following:

  (1)   Clark Kent went into the phone booth, and Superman came out.
  (1*) Clark Kent went into the phone booth, and Clark Kent came out.

   P(2) Superman is more successful with women than Clark Kent.
   (2*) Superman is more successful with women than Superman.[1]

When we pretend, along with the cartoon, that 'Clark Kent' and 'Super-man' refer to the same individual, (1) and (2) might seem true, while (1*) and (2*) seem false. And if substitutivity really does fail in these simple sentences then we have not only an interesting new phenomenon for semantic analysis, but an important counter-example to what many regard (along with difficulties quantifying-in) as a linguistic mark of the mental: it is only in ascribing psychological attitudes (beliefs, desires, and so on) that we encounter substitutivity failures of this type.[2] If the examples succeed, then there would be one less uniquely puzzling aspect of the mind (and our talk about it) to be explained, since substitutivity would be seen to fail even when we talk directly about non-mental portions of reality.

   In the end, Saul suggests that the substitutivity failure here is merely apparent, and that our anti-substitution intuitions – our intuitions that the paired sentences convey different bits of information – are best explained as arising from differences in pragmatic implicature.[3] So, on her suggested account, (1*) is strictly speaking true, although it pragmatically implies something false, while (2) is false, but carries with it a true and significant implicature. And Saul goes onto note that this might generate an intriguing dialectical turnabout in favour of the Soames/Salmon style account of atti-

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[1] I stick with this example because it is Saul's original, but success with women surely involves psychological attitudes. This is just a distracting feature of the particular example, however. We would get examples with just the same effect (and analysis) if we replaced 'is more successful with women' with 'leaps tall buildings more frequently', 'fights more villains', 'runs faster', or 'is stronger'.

[2] In order to extend the claim to non-rigid designating expressions substitutivity needs to be weakened so that it does not also fail in modal contexts. (Since quoting an expression plausibly creates a name of it, quotational contexts render otherwise co-referential and substitutable expressions non-co-referential.) The condition that is thought to fail only in psychological contexts would then be the following: necessarily co-designating expressions can be substituted salva veritate. (Expressions are necessarily co-designating in a context and at a world iff for any possible world that they can describe they designate the same entity (if any). I take the world at which the expressions are uttered to be fixed by conversational context.) This weaker condition is not falsified, for example, by substituting 'nine' for 'the number of planets' in 'It is not necessary that the number of planets is nine'.

   Saul is concerned with the even stronger claim that (necessarily) co-referential names can be substituted while maintaining truth-conditions (i.e., salva significatione). I concern myself here with defending the weaker claim, in part because the notion of 'truth-conditions' is theory-laden. But in any case, what I say about the weaker claim can be used in defence of the stronger claim.

[3] Saul does not take herself to be defending this view, merely suggesting it. See her 1997b: 114.

tude reports.[4] According to this account, substitutivity holds even in attitude reports, and our strong anti-substitution intuitions about them can be explained pragmatically. This account is thought to stumble in not fully appeasing the anti-substitution intuitions. But if we can pragmatically accommodate similar intuitions regarding simple sentences, then the Soames/Salmon line is buoyed by its new-found purview.

In two replies, (1997) and (1999), Forbes attempts to block this turnabout by extending his neo-Fregean account of attitude reports to Saul's simple sentences. For Forbes, (1) and (1*) are to be construed respectively (and roughly) as:

(1F)   Clark Kent, so-attired, went into the phone booth, and Superman, so-attired, came out.

(1*F)   Clark Kent, so-attired, went into the phone booth, and Clark Kent, so-attired came out.

In her response (1997b) to Forbes, Saul emphasizes the difficulties Forbes will have refining his preliminary appeal to 'attires' so as to handle the full range of cases that she has isolated. This worry can be met in ways I will sketch at the end. However, Forbes concedes that genuine substitutivity failure occurs in the simple sentences. And this I find implausible.

Here I develop and defend a 'contextualist' and 'reference-shifting' account of Saul's sentences. This account agrees with Saul (against Forbes) that there is no genuine substitutivity failure, but it maintains (against Saul's suggestion) that our anti-substitution intuitions are not best explained pragmatically. They should rather be explained by the fact that names that are, in many conversational contexts, co-referring and substitutable salva veritate in simple sentences can fail to co-refer in certain other contexts, and thus fail to be so-substitutable. In the case at hand, the names 'Superman' and 'Clark Kent' are used, in certain conversational contexts (and because of certain conversational goals and practices), to pick out not the individual Clark/Superman, but rather distinct 'aspects' of this individual. After fleshing out this contextualist response (§§2, 3), I compare it favourably to the solutions of Saul and Forbes (§4). In the final section (§5), I say more about the nature of aspects.

2. Saul's sentences are not so simple. Many of the examples in her original paper implicitly involve psychological relations which, as Forbes plausibly argues, would be made explicit in logical form. And what we say about those examples that seem purely non-psychological depends crucially upon the conversational contexts in which they are uttered and evaluated.

Consider a simple, 'unenlightened' conversational context in which Lois

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[4] See, for example, Salmon 1986.

utters sentences (1) and (2) to listeners who, like Lois, falsely believe that Clark Kent and Superman are distinct individuals. What should we who know the identity say about the truth-value of Lois's utterances? My strong intuition is that (1) is true, and (2), so-uttered, is false. Lois believes that sentence (2) is true, of course, but that's because she falsely believes that 'Superman' and 'Clark Kent' pick out distinct individuals (the former more successful with women than the latter).[5] Upon learning the identity, however, Lois would (or should) herself assent to the falsehood of her previous utterance. Unlike the enlightened speakers I discuss below, Lois uses (and intends to use) these names to talk about what she falsely takes to be distinct individuals, and not their aspects. I take these facts about the semantic intentions of the speaker partially to support my intuition. And if we honour this intuition, then we should hold that Lois's possible utterance of (1*) would be true, while her utterance of (2*) would be false.[6] In this context, 'Superman' and 'Clark Kent' genuinely co-refer, but there is no failure of substitutivity.

Consider now a conversation whose participants all know that Clark Kent is identical to Superman. In this 'enlightened' context, the starred and unstarred sentences might have different truth-values. But this, I maintain, can only be because 'Clark Kent' and 'Superman' are here used to refer to distinct 'aspects' of the individual Clark/Superman. For the moment we might think of these aspects as certain collections of Clark/Superman's properties – (often temporary) features of his physical appearance, character, reputation, and so on. The pointed use of distinct names that are presupposed to be co-referential will often lead participants in a conversation to interpret the speaker's utterances so that they satisfy conversational maxims of efficiency and relevance. In this case, participants will plausibly conclude that the speaker risks causing confusion only because she wishes to say something directly about different aspects of the conventional referent – aspects which are differently associated with the names. When used in this way, (1) should be interpreted as:

(1M) Clark/Superman's Clark-aspect walked into the phone booth and his Superman-aspect walked out.

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[5] We can allow that Lois has the metalinguistic belief that sentence (2) says something true without allowing that she believes its assertive content, if we allow that, in cases of false semantic presupposition, a sincere speaker might not believe what she says.

[6] These possible utterances are difficult to assess, since (1*) and (2*) are odd sentences to utter in any context. Their utterance, particularly after utterances of (1) and (2), might well change the semantic presuppositions of the context, or (depending upon how we individuate contexts) bring about a new context, as participants work to give the utterances an informative interpretation.

I'll say more about aspects later on. For now, though, I rely upon their ability to walk and to be successful with women. This is more innocent than it sounds: the properties of aspects are simply extensions of (or other-wise related to) the properties of individuals that have those aspects. If it is metaphysically or analytically true that an aspect walks only if its continuing individual does then (1M) analytically entails:

(3)　The individual Clark/Superman walked into the phone booth and the individual Clark/Superman walked out.

But (3) would be an entailment of (1M), not part of its assertive content. And this entailment would arise specifically from the nature of walking and our concept of walking.

By way of contrast, consider my gloss of (2), as uttered in this enlightened context:

(2M)　Clark/Superman's Superman-aspect is more successful with women than Clark/Superman's Clark-aspect.

If (2M), and hence (2), is to be true in this context then it cannot assert or entail the (necessarily) false:

(4)　The individual Clark/Superman is more successful with women than the individual Clark/Superman.

But (2M) needn't entail (4) if we allow that the relative romantic success of an individual's aspects can be independent of the success of the individual himself. And this seems plausible to me. It is certainly no more mysterious than allowing that Lois's left leg is longer than her left arm, although Lois is not, of course, longer than herself.

On my view, then, substitutivity does not fail in this enlightened context because the names, which usually refer to the same individual, do not, in this context, co-refer. But when we synecdochically use the conventional name of an individual to refer to an aspect of that individual, that individual is still involved semantically through a sort of embedded or secondary reference. The individual is employed in partially singling out the aspect referred to, in much the same way that Lois is involved in securing an arm as the referent of 'Lois's left arm', or in much the same way that, on Fregean theories, an object might help identify a 'de re sense' of it. Second-ary reference to an individual distinguishes the aspect that a speaker has in mind from the aspects of other individuals, but, of course, it does not always fully secure the primary referent. To do this we employ other means, just as we introduce the adjective 'left' to distinguish Lois's left arm from her right. While secondary reference to Clark/Superman can distin-guish his Clark-aspect from any aspect of Bruce Wayne/Batman, we rely upon the context-dependent connotations of the name 'Clark Kent' to

secure primary reference to Clark/Superman's Clark-aspect instead of his Superman-aspect.[7]

On my account, substitutivity holds in both the enlightened and the unenlightened contexts. And if these contexts are exhaustively representative, then we needn't concede that substitutivity can fail in simple sentences. But how are our anti-substitution intuitions to be explained? Here's one possibility. When Saul's sentences are presented to us we try to interpret them by finding or imagining, tacitly and very schematically, a conversational context in which they might be used. And we might naturally slough between the types of context I have discussed – the paired sentences differ in truth-value in the enlightened context, but the names are co-referential in the unenlightened. More likely, though, we imagine a sort of mixed context in which (while continuing to conceal the identity) the enlightened speak with the unenlightened. A sentence uttered in this mixed context might assert two different propositions, for the context is really, as it were, a combination of two. And so (1) can be used to make a claim about Clark/Superman to the unenlightened, and a claim about his aspects to the enlightened. This might explain why, upon encountering the naked sentences, we simultaneously experience a mix of intuitions.[8]

Notice that although (1) and (1*) are both true (and make the same claim) for the unenlightened, uttering these sentences would bring about distinct beliefs – beliefs which the unenlightened falsely take to be about different individuals. In fact, the unenlightened speaker succeeds in getting

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[7] How is it that the expressions 'Clark-aspect' and 'Superman-aspect' pick out distinct aspects, since 'Clark' and 'Superman' are in many contexts co-referential? I don't here carry out the difficult task of elucidating the complex, context-dependent links between names, connotations and aspects. Forbes points out this lacuna in 1998, but he also offers me a possible solution. I can gloss (1M) as:

(1M)   Clark/Superman's 'Clark'-labelled aspect walked into the phone booth, and Clark/Superman's 'Superman'-labelled aspect walked out.

Indeed, we can nicely restate this proposal using a Forbesian 'logophor':

(1M)   Clark's so-labelled aspect walked into the phone-booth and Superman's so-labelled aspect walked out.

I provisionally adopt Forbes's quotational suggestion here, though I worry that it might, in the end, be open to counter-example.

[8] There are other possibilities here. We might imagine an enlightened context and not realize that there is this subtle failure of co-reference. Or we might fail to apply conversational maxims and thereby construe the unstarred sentences as infelicitous equivalents to the starred ones. (Although, as I noted above, (2*) would be an odd sentence to utter.) Alternatively, we might imagine only the first type of context, and experience no anti-substitution intuitions – as initially happened to me.

There are other possible contexts that might further muddy our intuitions. Most notably we might imagine using these sentences as part of an extended belief report, as in:

her listeners to believe what she believes and means to convey, although this is not the claim her utterance makes about the actual world. And the sentences also bring about distinct beliefs in the enlightened listener – although, here, the beliefs concern aspects. This suggests a further explanation for our anti-substitution intuitions: uttering the starred and unstarred sentences will, in most contexts, bring about distinct beliefs in the conversation's participants. Or to put the point differently: the sentences are, in most contexts, attached to distinct propositions in the minds of the conversation's participants.

3.   My account involves two important but controversial claims. First, I claim that aspects are metaphysically acceptable entities, and well-behaved enough to figure occasionally in our talk of the world. I say more about this metaphysical claim in the last section. Second, I make the semantic claim that we sometimes 'reference-shift' in our use of names in simple sentences – that is, one and the same name (as it features in one and the same simple sentence) can refer to one type of entity (e.g., an individual) in one conversational context, and another type of entity (e.g., an aspect of the individual) in a different context.[9] One objection to this claim is that, even when used in the enlightened context, names 'semantically feel' as if they refer to individuals. And so, in its reference-shiftiness, my account violates a condition of semantic innocence similar to the constraint that Davidson urges for theories of attitude reports: it should 'seem to us incredible that words [in attitude reports] mean anything different, or refer to anything else, than is their wont when they come in other environments.'[10]

Both Forbes and Saul honour semantic innocence, at least for the cases at hand. (I argue in the next section, however, that doing so leads them to implausible results.) I can partially honour the semantic intuition by allowing that individuals continue to serve as secondary referents. But beyond that I'm inclined simply to deny the intuition – the truly enlightened would acknowledge, upon reflection, that they sometimes use the names to pick out not individuals but aspects.[11]

Lois believes that Superman and Clark are distinct individuals. As Lois sees things, Superman is strong, and Clark is weak. Superman is more successful with women than Clark.

But in such a context the sentences are not, of course, 'simple' in the relevant sense. They occur in an implicitly extended content-clause.

[9] My view is 'reference-shifting' in much the same way as Frege's view of names in propositional attitude contexts, although my view does not, of course, stand or fall with Frege's.

[10] Davidson (1969), p. 172.

Things are not this easy, however, since, as Forbes argues against me (in 1998), semantic innocence seems supported by cases of anaphoric reference. On my analysis, the primary referent of 'Superman' as it occurs in (1) (in an enlightened context) is not Superman, but his Superman-aspect in the sense that the aspect is the entity to which the predicate 'walked out of the phone booth' is being said to apply. Forbes worries that because of this my account will have a hard time making sense of the anaphor in the following extension of (1):

(5) Clark walked into the phone booth and Superman came out, but he didn't look happy.

On my account, the individual Clark/Superman is here merely the secondary referent of 'Superman' in the sense that the individual is picked out in the process of securing an aspect to serve as primary referent. But I claim that the anaphoric 'he' nevertheless picks up on this secondary reference to the individual. This response might seem ad hoc, but it isn't, since anaphora generally displays this type of flexibility. On my analysis, (5) works like the following:

(6) Lois's left arm was weak. So she went to the doctor.

Here the choice of 'she' as opposed to 'it' forces the anaphoric link to the secondary referent of 'Lois's left arm'. But anaphoric links to secondary referents needn't be forced in this way. Consider:

(7) The engine's carburettor was missing, so it didn't run very well.

(8) The engine's carburettor was missing. It had been stolen.

Here conversational accommodation determines when 'it' links to the primary referent, and when to a secondary one.

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[11] Crimmins (1998) has recently suggested a way to bridge a similar gulf between the semantically innocent feel of belief reports – the way that words seem to play the same role within a content-clause as without – and the fact that in belief reports the words also serve (on accounts like those of Crimmins and Forbes) to help express information about notions or senses. On Crimmins's proposal, we temporarily presuppose (or 'make-believe') certain propositions, which we believe to be false, about the existence, identity and nature of various individuals; and then we genuinely assert semantically complicated propositions about a believer's state of mind by making semantically innocent assertions that are 'pretend-true' relative to those presuppositions. We might apply this apparatus here: we genuinely assert propositions about different aspects of the same individual by making claims that feel as if they are about different individuals; these latter claims are pretend-true relative to the false presupposition that there are two (or more) individuals.

This might help. But, as I say, I'm inclined to think that in enlightened contexts the names don't really 'feel' as if they refer to individuals, and so participants don't pretend that they do.

Not only is anaphora not a strike against my account, but I think the anaphoric evidence actually supports the account, for it seems that we sometimes anaphorically link to aspects. Consider a further continuation of (1):

(9) Clark went into the phone booth and Superman came out, but he didn't look happy, unlike Clark.

Or consider:

(10) While Clark is mild-mannered, Superman is obnoxious. He entirely lacks Clark's gentle, self-effacing demeanour.

And what about the following continuation of (2)?:

(11) Superman is more successful with women than Clark Kent. But they both strike out when it comes to men.

I'm inclined to say that the 'they' in (11) links back to the distinct aspects. But the full story behind (11) is surely complicated.[12] In any case, if anaphora provides the best practical support for semantic innocence, then I'm happy to be guilty as charged.

4. My account compares favourably to those of Saul and Forbes. Why not hold, as Saul suggests, that the difference between the starred and unstarred sentences is merely pragmatic? Like Forbes, I have the strong intuition that, in the enlightened context, information about the individual's aspects is explicitly asserted, not merely implied. If we were strictly speaking only about the individual Clark/Superman we would, strictly speaking, fail to be perspicuous in our confusing use of distinct names; and, in the case of (2), we would fail to say only things that we don't believe to be false (indeed, impossible). There are, of course, assertions (hyperbolic, sarcastic, metaphoric, and so on) that violate these conversational maxims for the sake of pragmatic conveyance. So perhaps the maxims properly apply to an assertion's explicatures and implicatures taken together. But when it comes to Saul's sentences I don't see why (other than to give new support to the Soames/Salmon account) we should hold an utterance's supposed implicatures apart from its assertive content.

One possible motivation is that the information about aspects is cancellable. The aspectual implications of (1*), for example, might be cancelled by:

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[12] The use of 'they' may be enabled by semantic pretense of the type mentioned in the last footnote: the enlightened knowingly adopt the false conversational presupposition that Clark Kent and Superman are distinct individuals, and this 'make-believe' presupposition allows them efficiently to make claims about Clark/Superman's distinct aspects.

(12) Clark Kent went into the phone booth and Clark Kent came out, but nobody recognized him since he had changed into his Superman-attire.

But we should be careful in drawing conclusions from cancellability. As both Saul and Forbes note, a 'but'-clause might lead us not to cancel an implicature, but rather to adopt a different interpretation of what was previously asserted. In the case of (12), the added clause plausibly brings the enlightened listeners to construe the speaker as now speaking (at least temporarily) directly about Clark/Superman, and not his aspects. But this is compatible with my claim that without the additional commentary Saul's sentences directly concern aspects (in the enlightened context).

What about Forbes's account? While his (1F) might well capture the evidence that moves Lois to assert (1), the truth-values of these sentences are independent in the unenlightened context. Lois would not be refuted (and, once enlightened, would not take herself to have been refuted) if it turned out that Clark/Superman walked out in his Clark-attire – that is, if Lois mistook the Clark-attire for the Superman-attire. Forbes can accommodate this intuition by giving (1) a transparent reading in the unenlightened context. But I don't see that he can accommodate the intuition that (2) is true in the enlightened context. According to Forbes, a name continues to have its standard primary referent (if there is one) even when the name is also playing a 'logophoric' role, as it can do in attitude reports or, it now turns out, in certain simple sentences. In its referential role, a name helps pick out an abstract situation that can partly comprise the content of an assertion, along with any logophoric deliverances. So for Forbes:

(13) Lois believes that Superman is more successful with women than Clark Kent.

is interpreted as asserting

(13F) The abstract situation of Superman's being more successful with women than Clark Kent is such that Lois believes her so-labelled (and appropriately indexed) ways of thinking of it.

It's perfectly fine that the abstract situation (the same one expressed by (4)) is impossible, because (13F) does not assert that this situation obtains, but rather a larger situation that also involves Lois, the believing relation, and various neo-Fregean embellishments. And neither is Lois implausibly charged with irrationality, since rationality is, presumably, a function of the embellishments. But (2) is problematic. If its names continue to refer to individuals, and if the same impossible situation is picked out (and claimed to obtain), then it would seem that (2) semantically entails (4) for Forbes. But (4) is false. How then can (2) be true?

Even if Forbes can get around this problem, why should we adopt

Forbes's account instead of mine? Forbes takes it to be an advantage of his account that it is semantically innocent, while mine is not. I've already said why I'm unmoved by semantic innocence as a general theoretical constraint. But in any case, it's unclear to me that Forbes satisfies semantic innocence in a way that is theoretically desirable. To see this, consider the following example. Friday night, after work, Clark/Superman, dressed in his mild-mannered coat and tie, goes down to the Good Luck Bar to find a date for the evening. While he talks to Lois on his cell-phone, he makes mild-mannered eyes at the tall, dark and handsome fellow across the bar. Lois is game, while Tall-Dark-&-Handsome leaves the bar for more promising hunting grounds. An enlightened speaker might truly say:

(14)   Superman was entirely successful, while Clark was entirely unsuccessful.

I would gloss this as:

(14M) Superman's so-labelled aspect was entirely successful, while Clark's so-labelled aspect was entirely unsuccessful.

Forbes would presumably gloss this as:

(14F)   Superman, so-personified, was entirely successful, while Clark, so-personified, was entirely unsuccessful.

But how are we to understand the working of Forbes's 'so-personified'?

For Forbes, 'Superman' in (14) primarily refers to Clark/Superman. But what property is being said by (14) to hold of this individual? Not the property plausibly picked out by the predicate 'was entirely successful', because this is not true of Clark/Superman – he was not entirely successful, since he struck out with Tall-Dark-&-Handsome. So, the 'so-personified' part of Forbes's analysis must somehow work itself into the property attribution.[13] Perhaps the property of being entirely successful is being said to hold of Clark/Superman 'supermanly' – that is, in a Superman-like manner. Or better, perhaps it is the property of being entirely successful with people who think of him as a superhero, etc. that is being attributed to Clark/Superman, along with the non-contradicting property of being entirely unsuccessful with people who think of him as a mild-mannered reporter, etc. This would preserve semantic innocence, but by means of guilty predication – at the cost of counter-intuitively complex predicates or properties. And this, to me, seems less plausible than holding, as I do, that, for the sake of conversational efficiency, the enlightened sometimes 'reference-shift' and refer directly to aspects.

[13] In his 1999, Forbes in fact proposes to handle my example with a many-sorted semantics of adverbial modification. Not only is the proposal worryingly complicated, but it embroils Forbes in a controversy about event individuation.

5. The position I've proposed here depends crucially upon the existence of 'aspects'. But what are these entities? They are not psychological or representational entities, such as concepts of an individual, or Fregean senses.[14] They are, rather, parts of the world that can have many of the same properties – walking, romantic success, and so on – as individuals. Aspects might have certain essential temporal properties, as in Saul's:

(15) I never made it to Leningrad, but I visited St. Petersburg last week.

But they cannot be identified with (collections of) an individual's temporal stages. For one thing,[15] we might distinguish aspects of the same temporal stage as in (14). Or for a variant – if Clark/Superman talks on the phone to Lois in his superhero manner, while sitting at his desk dressed as Clark, then we might naturally claim:

(16) While talking on the phone to Superman, Lois looked through the window at Clark Kent.

And as Saul effectively brings out, Forbes's appeal to modes of attire won't always do the trick. But what about Forbes's more general 'modes of self-presentation'? These won't do if a mode of self-presentation requires that its object have some internal mechanism of 'presentation,' or a self, or even a mental life, because a city (for example, Leningrad), or even a large rock (for example, Venus) can have aspects. Consider:[16]

(17) Yesterday, Phosphorus shone brightly, but clouds obscured Hesperus.

If we allow that entirely material objects can have modes of self-presentation then, up to the level of specification Forbes provides, his modes are so

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[14] Assuming, that is, that senses are thought of as inhabiting a semantical 'third realm' apart from the mental and the physical. But even if senses are construed as conditions or properties of individuals, and not representations of these, there are still differences between senses and aspects. An aspect of an individual might lack certain properties – like continually occupying space – that any sense of that individual will represent the individual as having. And the aspects associated with a name do not serve as referential routes to the individual, though they might play a role in such routes. However, if senses exist then aspects surely have an intimate connection with them: information contained in a sense is often (but not always) connected to information about an aspect.

[15] For another, we might ask, along with Saul, which type of temporal stage Clark/Superman is in when he's in the shower? (104) As Saul suggests, however, this vagueness can be accommodated (see my discussion of vague aspects below).

[16] This directly rules out the possibility that aspects are tendencies or dispositions to behave (assuming planets don't behave). (See Saul's discussion of this possibility, 1997b: 117.) Such tendencies might, nevertheless, be central or even essential features of certain aspects.

far indistinguishable from my aspects.

This point should be emphasized: the semantic accounts with which mine competes seem also to invoke aspects. The pragmatic treatment that Saul suggests will presumably have to include information about aspects among the pragmatic implicatures of simple sentences. And what are Forbes's 'modes of self-presentation' or 'personae' if not aspects of an individual? Indeed, Forbes now (1999) endorses my talk of aspects. So, worries about aspects don't, in the end, plague my position any more deeply than the competing positions. Still, we naturally want more details.

Aspects are, I think, primitive, irreducible, and, as I shall suggest shortly, somewhat indeterminate entities. Our pre-reflective conceptual scheme demands them, but the scheme alone doesn't decisively answer certain philosophical questions about them. Nevertheless, we can usefully model an aspect as a collection of properties of a certain type (or alternatively, as a complex property that conjoins these properties).[17] The aspect associated with a name in a context instantiates the properties associated with the name by the conversation's participants. So, in the enlightened context, Clark/Superman's Superman-aspect typically wears a cape and has the ability to fly, while his Clark-aspect typically wears a suit and is unable to fly. Aspects satisfy certain broad principles: an aspect mustn't instantiate contradictory properties, it should instantiate only properties appropriate to individuals of that type, and so on. But beyond this, we should expect aspects to vary greatly in a number of ways.

An aspect might centrally instantiate some temporal property, as in the Leningrad example. And it might centrally instantiate the property of featuring in a specific way in the psychological life of certain observers, as in some of the Clark/Superman examples. An aspect might constitute a nearly complete profile of an individual, but it might also be extremely thin. Indeed, the same name might pick out a thick aspect in one context and a thin one in another. For example, upon hearing (1) and (2), we would be able to invoke distinct aspects even if all we knew about Clark/Superman is that he is picked out by the two names, and that these names

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[17] Two important caveats: First, if aspects are individuatively robust enough to survive modal and temporal variation, then they can't be modelled once and for all as sets of properties. (I thank Forbes for pointing this out.) Functions from world-time pairs to sets of properties of an individual would work better. But second, even these 'modal-temporal-property-collections' can, at best, model, but not constitute aspects: in order for my theory to work, aspects need to be bits of the world with properties so they can walk, be successful with women, and so on. Since collections of properties, even 'modal-temporal' ones, can't be successful with women, aspects must be distinct from these. So, a collection that we might use to model an aspect contains the properties that the aspect instantiates. (Incidentally, I don't rule out the possibility of an aspect's itself having aspects.)

are standardly believed, falsely, to correspond to two distinct individuals. A speaker can even authoritatively create aspects more or less on the spot. If we've never heard of Clark/Superman, two of his aspects might be quickly introduced to us as follows:

> (18) That guy [pointing to Clark/Superman] is both an agile super-hero and an uncoordinated journalist. Superman [speaker's emphasis] leaps tall buildings in a single bound, while Clark Kent trips down stairs.

Aspects exist independently of our talk about them, but they earn their keep semantically: they are invoked in a conversation as pegs on which to hang bits of information. As such, they are subject to the underspecification, vagueness, falsehood, and disagreement that is possible in conversational presupposition. And so, although our talk of aspects usually picks out conditions that can be evaluated, certain utterances might lack a determinate truth-value. Suppose, for example, that Clark/Superman goes into a beach-side phone booth dressed as Clark and then emerges in purple swimming trunks. We might be inclined to assign no truth-value (or an indeterminate one) to an utterance of (1), if our presuppositions contain no information about which coloured trunks go with which aspects, or if it contains the information that the Clark-aspect wears bluish trunks, and the Superman-aspect wears reddish ones. Our utterance of (1) might also have no truth-value if the conversation's participants have a slight, but tolerable disagreement about which aspect wears purple.[18] And what if the enlightened turn out to be only half so: what if, unbeknownst to them, Clark/Superman is also Purpleman, a superhero who always wears purple? In the context in which it is uttered, (1) might correctly imply that a superhero aspect emerges – but not the right one. There is, then, a good deal of looseness in our talk of aspects, perhaps more than in our talk about individuals. But this, I think, is a fact to be honoured semantically, not a reason for rejecting aspects.[19]

One might still complain that I haven't gone far enough in satisfying the demand for details. While there surely is more to be said about the nature of aspects,[20] I end by making three points in response. First, as I've emphasized, aspects or similar entities will be required by any adequate and fleshed out account of Saul's simple sentences – any account, that is, that recognizes an assertive difference (genuinely semantic or otherwise) between the paired sentences. So the outstanding challenge to provide a

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[18] Too much disagreement will, or course, lead to 'mixed contexts', or conversational break-down. Note also that to make these examples work, we must assume that there are not other factors – Clark/Superman's subsequent behaviour, for example – that determine which aspect emerges from the phone booth. And we must not allow that the utterance of (1) makes it the case that wearing purple swim trunks becomes part of the Superman-aspect simply through speaker's authority.

detailed account doesn't favour Forbes's account or a pragmatic account over mine. Second, aspects may well be required to make sense of other parts of our language – for example, our direct talk of appearances, personae, guises, voices, moods, and so on.[21] Third, given the flexible and variable ways in which we talk about individuals and their aspects, I doubt that much more can be said in a general way about the nature of aspects – about how they are individuated, about how they are to be understood metaphysically, and about what general principles link them to our talk and thought. But this needn't challenge their existence.[22]

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[19] There's a theoretical choice here about how much of this looseness is reflected metaphysically. We might take aspects to embody the looseness. We might model them, for example, as collections that are possibly incomplete (i.e., containing no determinate property for certain determinables (e.g., swim-trunk colour)) or 'fuzzy' (i.e., containing different determinates to different degrees). Alternatively, we might situate the looseness entirely in our talk of aspects. We might do this, for example, by first postulating a realm of 'sharp-aspects' (modelled, perhaps, as maximally consistent collections of sharp properties (given some conception of what those are)), and then model our semantic indecision as matter of supervaluating over certain collections of these.

[20] Baxter (1997) develops and defends the existence of aspects in interesting ways. And I further develop my notion of an aspect in Ms.

[21] In my Ms., I also show how aspects can be usefully employed in the semantics of certain identity statements and psychological attitude reports.