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Defending Millian Theories

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In this article I offer a three-pronged defense of Millian theories, all of which share the rough idea that all there is to a proper name is its referent. I first give what I believe to be the first correct analysis of Kripke's puzzle and its anti-Fregean lessons. The main lesson is that the Fregean's arguments against Millianism and for the existence of semantically relevant senses (that is, individuative elements of propositions or belief contents that are sensitive to our varying personal conceptions of the referents of those elements) are viciously circular. Thus, the Fregean must give new arguments for her central claims. Second, I offer original, positive arguments for the Millian idea that the thoughts that Cicero was bald and that Tully was bald are identical. Strangely enough, the arguments appeal to nothing but pretheoretical principles regarding folk psychological usage—traditionally the source of Fregean intuitions. Third, I examine one of the most important recent papers on Kripke's puzzle, that by David Sosa (1996). Sosa claims to have found a way to turn the tables on Kripke's puzzle by using it to argue against Millian theories. I argue that Sosa's argument on behalf of the Fregean is question-begging. I conclude that Millian theories can be seriously defended without any use of theoretical constructs such as guises or Russellian propositions, and that Fregeans provide new argument for their theory's central claims.

Suppose Peter is a monolingual English speaker who in 1996 learned of Geoffrey Hellman the philosopher of mathematics and came to mistakenly believe that Hellman lives in St. Paul, not Minneapolis. Some time later in 1997 he heard about Geoffrey Hellman the pianist, came to know that Hellman lives in Minneapolis, but did not learn that the philosopher is the pianist: he thinks there are two Hellmans. It seems that Peter is perfectly rational despite having explicitly contradictory beliefs: that Hellman [the pianist] lives in Minneapolis and that Hellman [the philosopher] does not live in Minneapolis.

Saul Kripke has offered thought experiments similar to the one involving Peter in order to further the discussion regarding the connections between thought and language (Kripke 1979). In this article I set aside my own Fregean inclinations in order to offer a three-pronged defense of Millian theories, all of which share the rough idea that all there is to a proper name is its referent. I first give what I believe to be the correct analysis of Kripke's puzzle and its anti-Fregean lessons. After almost twenty years it is still controversial what, exactly, the lessons are of Kripke's thought experiments. The main lesson, which will be further articulated below, is that the Fregean has to start all over in attempting to

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establish her theory; the traditional Fregean arguments are failures. Thus, one cannot rest content, as many have done, with merely determining how the Fregean would account for Peter's situation. As we will see, that project misses the point of Kripke's puzzle entirely. The real challenge the Fregean faces, one inexplicably missed or misconstrued by many if not most commentators, is that of providing a new argument for the existence of semantically relevant senses, that is, individuative elements of propositions, belief types, or belief contents that are sensitive to our varying personal conceptions of the referents of those elements. Second, I offer original, positive arguments for the Millian idea that one may believe, for instance, that Cicero was bald even though one vigorously, honestly, and knowingly dissents from "Cicero was bald". In fact, the arguments conclude that the thoughts that Cicero was bald and that Tully was bald are identical. Strangely enough, the arguments appeal to nothing but pre-theoretical principles regarding folk psychological usage—traditionally the source of Fregean intuitions. No appeal is made to Frege–Kripke puzzle cases or theoretical constructs such as guises or Russellian propositions. Third, I examine one of the most important recent papers on Kripke's puzzle, that by David Sosa (1996). Sosa claims to have found a way to turn the tables on Kripke's puzzle by using it to argue *against* Millian theories. I will argue that Sosa's argument on behalf of the Fregean is question-begging. I conclude that Millian theories can be seriously defended without any use of theoretical constructs such as guises or Russellian propositions, and that Fregeans need to provide new arguments for their theory's central claims.

1. Kripke's Millian argument against Fregeanism

The Kripkean argument given by Millians against Fregean theories goes something like this, utilizing the Peter–Hellman story. Peter assents to "Hellman [the pianist] lives in Minneapolis". So he seems to believe that Hellman lives in Minneapolis. He also assents to "It's not the case that Hellman [the philosopher] lives in Minneapolis". So he seems to believe that it's not the case that Hellman lives in Minneapolis. It is highly plausible to suppose that no one can be fully rational and believe that *P* and that it's not the case that *P*. But surely Peter is a paradigm of rationality. Thus, since we have reached a contradiction something must give way: either Consistency (a fully rational individual cannot believe that *P* and that it's not the case that *P*) or Disquotation (if a fully ratio-

nal person honestly assents to an English sentence ΔP°, then she believes that P).

The Millian then asks us to consider the traditional Fregean argument for the thesis that one can believe that Cicero was bald while failing to believe that Tully was bald. Mary, a paradigm of rationality, assents to "Cicero was bald" and "It's not the case that Tully was bald". The Fregean infers from these assents that Mary believes that Cicero was bald and that it's not the case that Tully was bald. This inference in the Fregean argument relies on Disquotation. Let *Substitutivity* be the principle that if English proper names a and b are coreferential, then ΔS believes (thinks, etc.) that a is F° and ΔS believes (thinks, etc.) that b is F° have the same truth value (assuming that the difference in a and b is the only one in the two sentences, the other linguistic parts agreeing in meaning, reference, etc.). If Substitutivity holds, then since Mary believes that Cicero was bald she also believes that Tully was bald. And we already inferred from Disquotation that she believes that Tully was not bald. But, the Fregean continues, this cannot be right: no fully rational person can believe that P and that it's not the case that P. This part of the Fregean argument relies on Consistency. The Fregean concludes that Mary does *not* believe that Tully was bald, that the thoughts that Cicero was bald and that Tully was bald are distinct, and that Substitutivity is incorrect. But the Fregean had to use both Consistency and Disquotation in this argument—and we just saw that the conjunction of these two principles leads to a contradiction in the Peter–Hellman story. So the Fregean argument against Substitutivity has at least one false premise.[1] The Millian, who endorses Substitutivity, may not be as crazy as we all used to think. Furthermore, the Fregean has lost her most characteristic argument against Substitutivity. This is the main initial conclusion of Kripke's argument.

It will be worth our while to make the principles behind the Millian argument more precise.

[1] What is stunning about this reconstruction of the Fregean argument is that Mary's strenuous dissents to "Tully was bald" are completely left out of consideration. However, in my opinion one main reason we are hesitant to attribute the belief that Tully was bald to Mary is that she knowingly and honestly *dissents from* "Tully was bald". This suggests that the Fregean's argument should go as follows. Mary assents to "Cicero was bald" and dissents from "Tully was bald". The Fregean then infers that Mary believes that Cicero was bald and she does not believe that Tully was bald. If Substitutivity holds, then since Mary believes one she also believes the other. But this cannot be right: we just decided that she did not have the Tully belief. The Fregean concludes that Substitutivity is false without ever worrying about possibly contradictory beliefs. However, it can be shown that this argument has all the problems and virtues of the Fregean argument given in the text.

> *Rationality*$_P$: Peter is as rational as one can realistically get.[2]
>
> *Assent*$_P$: Peter honestly[3] assents to "Hellman [the pianist] lives in Minneapolis"; and he honestly assents to "It's not the case that Hellman [the philosopher] lives in Minneapolis".
>
> *Disquotation*: If S is as rational as one can realistically get, then if S honestly assents to an English sentence ΔP°, then S believes that P.[4] In particular, if Peter is as rational as one can realistically get, then if he honestly assents to "Hellman lives in Minneapolis" (or "It's not the case that Hellman lives in Minneapolis"), then he believes that Hellman lives in Minneapolis (or that it's not the case that Hellman lives in Minneapolis).
>
> *Consistency*: If S is as rational as one can realistically get, then S does not believe that P and that it's not the case that P. In particular, if Peter is as rational as one can realistically get, then Peter does not believe that Hellman lives in Minneapolis and that it's not the case that Hellman lives in Minneapolis.

The set of these four principles is inconsistent. Since the first two principles are unproblematic, either Disquotation or Consistency must go. Here is the Millian's reconstruction of the Fregean argument.

> *Rationality*$_M$: Mary is as rational as one can realistically get.
>
> *Assent*$_M$: Mary honestly assents to "Cicero was bald", and she honestly assents to "It's not the case that Tully was bald".
>
> *Disquotation*: If S is as rational as one can realistically get, then if S honestly assents to an English sentence ΔP°, then S believes that P. In particular, if Mary is as rational as one can realistically

[2] The subscript "P" is for "Peter". By "as rational as one can realistically get" I do not intend any idealization. All I mean is that Peter is just about as rational as we, in fact, ever get. I do not think there are any grounds for doubting Rationality$_P$. The only reason to dispute it is that Peter seems to have contradictory beliefs: he believes that Hellman [the pianist] lives in Minneapolis and that Hellman [the philosopher] does not live in Minneapolis. If he does have explicitly, even occurrently held, contradictory beliefs or thoughts, how can he remain rational upon reflection? However we answer this question, we need to observe that no matter how we characterize his beliefs he *must* come out rational in the end. Even though Peter *may* have contradictory beliefs, the beliefs that P and that it's not the case that P, we all recognize that *it's not his fault*; he is *blameless*; he has done nothing to deserve his wretched position. His odd situation is due to circumstances *beyond his control*; the unfortunate contingencies that led to his odd situation did not occur internal to his cognitive apparatus, so to speak. He has not failed to live up to some standard of using all his introspective abilities to determine whether he has contradictory beliefs. So the problem is certainly not with Peter's rationality.

[3] By "honestly" I intend sincere, reflective, knowing, etc., assent meant to exclude assents made while acting, etc.

[4] Here and elsewhere "P" is to be replaced so that ΔS believes that P°, true or not, ascribes a first-order *de dicto* belief. Also, due to the nature of the counterexample we can ignore sentences containing indexicals and other problematic devices. In my forthcoming paper (forthcoming c) I defend the application of Disquotation to the Peter–Hellman case.

> get, then if she honestly assents to "Cicero was bald" (or "It's not the case that Tully was bald"), then she believes that Cicero was bald (or that it's not the case that Tully was bald).
>
> *Consistency*: If *S* is as rational as one can realistically get, then *S* does not believe that *P* and that it's not the case that *P*. In particular, if Mary is as rational as one can realistically get, then she does not believe that Tully was bald and that it's not the case that Tully was bald.

The set of these four claims entails that Mary believes that Cicero was bald but does *not* believe that Tully was bald. So Substitutivity would have to be false if these four claims were true. As with the Peter–Hellman story, the first two claims are unproblematic. But as the Millian has pointed out with the Peter–Hellman story, either Disquotation or Consistency is false; so the traditional Fregean argument against Substitutivity rests on a false premise. So the Millian is not necessarily crazy.

This Millian argument against Fregeanism is solid, but I think it has two significant weaknesses, neither of which I recall being brought out in the literature. First, there is a closely related alternative Fregean argument, to be presented and examined in the next section, that does not use Consistency even though it reaches the *same* conclusions as the one given above. And as we will see, *Frege–Kripke puzzle cases cannot be used to show that this alternative argument relies on a false premise*.

Second, I think that any good Fregean would reject Consistency anyway, which strongly suggests that the Fregean argument given above may not have anywhere near the importance Kripke and others give it. To see this let us ask how is it that the Fregean *accounts for* the apparent datum that Mary can rationally believe that Cicero was bald while failing to believe that Tully was bald. Mary can be in this odd situation because, it is claimed, she associates different Fregean senses with Cicero. In particular, she associates a sense we will call Cicero_1 with "Cicero" and she associates a distinct sense, Cicero_2, with "Tully". For our purposes it matters little what the nature of Fregean senses is. When thinking about Cicero using Cicero_1 she will express her belief that Cicero was bald with the sentence "Cicero was bald". When thinking of Cicero using "Tully", that is, when employing Cicero_2, she assents to "Tully wasn't bald". The reason this situation is unproblematic, according to the Fregean, is that the two thoughts believed are not related as a thought and its negation: Mary's belief that it's not the case that Tully was bald is not the negation of her belief that Cicero was bald. Mary's assents to "Cicero was bald" express a certain *cognitive content* or *knowledge worth*, a content not expressed by her dissents from "Tully was bald" because of the nonidentity of Cicero_1 and Cicero_2.

Now consider Jan, who like Mary seems to believe that there were two Roman orators, one bald and the other hairy. Also like Mary, Jan's putative beliefs about the orators are both in fact about Cicero. Finally, Jan has the *same* two senses of Cicero, Cicero_1 for the bald one and Cicero_2 for the hairy one. The only difference between Mary's and Jan's situations is that whereas Mary thinks the orators have different names, "Cicero" and "Tully", Jan thinks that both orators are named "Cicero" in English. Jan has never heard the name "Tully".

I think the Fregean would be hard-pressed to find any significant cognitive difference between Mary's and Jan's epistemic repertoires. It is difficult to see how this linguistic accident—Mary has two names for Cicero while Jan has just one—could make for a difference in their *Fregean* thoughts regarding Cicero. On Fregean theory Jan's assents to "Cicero was bald" express her Fregean thought containing sense Cicero_1 and make it true that she believes that Cicero was bald; her assents to "It's not the case that Cicero was bald" express her Fregean thought that contains Cicero_2 and make it true that she believes that it's not the case that Cicero was bald. Exactly as in Mary's case the beliefs are not contradictory in their Fregean contents. The Fregean will hold that Jan's odd situation of believing that *P* and that it's not the case that *P* is possible because she employs different senses corresponding to "Cicero": Cicero_1 and Cicero_2 are different senses and some of Jan's utterances of "Cicero" express the one, some the other. Of course, Jan's beliefs are contradictory in some superficial linguistic sense, but the Fregean will want to make a distinction between the contradictory linguistic contents of Jan's beliefs and their consistent Fregean thought contents. More on this crucial distinction below.

Jan is in a Frege–Kripke puzzle situation. In effect, what we have established with Kripke's puzzle is that on Fregean theory Consistency is false. So one might ask why it is that philosophers have fussed over Kripke's puzzle. Its conclusion is that a conjunction (of Disquotation and Consistency) is false. But on Fregean theories one conjunct (Consistency) is false. So where's the threat to Fregeanism?

The initial threat is that the Fregean has to provide new arguments against Substitutivity. On her own theory Consistency is false; and the most straightforward way to argue against Substitutivity is to use Consistency. So how on earth is she to argue against Substitutivity? And if she cannot provide a compelling argument against Substitutivity, then how is she to defend her rejection of Substitutivity? Or does she really need to reject Substitutivity? These are some of the crucial questions that must be addressed in any adequate account of Kripke's puzzle.

2. *The alternative Fregean and Millian arguments*

Consider the following *alternative* Fregean argument, one that I think characterizes Fregeanism better than the Fregean argument given in the previous section. Mary, a paradigm of rationality, assents to "Cicero was bald". So she believes thought C, the thought expressed by her assents to "Cicero was bald". She also assents to "It's not the case that Tully was bald". So she believes the negation of thought T, the negated thought expressed by her assents to "It's not the case that Tully was bald". Let *Millianism* for coreferential proper names be the principle that if English proper names a and b are coreferential, then Δa is F° and Δb is F° express the same thought.[5] It follows from Millianism that thought C is identical with thought T. So if Millianism is correct, then Mary believes thought T and its negation. But this cannot be right: no rational person can believe a thought and its negation. Thus, $C \neq T$; Millianism is incorrect.

When made more precise, the alternative Fregean argument relies on each of the following claims.

> *Rationality*$_M$: Mary is as rational as one can realistically get.
>
> *Assent*$_M$: Mary honestly assents to "Cicero was bald", and she honestly assents to "It's not the case that Tully was bald".
>
> *Meaning*$_M$: Mary's honest assents to "Cicero was bald" express thought C. Mary's honest assents to "It's not the case that Tully was bald" express the negation of thought T.
>
> *Disquotation*$_F$: If S is as rational as one can realistically get, then if S honestly assents to a sentence π, where S's assents to π express thought P, then S believes P.[6]
>
> *Consistency*$_F$: If S is as rational as one can realistically get, then S does not believe a thought and its negation.

The set of these claims entails that Mary does *not* believe T; since they also entail that Mary believes C, we conclude that $C \neq T$. The falsehood of Millianism follows. Rationality$_M$, Assent$_M$, and Meaning$_M$ are unproblematic. So the only way to find fault with the argument is to focus on Disquotation$_F$ and Consistency$_F$.

The Millian is able to use Frege–Kripke puzzle cases to produce a conclusive argument to the effect that the first Fregean argument against Substitutivity rests on a false premise (Consistency or Disquotation); the Millian did so by deriving a contradiction from the Fregean premises. However, as we have seen, such an argument cannot be too important, for

[5] Here we assume that "F" gets replaced so that the sentences are non-intentional and the difference in a and b is the only one in the two sentences, the remaining linguistic parts having the same reference, meaning, etc.

[6] The subscript "F" is for "Frege".

the Fregean would give up Consistency anyway! So a crucial question is whether the Millian can show that the *alternative* Fregean argument rests on a false premise. Just as one might expect, Disquotation_F and Consistency_F show up in the alternative Millian argument (using the Peter–Hellman story) corresponding to the alternative Fregean argument. But this time an extra premise is needed to derive the contradiction.

> *Rationality*$_P$: Peter is as rational as one can realistically get.
>
> *Assent*$_P$: Peter honestly assents to "Hellman [the pianist] lives in Minneapolis", and he honestly assents to "It's not the case that Hellman [the philosopher] lives in Minneapolis".
>
> *Meaning*$_P$: Peter's honest assents to "Hellman [the pianist] lives in Minneapolis" express thought K. Peter's honest assents to "It's not the case that Hellman [the philosopher] lives in Minneapolis" express the negation of thought L.
>
> *Disquotation*$_F$: If S is as rational as one can realistically get, then if S honestly assents to a sentence π, where S's assents to π express thought P, then S believes P.
>
> *Identity*$_P$: Thoughts K and L are identical.
>
> *Consistency*$_F$: If S is as rational as one can realistically get, then S does not believe a thought and its negation.

These six claims are collectively inconsistent and each one is needed to reach the inconsistency. Just as in the case of the alternative Fregean argument, the first three claims are unproblematic. Thus, either Disquotation_F, Identity_P, or Consistency_F must go. Obviously the Fregean is going to avoid the inconsistency by rejecting Identity_P. The rejection of Identity_P is exactly analogous to the lesson of the alternative Fregean argument regarding Mary and Cicero. That argument attempted to show that Mary's uses of "Cicero was bald" and "Tully was bald" express different thoughts: $C \neq T$. Obviously we can apply the entire alternative Fregean argument to Peter in an attempt to show that Peter's uses of "Hellman lives in Minneapolis" express, on different occasions, different thoughts: $K \neq L$. The Fregean took the lesson of the Mary–Cicero story to be that thoughts C and T are distinct—so it is obvious that she will take the lesson of the Peter–Hellman story to be that thoughts K and L are distinct. So the Fregean rejects Identity_P by endorsing Consistency_F and Disquotation_F. The Millian cannot use Frege–Kripke puzzle cases in order to show that the alternative Fregean argument rests on a false premise, either Consistency_F or Disquotation_F.

This Fregean response is correct as far as it goes—Kripke's puzzle provides no direct threat to *this* argument against Millianism—but as we will see in the next section the fascinating point is that it does not go very far. At this point we should, for the sake of completeness, note how the alternative Fregean argument can be extended to produce a rejection of Sub-

stitutivity. All it shows thus far, assuming Disquotation_F and Consistency_F, is that Mary does not believe *T*, the thought expressed by her uses of (i.e. dissents from) "Tully was bald". If sound, the valid alternative Fregean argument shows that *C* and *T* are distinct and Millianism is false. But from the soundness of the Fregean's alternative argument one cannot yet obtain the conclusion that Mary does *not* believe that Tully was bald. She does not believe *T*, the thought expressed by her dissents from "Tully was bald", but that is another, albeit very closely related, matter.

One might think that all the Fregean needs in order to mount a valid argument against Substitutivity using the premises of the alternative Fregean argument is the addition of some relatively innocent premise. After all, from Disquotation_F and Consistency_F (and the unproblematic Rationality_M, Meaning_M, and Assent_M) we have the conclusion that Mary does not believe *T*, the thought she expresses with "Tully was bald". What better reason could there be for concluding that she fails to believe that Tully was bald? Even so, it is not easy to formulate a nonquestion-begging principle that can serve as the missing premise. Here is one principle that seems to do the job.

> *Disbelief*: If *S* fails to believe thought *H*, and *S* uses English sentence ΔP° to express *H* and *only H*, then *S* fails to believe that *P*. In particular, if Mary fails to believe thought *T* (the one expressed by her uses of, i.e. dissents from, "Tully was bald"), and Mary uses the sentence "Tully was bald" to express *T* and only *T*, then Mary fails to believe that Tully was bald.

Since we have already concluded that Mary fails to believe thought *T*, and on Fregean *and* Millian theories she uses "Tully was bald" to express just one thought, the Fregean can use Disbelief to conclude that Mary fails to believe that Tully was bald; so the Fregean would have completed her argument against Substitutivity. Furthermore, Disbelief does not conflict with her analysis of Peter's situation. If we apply Disbelief to Peter's situation we get the following.

> If Peter fails to believe thought *L* (the one expressed by his uses of "Hellman [the philosopher] lives in Minneapolis"), and he uses the sentence "Hellman lives in Minneapolis" to express *L* and only *L*, then he fails to believe that Hellman lives in Minneapolis.

This sentence is true on Fregean theory because on this theory the second conjunct of the antecedent is false: Peter uses "Hellman lives in Minneapolis" to express the two thoughts *K* and *L* from before. It is also true on Millian theories because on those theories the first conjunct of the antecedent is false. Assuming that Disbelief is innocent, has the Fregean given compelling arguments against Millianism and Substitutivity by using Disquotation_F and Consistency_F— arguments that avoid all the problems revealed by Kripke's puzzle?

3. The main lesson of Kripke's puzzle

Virtually everyone agrees that Kripke's puzzle shows that Peter believes that Hellman lives in Minneapolis and that Hellman does not live in Minneapolis.[7] The straightforward way to interpret this is to conclude that Peter believes and disbelieves the same thought, the thought that Hellman lives in Minneapolis, and that's all there is to it: so both Consistency and Consistency_F are false. And if we reject Consistency_F, then we must reject the alternative Fregean argument against Millianism and Substitutivity. Since the Fregean who endorses the alternative Fregean argument thinks that this is not all there is to it, claiming that Consistency_F is true, she needs a compelling argument for this crucial premise, Consistency_F, in spite of her rejection of the closely related Consistency. By rejecting Consistency while accepting Consistency_F, the Fregean must hold that there are two kinds of thought content. In rejecting Consistency the Fregean admitted that Jan believes that Cicero was bald and that Cicero was not bald; but by accepting Consistency_F the Fregean claims that Jan does not, in some sense, believe a thought and its negation. Thus, on Fregean theories there is the ordinary, familiar type of thought content for which the beliefs that Cicero was bald and that Cicero was not bald have straightforwardly contradictory contents independently of the believer's conceptions of Cicero. When we say that everyone who believes that Cicero was bald believes the same thing, that is, has the belief that Cicero was bald, we are appealing to this "linguistic" content for which our different conceptions of Cicero are largely irrelevant in the sense that they do not ruin the identity of what we believe: we all share the same belief despite conceiving of Cicero in many different ways. The Fregean will agree that someone (e.g. Jan) may believe and disbelieve the same linguistic content. This linguistic content is (should be) recognized by Millians as well as Fregeans. However, endorsing Consistency_F in the face of rejecting Consistency forces the Fregean to argue for the existence of *another* kind of content lying behind the scenes, individuated by something like ways of conceiving or conceptions or individual concepts. It is this additional content or content-like property that makes Jan's beliefs consistent in one way.

How is the Fregean to argue for this additional kind of content, one particularly sensitive to our conceptions? Here is how the most straightforward, Fregean argument would go. Suppose Substitutivity is false; Mary believes that Cicero was bald but she does not believe that Tully was bald. With this failure of Substitutivity we need to find a distinction between the content of her belief that Cicero was bald and the content of her thought

[7] Of course, this statement is false. But one can construct arguments in favour of this characterization of Peter's beliefs that are decisive. I set out these arguments in my paper (forthcoming c).

that Tully was bald. Fregean senses individuated by conceptions fit the bill as *constituents* of the propositions or belief contents: since the senses differ and are parts of the propositions, the propositions differ. It is important to remember that one cannot distinguish the "Cicero" and "Tully" contents just by pointing out that Mary has two conceptions or senses of Cicero. That fact may account for her different attitudes toward "Cicero was bald" and "Tully was bald", but it does not help one differentiate the "Cicero" and "Tully" contents unless one claims that those differing conceptions result in different propositional constituents. Accepting *psychologically relevant* conceptions or senses, as *any* theorist should do in accounting for, for example, Mary's different attitudes towards "Cicero was bald" and "Tully was bald", does not mean one accepts *semantically relevant* senses, senses that figure in the identities of propositions, belief types, or belief contents. So with the failure of Substitutivity one had a good argument for Fregean, that is, semantically relevant, senses. These senses formed the backbone of the additional, Fregean kind of content. Thus, with the failure of Substitutivity, the Fregean can conclude that there are two kinds of content, the linguistic one and the internal, mental, psychologically and semantically relevant, Fregean one that is sensitive to our varying conceptions. This does not quite give me $\text{Consistency}_{\text{F}}$, but it is the important first step.

What we have learned from Frege–Kripke puzzle cases ruins this Fregean argument for an additional kind of content and Fregean senses, because the Fregean has no good argument for its initial supposition, that Substitutivity is false. Here's why. The Fregean cannot use the straightforward argument against Substitutivity that used Consistency since she rejects that principle (as we discovered in §1). Instead she uses the alternative Fregean argument against Substitutivity given in §2. But, as we saw in §2, the alternative Fregean argument against Substitutivity will not be compelling unless we have a compelling argument for its controversial premise $\text{Consistency}_{\text{F}}$. We also saw that given the Fregean's rejection of Consistency the soundness of an argument for $\text{Consistency}_{\text{F}}$ amounts to the soundness of an argument for the additional, Fregean content. Thus, the alternative Fregean argument against Substitutivity will not be compelling unless we have a compelling argument for the existence of an alternative, Fregean content. That is, the Fregean's *first* task is to get a compelling argument for the Fregean content; only then can her argument against Substitutivity be any good. However, as we just saw in the previous paragraph, the traditional argument for the additional, Fregean content will not be compelling unless we have a compelling argument for its controversial premise, the denial of Substitutivity. So the Fregean's *first* task has to be to get a compelling argument against Substitutivity; only

then will her argument for Fregean content be any good. Thus, the Fregean is caught in a straightforwardly vicious circle: her only live argument for the denial of Substitutivity contains a premise (Consistency_F) that requires a compelling argument for the existence of an additional, Fregean content, but her only argument for the existence of an additional, Fregean content contains as a premise the denial of Substitutivity. Given the viciousness of the circle, *one cannot without begging the question appeal to semantically relevant senses in order to account for the Frege–Kripke puzzle cases*. Accounting for Frege–Kripke puzzle cases on the Fregean model has always been easy: the protagonist associates two semantically relevant senses with the object (e.g. Cicero) in question. But this appeal to semantically relevant senses is clearly question-begging since the Fregean has lost her argument for the existence of semantically relevant senses—the primary elements of the additional, Fregean kind of content. The primary lesson of Kripke's puzzle is that the Fregean has to start over in arguing for her theory's central claims that Substitutivity is false and that our conceptions determine semantically relevant senses.[8]

One should not be tempted to think that one does not really need an argument against Substitutivity or for semantically relevant senses (or, what amounts to the same thing, the additional, Fregean kind of content). The mere existence of Millian theories that provide accounts of our Fregean intuitions against Substitutivity without appeal to semantically relevant senses shows the folly of such an attitude. One can, of course, quarrel with those accounts, but one can quarrel with Fregean accounts as well. Independently of that matter, the idea should look foolish to any serious philosopher.

The Fregean has to start over arguing against the Millian. Are there other Fregean arguments against Substitutivity or for the additional, Fregean kind of content? As far as I know, only Joseph Owens (1995) and David Sosa (1996) have offered new arguments against Substitutivity. I have argued elsewhere (forthcoming (a)) that Owens' argument is inadequate; Sosa's argument will be criticized below. The dual view of content, with or without the Fregean construal of the behind-the-scenes content, has gained popularity from analyses of Kripke's puzzle and the anti-individualist or externalist thought experiments offered by Tyler Burge and

[8] I believe that Kripke took his puzzle cases to cast doubt on the conjunction of Consistency and Disquotation (although he did not put it this way). Kripke also seems to have taken these principles to be so ingrained in our ordinary intentional state attribution practice that with their rejection the coherency of the practice is threatened. Both the Millian and the Fregean have theories according to which Consistency is false, but that does not quite impugn Kripke's point. Even so, I do not interpret the Kripke puzzle cases as offering a serious threat to the coherency of our practice for the simple reason that I am not sure what the threat is intended to amount to.

Hilary Putnam.[9] However, this view has met with heavy opposition from Burge (1986, 1989), Owens (1987, 1989, 1990, 1992), and Robert Stalnaker (1990) among others. In spite of these criticisms, Brian Loar (1987, 1988) and others have gathered evidence, justifiably found compelling by many, that seems to require some kind of additional, perhaps Fregean, kind of content or content-like property that is not captured by "that"-clauses. Elsewhere (forthcoming (b)) I have argued for the surprising claim that the folk psychological phenomena thought by these theorists to require an additional kind of content are best and most naturally accounted for with just the ordinary content given by "that"-clauses. These matters are complex and cannot be adequately addressed in a short compass. It will have to suffice to note that the arguments for an additional, Fregean kind of content—one sensitive to our varying conceptions—are either question-begging against the Millian (relying on the denial of Substitutivity) or under heavy fire.

4. A new argument for substitutivity and Millianism

Given the failure of Fregean arguments against Substitutivity and Millianism, what are we to think of these two counterintuitive principles? Is there any good *argument* for either accepting or rejecting them? Although like most theorists I am *inclined* to think that Substitutivity and Millianism are false, I want to present a *positive* argument for both. I think my argument is novel, since the best (but not all) reasons for accepting these doctrines that I know of have been negative, coming from the difficulties found in alternative theories. However, not only is there a reasonably good argument for both Substitutivity and Millianism, but, incredibly, it comes from mere elementary, pre-theoretical reflections on standard and perfectly ordinary folk psychological usage—precisely the primary source of intuitions *against* Substitutivity and Millianism! The argument has no direct, positive consequences for the existence of Russellian propositions or any other theoretical construct of Millian theories, but it supports those theories by making Substitutivity and Millianism more attractive.

The argument is based on a thought experiment. Suppose that there is no name for Bigfoot in British English other than "Bigfoot"; in Canadian English the only name for Bigfoot is "Sasquatch"; and US English, the

[9] Some who have endorsed the dual content view are David Lewis (1983), Brian Loar (1987, 1988), Colin McGinn (1982), and Jerry Fodor (1982, 1987, 1991). Fodor now has doubts about the dual content view, but many others are still committed to it.

Defending Millianism

PETER J. GRAHAM

Millianism is the view that all there is to the meaning of a name is its bearer.[1] In a recent paper Bryan Frances seeks to undercut the traditional argument against Millianism as well as offer a new argument in favor of Millianism. I argue that both endeavors fail.

I

Frances (1998) reconstructs the traditional anti–Millian argument that the belief that Cicero was bald differs from the belief that Tully was bald as follows:

> *Rationality*$_M$: Mary is as rational as one can realistically get.
>
> *Assent*$_M$: Mary honestly assents to "Cicero was bald", and she honestly assents to "It's not the case that Tully was bald".
>
> *Disquotation*: If S is as rational as one can realistically get, then if S honestly assents to an English sentence $\Delta P^{\cdot}$, then S believes that P. In particular, if Mary is as rational as one can realistically get, then if she honestly assents to "Cicero was bald" (or "It's not the case that Tully was bald"), then she believes that Cicero was bald (or that it's not the case that Tully was bald).
>
> *Consistency*: If S is as rational as one can realistically get, then S does not believe that P and that it's not the case that P. In particular, if Mary is as rational as one can realistically get, then she does not believe that Tully was bald and that it's not the case that Tully was bald. (1998, pp. 706-7)

The anti–Millian thus concludes that the Millian principle of Substitutivity, the principle that co-referential names are substitutable in belief-contexts salva veritate, is false.

Frances then argues by thought experiment that the Fregean (the version of anti–Millianism he considers) would give up on Consistency anyway, and so the traditional anti–Millian argument is ineffective. The

[1] "The meaning of a name" denotes the contribution the use of a name makes to the content of what is stated by the use of the name in an utterance of a sentence involving the name, and so to the content of what is (at least in the default case) believed.

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thought experiment has three steps. First, the Fregean holds that Mary associates different senses or descriptions, or expresses different meanings or concepts, with "Cicero" and "Tully". Call the first sense associated with "Cicero" Cicero_1 and the sense associated with "Tully" Cicero_2. The Fregean would then say that she does not believe a thought and its negation because the thoughts differ: "Mary's belief that it's not the case that Tully was bald is not the negation of her belief that Cicero was bald" (1998, p. 707).[2]

Second, Jan is just like Mary in grasping the two senses Cicero_1 and Cicero_2, but she does not use the words "Cicero" and "Tully". Rather she uses the words "Cicero" and "Cicero". That is, Jan, like Mary, thinks that there are two distinct famous Roman orators, it is just that Jan, unlike Mary, uses "Cicero" to refer to, or express her thoughts about, both.

The third step is the interpretation of Jan's situation. What Frances says about her situation is worth quoting in full:

> The Fregean will hold that Jan's odd situation of believing that *P* and that it's not the case that *P* is possible because she employs different senses corresponding to "Cicero": Cicero_1 and Cicero_2 are different senses and some of Jan's utterances of "Cicero" express the one, some the other. Of course, Jan's beliefs are contradictory in some superficial linguistic sense, but the Fregean will want to make a distinction between the contradictory linguistic contents of Jan's beliefs and their consistent Fregean thought contents. More on this crucial distinction below. Jan is in a Frege-Kripke puzzle situation. In effect, what we established with Kripke's puzzle is that on Fregean theory Consistency is false. (1998, p. 708)

So Frances thinks that the Fregean because of cases like Jan, cases just like Kripke's "Paderewski" case, would abandon Consistency.

What Frances means by saying the Fregean, in abandoning Consistency "will want to make a distinction" between two kinds of content is that the Fregean will agree that there are two kinds of content, "linguistic content" and "psychological content". Linguistic content is essentially Millian content and psychological content is Fregean content (1998, pp. 709–15). This is the "crucial distinction" Frances has in mind.

Frances now argues that since the Fregean has abandoned Consistency, she can no longer appeal to it in order to argue that the content of beliefs is finer-grained than Millian content. That is, even if there is psychological

[2] To say that she does not believe a thought and its negation is to say that her thought is not contradictory at the level of content. It is, of course, possible that her thoughts cannot both be true; the debate is about de dicto ascriptions of belief and not de re ascriptions.

The plausibility (if there is any) of Frances's claim (below) that Jan has contradictory beliefs is due to confusing a true de re ascription with a false de dicto ascription.

content, the Fregean cannot appeal to the principle of Consistency in an argument for the claim that psychological content enters into belief content (p. 713). The problem, Frances claims, is that any such argument will require a principle that is only defensible if it is first assumed that the Millian principle that co-referential names are substitutable in belief-contexts is false. Without Consistency, no such argument can get off the ground. This is what Frances takes to be the "primary lesson of Kripke's puzzle", that the "Fregean has to start over in arguing for her theory's central claims that Substitutivity is false and that our conceptions" enter into the content of belief and into the meaning of a name (p. 714). If the Fregean allows for "linguistic content", the game is up.

Since it is not at all obvious that Mary holds contradictory beliefs, why would the Fregean agree that Jan holds contradictory beliefs? After all, Jan's "thoughts" or "beliefs" involve the very same senses that Mary's beliefs do! Why, if the Fregean is not prima facie forced to give up on Consistency in Mary's case, would the Fregean give up on Consistency in Jan's case?

What drives Frances to say that Jan has contradictory beliefs is the fact that Jan assents to "Cicero was bald" and also assents to "Cicero was not bald". Applying the principle of Disquotation, it is supposed to follow that Jan believes that Cicero was bald and that Cicero was not bald. Hence Jan "clearly" holds contradictory beliefs. It is now, I think, easy to see what has gone wrong. The Fregean will insist that Disquotation, properly applied, does not imply that Jan believes a contradiction. As Kripke (1976, p. 113) was well aware, it is important to allow for ambiguities when stating the principle of Disquotation (compare Sosa 1996, pp. 388 ff.). Otherwise we will attribute contradictions everywhere, for people do sometimes utter both "Banks close on holidays" and "Banks never close", meaning financial institutions in the first case and the side of a river in the second. When I apply the principle of Disquotation to Jan, I must use the word "Cicero" in two ways; one way to track her use of "Cicero" that expresses Cicero_1, and a second way to track her use of Cicero_2. I can do this using "Cicero" if my use is ambiguous. If my use is not, then I will have to use additional words to specify her two beliefs, something we have already done in setting up the case. When I say that she believes that Cicero was bald and that Cicero was not bald, I am not attributing to Jan contradictory beliefs (see fn.2). The anti–Millian holds that co-referential proper names may differ in meaning or express different belief contents, even co-referential words that are instances, at one level of individuation, of the "same" word. Hence the anti–Millian would deny that the case of Jan is any reason to abandon Consistency. To suppose the anti–Millian must abandon Consistency in such a case is to beg the question. It is to assume

an application of Disquotation that the Fregean or anti–Millian would disavow. It is to assume that Millianism is true about "one level" of content.

Frances might object on the following grounds. The principles of Disquotation and Consistency are supposed to be neutral between the disputants; it is supposed to be an open question whether proper names or belief contents are individuated in a coarse-grained or in a finer-grained manner. All we are allowed to use when arguing about meaning and belief content are neutral principles. Then we can see who gets the right results. Hence to build into Disquotation worries about ambiguity may be fine, but to assume that Jan's uses of "Cicero" are ambiguous because she associates two different senses with her various uses of "Cicero" is just to assume that Millianism is false. Hence the Fregean or anti–Millian, and not the Millian, is begging the question.

This is inadequate. The reply takes too seriously the idea that all there is to the debate is neutral data about what sentences people assent to and dissent from and a neutral reading of the principle of Disquotation. This cannot be true, for we would never accept a "neutral" reading of the principle of Disquotation. We accept the principle because we have a good idea of what people mean by their words, and so we think we can defeasibly infer what they believe from what words they use when making assertions or answering questions. Disquotation already involves a commitment to some understanding of what meanings are, so it cannot be stated in a way that is wholly neutral between competing theories of meaning.

The Fregean, or the anti–Millian generally, is free to deny the claim that Jan has contradictory beliefs, and so is free to assert Consistency. The Fregean, or anti–Millian generally, need not accept that there is a level of content that is Millian. She need not accept that Jan has beliefs that are "contradictory in some superficial linguistic sense" (p. 708). She is free to deny that Kripke or Frances has shown any such thing.[3]

II

Frances argues that the phenomenon of shared belief supports Millianism (pp. 715–22). He purports to offer a case where Substitutitvity of co-referential expressions is clearly permitted but Disquotation clearly fails.

[3] Frances's argument feels like a sleight of hand. The Fregean is supposed to accept that Jan has contradictory beliefs in a "superficial linguistic sense" and then ends up without any argument at all against the Millian. Surely something has gone wrong. It cannot be that something "superficial" should run so deep.

1 → 2: If in British "Bigfoot" is the only name of Bigfoot, in Canadian "Sasquatch" is the only name of Bigfoot, English in England and Canada is otherwise relevantly the same; in England Edna's conception associated with "Bigfoot" sufficiently conforms to British use of "Bigfoot"; Edna is not in any relevant Lois Lane-type situation or other odd circumstance; and "Edna believes that Sasquatch is real" is the perfectly proper Canadian translation of the true British "Edna believes that Bigfoot is real"; then "Edna believes that Sasquatch is real" is true in Canadian. 1 → 4 and 2 → 3 are similar but much more plausible.

5 → 6: If an agent has just one ordinary conception associated with each term in a sentence "α is *F*", she uses "α is *F*" in just one language to express her belief B_1 *and* her belief B_2, she would honestly assert that she expresses just one belief with that sentence, and she is not in any relevant Lois Lane-type situation or other odd circumstance, then $B_1 = B_2$.

Graham seems to claim that my argument is invalid because it assumes that "Bigfoot" and "Sasquatch" have the same meaning. The reader can verify that the argument is valid and the question-begging assumption is never made (see Frances 1998, p. 717). He seems to claim that I am trying to undercut Disquotation and that I fail because Disquotation does not apply to Alice, who assents to "Bigfoot is real" and "Sasquatch isn't real". (Roughly put, Disquotation says that if you assent to "*P*" then you believe that *P*.) He also characterizes my argument as purporting to offer a case where Substitutivity is permitted even though Disquotation fails. My argument never even uses or targets Disquotation. He then writes that Substitutivity (roughly, if names *a* and *b* are coreferential then you believe that *a* is *F* iff you believe that *b* is *F*) does not apply to the Bigfoot case because "Bigfoot" is empty. I never claimed or implied otherwise. The fourth criticism is that the anti-Millian's explanation of the Bigfoot story is better than the Millian's. I agree, but that hardly matters. Graham does not understand the argument at all.

Graham also criticizes my analysis of the Fregean's reaction to Kripke puzzle cases. My first argument is that Kripke puzzle cases refute the conjunction of Disquotation and Consistency (roughly, you cannot believe that *P* and that not-*P*). Since the traditional argument against Substitutivity relies on this conjunction, that argument is unsound. My second argument is that the Fregean will probably want to reject Consistency anyway. Here is the argument. The Fregean says that Mary associates sense Cicero_1 with "Cicero" and sense Cicero_2 with "Tully" and assents to "Cicero was bald" and "Tully wasn't bald". By Disquotation she believes that Cicero was bald and that Tully wasn't bald. The Fregean thinks that since $\text{Cicero}_1 \neq \text{Cicero}_2$, her "Tully" thought≠the negation of her "Cicero" thought. So the Fregean concludes that Mary's beliefs are not contradic-

tory. Jan is just like Mary in that she uses names to express her beliefs containing (on Fregean theory) Cicero_1 and Cicero_2. But she uses just "Cicero". She assents to "Cicero was bald" when employing Cicero_1; by Disquotation she believes that Cicero was bald. She assents to "Cicero wasn't bald" when employing Cicero_2; by Disquotation she believes that Cicero wasn't bald. Exactly as in Mary's case, the Fregean insists that Jan's beliefs have contents that are not contradictory since they contain these distinct senses. But the Fregean realizes that Disquotation entails that Jan believes that Cicero was bald and that Cicero wasn't bald. The Fregean can hardly deny that these beliefs are contradictory in some perhaps superficial linguistic sense.[2] (This is not, pace Graham, to assume that this linguistic or shared content is Millian.) So the Fregean rejects Consistency.

Graham asks why I think the Fregean is forced to give up on Consistency in Jan's but not Mary's case. Well, we have *not* seen that Mary believes that Cicero was bald and that Cicero wasn't bald. However, we have seen that Jan has those beliefs. So Jan but not Mary forces the Fregean to reject Consistency and then move on to endorse some other Consistency-like principle, one that is intended to apply to the inner, mental belief contents somehow standing behind the linguistic contents. I suggested Consistency_F: roughly, you cannot believe a thought and its negation—where the thought contents here are those that are most intimately part of our cognitive makeup and not necessarily given by "that"-clauses. The Fregean will claim that Jan's beliefs are not related as thought and negation—at least for the inner mental contents somehow most relevant to her cognitive makeup.

Graham claims that the Fregean will endorse Consistency while admitting that Jan believes that Cicero was bald and that Cicero wasn't bald. This is absurd. Disquotation entails that (a) Mary believes that Cicero was bald and that Tully wasn't bald, and, as Graham admits, (b) Jan believes that Cicero was bald and that Cicero wasn't bald.[3] Consistency transparently entails that Jan does *not* believe that Cicero was bald while believing that Cicero wasn't bald; that is all there is to it. I suspect that what Graham wants is an *alternative* Disquotation-like principle for the Fregean, one which when applied to Jan's case will result in a pair of beliefs that are not

[2] Graham (1999, p. 558, fn.3) asserts that my argument "feels like a sleight of hand" because the Fregean is supposed to agree that Jan has contradictory beliefs but then loses any non-question-begging argument against Millianism. Graham (1999, p. 558) claims that "it cannot be that something 'superficial' should run so deep". I agree with the latter claim, but I think that is a problem not with my argument but with Fregeanism, since it suggests that the sense in which Jan's beliefs are contradictory may not be superficial.

[3] Unlike Graham, one might try to argue that it is false that she believes that Cicero was (wasn't) bald (see Frances 1999).

obviously contradictory *even though they get ascribed with contradictory sentences*. I agree, and in my article I offered Disquotation$_F$: If S is as rational as one can realistically get, then if S honestly assents to a sentence π, where S's assents to π express thought P, then S believes thought P. The contents are stipulated to be those that are most intimately part of our cognitive makeup; it is thereby left open whether S's assents to π and not-π express thoughts that are both central to our cognitive makeup and contradictory. The Fregean thinks that in Jan's case these cognitive contents are not straightforwardly given by the corresponding "that"-clauses (which ascribe contradictory linguistic contents) and are partly constituted by the distinct Cicero$_1$ and Cicero$_2$, so there is no contradiction; the Millian disagrees. The problem then arose that the Fregean's new argument against Substitutivity and Millianism using Disquotation$_F$ was question-begging (see Frances 1998, Sc. 3).

I suspect that we must admit that when we utter truly "Jan believes that Cicero was bald" and "Jan believes that Cicero wasn't bald" we are using just one name, "Cicero", each time. At least that is what *I'm* doing. Prima facie, when I say that Bob believes P and Fred believes that not-P, I am attributing contradictory beliefs; I am saying that Bob believes what Fred disbelieves. Whether or not Bob or Fred is in a Kripke puzzle or whether or not I am aware of their being in a Kripke puzzle has no effect on the truth value or meaning of my utterances. In Jan's case I will most probably not be aware of her confusion but will be able to truthfully utter "Jan believes that Cicero was bald". Considerations like these (there are many more) suggest that we do not need to use "Cicero" in two ways when attributing beliefs to Jan, as Graham appears to claim.

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