

**Week 11: Wrapping up
Predicates of Personal Taste, Epistemic Modals, First-Person Oriented
Content, and Debates about the Implicit Judge(s).
And more on Moltmann on generic *one* and the judge parameter.**

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Note: This handout can be downloaded (then links to references can be clicked) from my site.

And don’t forget to periodically download the frequently updated [720 Dynamic Reading List](#).

Readings

Week 7, 9, and 10 readings, continued, plus:

(von Fintel and Gillies 2008) -- CIA Leaks. A closer look at “faultless disagreement” data and a challenge to some of the basic assumptions behind Lasersohn’s analysis. Beginnings of an alternative theory positing considerable “contextual vagueness” in the choice of modal base for *might* and a greater role for pragmatics in figuring out what disagreements are about.

Plan:

Part I: Finishing up from last week, on recent work by Moltmann on first-person-oriented content, generic one, and relative truth, and their relation to predicates of personal taste and epistemic modals.

Part II: BHP’s thoughts on what Lasersohn, Stephenson, Moltmann, and (newly added to our discussion) von Fintel & Gillies might say to each other.

PART I: MOLTMANN, CONTINUED.

I repeat below the part of last week's handout that we didn't discuss, and add a bit more about Moltmann. Central to her account of intuitions of relative truth is a notion of first-person-based genericity (Moltmann 2005, 2006, In Press-a, In Press-b, In Press-c), which we discussed last time; we barely started with the formal analysis with its use of qua-objects. We continue with that today before getting into theory comparison. We had started a little bit into Section 3.2., but I'll start there again to review where we were.

3.2. Semantic analysis of generic one

pp. 22-26.

The intuitive idea:

First-person-based genericity involves abstraction from the particularities of one's own experience, judging oneself normal in relevant respects, and generalizing to anyone meeting the same conditions. It can also be viewed as a form of **generic simulation** (see her references to work by R.M. Gordon in *Mind and Language*, which I don't know, but which sounds interesting.)

It may involve "identifying with" another individual one is simulating, or 'projecting oneself onto' (see earlier examples with parent-child interactions). Intuitive conclusion: **Generic one ranges over individuals as entities the relevant agent identifies with.** The challenge: how to formalize that "as"-condition.

The formal analysis:

She uses *qua* objects in the sense of the philosopher Kit Fine (Fine 1982). According to Fine's analysis, *qua* objects are obtained from an individual *d* and a property *P* (the 'gloss') with the following conditions:

- (1) For a property *P* and an individual *d*, [46]
1. *d qua P* exists in a world *w* at a time *t* iff *P* holds of *d* in *w* at *t*.
 2. *d qua P* is identical to a *qua* object *d' qua P'* just in case *d = d'* and *P = P'*.
 3. *d qua P* has a property *Q* just in case *d* has *Q* at the time it is *P*.

She doesn't quite agree with his third condition, which is too extensional, allowing totally accidental and irrelevant properties. (# John as a teacher is 35 years old.) The *qua* property *P* should provide **possible epistemic grounds or other relevance for Q.**

The *as*-phrase, expressing the *qua* property, **does not affect the truth-conditions.** [NB: this makes it different from the *as*-phrases discussed by Landman (1989), where he discusses a person who holds two jobs, and you can say "John as a judge earns \$50,000 a year and John as a janitor earns \$10,000 a year"; there the truth-conditions are implicated, and John altogether earns (at least) \$60,000 a year. There were and probably still are debates about attaching *as*-phrases to an NP vs. attaching them to a VP; similarly for "in his capacity as ...". Landman gives good arguments for analyzing at least some *as*-phrases to the NP, and treats those.]

The *as*-phrase implicit in the *one*-sentence on Moltmann's analysis provides an *epistemic basis* for the application of the predicate; it does not affect truth conditions. And it does

not restrict the domain that generic *one* ranges over, which is ‘vaguely’ restricted (by vague conditions on what is considered normal, plus a contextual restriction.) The ‘gloss’ (the *as*-phrase) will *influence* the domain of quantification, however – the domain will be entities the speaker identifies with, and will likely include the speaker and the addressee.

[This is where we stopped last time. I haven’t repeated my excursion on *one/you*-generics vs. *they* generics from pp13-14 on last week’s handout. I’ve slightly edited and expanded what follows; it’s no longer identical to the corresponding parts of last week’s handout.]

Back to qua objects.

A qua object is analyzed as a “complex variable”: $\text{qua}(x, P)$ is read as “ x qua P ”.

(2) $\text{qua}(x, \lambda y[I y z])$, which is to be read as $\text{qua}(x, \lambda y[z \text{ identifies with } y])$, i.e. as ‘ x qua being an individual that z identifies with’.

- Here z is the relevant agent – the speaker, or the subject of an attitude, or someone the speaker is projecting onto.
- x is the ordinary variable being quantified over; these are generic sentences with $\text{Gn } x$.
- the $\lambda y[\dots]$ constituent is the “mode of presentation”. It is modes of presentation that are first-person-oriented or not.

The **mode of presentation** will govern the applicability of predicates, providing either epistemic basis (the ‘standard’ case) or ‘practical purpose’ (this applies when *one*-sentences are giving rules or advice for others to follow – examples mainly in Moltmann (2006)).

“The variable ‘ z ’ will be bound by a λ -operator defining the meaning of a generic-*one* sentence ... as a property.” (p. 24) This means that the whole generic sentence is given the kind of property interpretation that is suitable for *de se* attribution; she says on p.26 that asserting or even entertaining a generic *one*-sentence requires self-attribution of the property expressed by the generic *one*-sentence. (But I’m not sure whether she’s turning *all* sentence meanings into properties; maybe.)

She illustrates with her partial ‘logical form’ [48] for the sentence *One can see the picture from the entrance*.

(3) $\lambda z[\text{Gn } x . \text{Can-see-the-picture-from-the-entrance}(\text{qua}(x, \lambda y[I y z]))]$ [48]

Note: I believe the relevant *proposition* is what’s inside the lambda-abstraction; so if the qua-property doesn’t affect the truth-conditions, the truth-conditions are those of “ $\text{Gn } x . \text{Can-see-the-picture-from-the-entrance}(x)$ ”. Recall from last time the assumptions about the Gn operator: it allows exceptions, it has modal force, the individuals it ranges over should be ‘normal’ or ‘stereotypical’ (a vague and context-dependent constraint), and its domain may also be contextually restricted, e.g. to visitors who come to this month’s exhibit.

So both the λz that makes this into a property to be self-attributed and the qua-object affect not the truth-conditions but the “first-person access” to this property, about which she has more to say below.

And it’s important to note that this applies to the hearer as much as to the speaker. She is thinking about a hearer not as simply understanding what the speaker has said, but as accepting it or not; and to accept it requires self-attribution of the same first-person-oriented property.

Added bonus.

Qua-objects can also be used to capture the restrictions on other **singular** generic sentences in English and some other languages, as in the well-known madrigal examples (Krifka et al. 1995).

- (4) a. A madrigal is polyphonic. / Madrigals are polyphonic. [49]
b. # A madrigal is popular. / (OK) Madrigals are popular.

Singular generics seem to need qua-objects; their predicates are restricted to properties that hold of a madrigal *qua* madrigal. See also (Greenberg 2007).

Explaining the appearance of faultless disagreement. “First-personal access”

The appearance of faultless disagreement comes from the need to apply the predicate in a first-person-way, as if to oneself, to every individual in the domain; it’s a self-attribution of the property expressed by the generic *one*-sentence.

If one agent has first-personal grounds for asserting the content of a *one*-sentence and another for denying it, then both have reasons for their claim, and in this sense neither is at fault; but at most one of them is right in extending the first-personal grounds to anyone in the contextually relevant domain. The truth-conditions are agent-independent; it is only the epistemic component that will be fixed differently for the two agents.

“Whether the content of a generic *one*-sentence is accepted, rejected, just entertained or merely understood, this requires the same first-personal access for any agent, that is, an application of the predicate to the individuals in the domain as if to oneself. Formally, the condition that the content of a generic *one*-sentence can be accessed only in a first-personal way consists in a self-attribution of the property expressed by the generic *one*-sentence.” (p.26)

Attitudinal objects – some of those, too, can only be accessed in a first-personal way. First-personal vs. plain *de se*.

“If John accepts Mary’s assertion that one can see the picture from the entrance, John needs to self-apply the content ‘that one can see the picture from the entrance’, and if John and Mary share the belief that one can see the picture from the entrance, then that is on the basis of both John and Mary self-applying the content ‘one can see the picture from the entrance’. The role of the property expressed by a generic *one*-sentences in an attitudinal object is different from the role of the property expressed by a sentences with a *de se* interpreted pronoun or other type 2 expression. In the latter case, attributing the

property to the agent of the attitudinal object gives the truth conditions of what is believed. In the case of generic *one*, the property must be self-ascribed by whoever grasps the attitudinal object (or its content).” (p.26)

With generic *one*, two attitudinal objects with the same property as content are identified even if they involve different agents. (Because the agent is lambda-abstracted over in forming the property.) Thus if both John and Mary believe that one can see ..., they can only believe the same thing, not believe different things. **Hence obligatory sharing.**

3.3. A second use of generic one: “practical goals”.

(p.27) For instance in deontic sentences:

- (5) a. One is not allowed to enter the room. [50]
b. The tailor knows what PRO_{arb} to wear.

“... in these cases the speaker presents an internalized, but already established generalization, a law, general requirement, or general recommendation.” (p.27) The statement may be used by the addressee as a premise in practical reasoning. See more in Moltmann (2006). She does not consider this an ambiguity, but two different strategies for fulfilling the same semantic condition, namely that of the gloss that generic *one* imposes on the objects quantified over. Generic *one*-sentences allow for an immediate first-person application by anyone who accepts them.

- Strategy 1: speaker’s own experience leads to a generalization expressed by a *one*-sentence.
- Strategy 2: An already established generalization is presented as a *one*-sentence in hopes that the hearer will accept it and use it in practical reasoning to derive a first-person application.

4. Generalizing the analysis to other type 1 expressions.

(pp. 27-36)

She looks at predicates of personal taste and finds similarities to *one*-sentences, and various linguistic links between *one*-sentences and p.p.t. sentences.

4.1. First-person genericity and predicates of personal taste

(pp. 28-33)

Her first main argument is that p.p.t. sentences are not interpreted simply as subjective, but as generic-quantificational. They *may* be interpreted subjectively, but they may also be interpreted as generalizations true with respect to anyone of the relevant sort. One argument is that the intuition of faultlessness disappears when they are embedded under *know* and other clearly truth-directed attitudes, but remains when they are embedded under *consider* and other more subjective, ‘opinion-expressing’ attitudes, as in some examples later below.

- (6) A: I know that frog legs taste good. [53]
B: I know that frog legs do not taste good.

Here the intuition is that at most one of A and B is right. This is explained on her account, since the *content* of A's reported knowledge is in contradiction to B's. The first-person accessibility of that content is not any part of the truth-conditional content. On a standard relativist account, she says, both A and B should be right, if they have suitable grounds for their differing judgments. [Is that true? I haven't done the further homework to try to work this out for MacFarlane or any other relativist account.]

So for her, sentence (a) below is approximately equivalent to (b) and not to (c).

- (7) a. I know that chocolate tastes good. [54]
b. I know that one likes the taste of chocolate.
c. I know that I like the taste of chocolate.

It is not this way for all attitude verbs, she notes. She calls attention to the difference between *know* and *consider*: *consider* requires a predicate of taste or other subjective predicate (Lasnik 2009). It yields a *subjective* rather than generic reading.

- (8) John considers frogs legs tasty. [55]

Similarly for *find* on one reading, *think* on one reading (Stephenson 2007). In such cases there is **no disagreement at all**. In the next example, both can be right, no disagreement.

- (9) A: I consider frog legs tasty. [56]
B: I consider frog legs not tasty.

Unlike p.p.t. sentences, **one-sentences have no difference in content** with verbs expressing truth-directed attitudes and speech acts vs. verbs expressing purely subjective ones.

- (10) a. John claims / believes that one can see the picture from the entrance. [57]
b. John thinks / finds that one can see the picture from the entrance.

So sentences with p.p.t.'s are *ambiguous*, depending on the kind of attitude verb they are embedded under. With ppts, can have **expressive vs. truth-directed** speech acts too.

Expressive: "presentation" of inherently subjective content.

The formal difference: subjective (evaluative) complements are **two-place** relational predicates with one argument position (the judge position) being *de se*, to be self-ascribed in the attitude of evaluation. (More in her section 5.2, our 4.2 below.)

Since *know* and most attitude verbs do not select predicates of evaluation with one argument position to be self-ascribed, it generates [or selects – BHP] a generic reading of clausal complements with a predicate of evaluation, which means that **the judge argument gets bound by the generic operator**.

Evidence from factive verbs:

- (11) John realized that frog legs taste good. [60]

Lasersohn (2009): Factivity: the embedded S should be true both relative to the described agent *and* relative to the assessor. But (Moltmann) the assessor need not have any taste sensations at all; really for factivity it should be true for all in the ‘domain’ --- the relevant and ‘normal’ individuals.

More evidence of connections between ppts and *one*.

- (12) Chocolate tastes good. [62]
One should eat what tastes good.
One should eat chocolate.

The validity of such an inference shows that the first premise is also generic, with the same generic quantifier as first-person-generic *one*. The inference would fail if the first premise had overt “to me” added.

Note: But SOME ppt sentences are clearly not generic. (*That chocolate tasted good!*) And she allows for that in her discussion. Is there any independent formal distinction that lets us predict which are (or can be) and which not?
Is it in sentences that exclude the generic reading that one gets the subjective reading with an implicit judge? Would that be a better account of the “ambiguity”? Cf. Stephenson on her PRO_J vs a referential pro argument? [and is “to me” vs. “to the cat” a potentially additional “ambiguity”? Homework!]

Her claim (p. 32):

“The generalization is that in truth-directed contexts, sentences with predicates of personal taste have a first-person-based generic interpretation, the kind of interpretation that is obligatory for generic *one*-sentences in *any* context. Truth-directed propositional attitudes and speech acts go along with a generic interpretation of predicates of personal taste, whereas propositional attitudes and speech acts of individual judgment will go along with a subjective interpretation.”

My reaction:

I think it’s reasonable but not absolute: the cat food example can be a truth-directed assertion, and can embed under truth-directed attitudes, as in (13).

- (13) John realized/ found out/ concluded / knew that Friskies taste(d)¹ good.

Perhaps we may be pretending to be a cat, and making a generic statement about us cats?? Even in the cat-food case, I’m not sure we are making or reporting a claim just about the one cat whose reactions we’re basing our statement on.
Here’s a possibly interesting research topic: check what difference it makes to use sequence-of-tense or not. My first impression is that if the embedded sentence is in present tense, it has to get a generic reading, even if it may be generic just over cats. If there’s sequence-of-tense agreement, then the embedded tense is bound to

¹ Possibly interesting research topic: check what difference it makes to use sequence-of-tense or not. My first impression is that if the embedded sentence is in present tense, it has to get a generic reading, even if it may be generic just over cats. If there’s sequence-of-tense agreement, then the embedded tense is bound to the matrix tense and can more easily be linked to the episode John witnessed involving his own cat, hence more easily reporting that he found out that Friskies tasted good to his cat.

the matrix tense and can more easily be linked to the episode John witnessed involving his own cat, hence more easily reporting that he found out that Friskies tasted good to his cat.

I think Moltmann would say that with the present tense embedded clause in (13), we do have a generic sentence. She notes (p.33) that

“as with a generic-*one*-sentence, a single first-person experience suffices to make the generalization expressed by a sentence with a p.p.t. in a truth-directed context:

(14) John just found out that chocolate tastes good. [64]

The content of the epistemic attitude described in (64) is a generalization even though what grounds it is most likely a single first-person experience.”

Moltmann criticizes accounts that are unable to distinguish the content of a truth-directed attitude or speech act from a merely subjective content (such as that of the attitude expressed by *consider* or *find*.) This is for her a general problem with the relativist approach.

4.2. Semantic connections between evaluative predicates and generic one

Given that p.p.t.s have either *subjective* or *first-person-based generic* interpretations, and that the latter are obviously based on the former, how should the subjective reading be represented formally? Choices:

- (a) Judge as a bound variable?
- (b) Judge as a shiftable contextual parameter?

Lasersonhn argues for (b). Stephenson argues for (a). Moltmann has two more arguments for (a).

First argument: A simpler account of binding, plus selection by *consider*.

If the judge is a bound variable, it allows a straightforward account of the possibility of its being bound by a quantified NP, as in (15).

(15) Everyone considers chocolate tasty.

The variable could be part of an implicit *for*-phrase or an argument of *tasty*. One advantage of making it a second argument of *tasty*: that would help with how to account for the semantic selection properties of *consider*.

Proposal: *Consider* can select two-place predicates with one argument place for a “judge”.

And that argument place can also get bound by a generic operator, accounting for the difference between subjective and generic readings in (16) vs. (17)).

- (16) a. John considers chocolate tasty. [66]
b. consider (John, λx [tasty(c,x)] (note: this to be self-ascribed to John *de se*)

- (17) a. John claims that chocolate is tasty. [67, slightly modified]
b. claim (j, $\lambda x[\text{Gn } y. \text{tasty } (c, \text{qua } (y, \lambda z[\text{I } z \text{ x}]])])$)
(also to be self-ascribed, but content not subjective, only the ‘mode of presentation’)

Second argument: A formal link between that argument and generic *one*.

- (18) a. It’s always nice when you get home after a long trip. [variant of 68a]
b. It is nice PRO_{arb} to get home after a long trip. [variant of 68b]

The understood judge of *nice* above covaries with generic *one/you* and arbitrary *PRO*. They can (sometimes must?) be bound by a single generic operator.

- (19) $\lambda x[\text{Gn } z. \text{nice } (^{\wedge} \text{get home } (\text{qua}(z, \lambda y[\text{I } y \text{ x}])) , (\text{qua}(z, \lambda y[\text{I } y \text{ x}])))]$

(my paraphrase: It’s generically (for *z*) nice for *z*-qua-*P* when *z*-qua-*P* gets home), where *P* is $\lambda y[x \text{ Identifies with } y]$, and *x* is the one who is self-ascribing the whole thing, so you can think of *P* as “being someone I identify with” in a normal assertion where I am the self-ascriber.)

A corollary thought, related to Masashi’s term paper project: I suppose it should be odd, then, to try to say something like the following, or it can only get some other sort of meaning:

- (20) #? It’s always nice to visit me. [I can ‘get’ this on a reading of ‘nice of you’, but not on the ‘nice for you’ reading, and of course it’s anomalous as ‘nice for me’.]

Oh, but if I turn it into a question, I’m asking you to self-ascribe, and then it should be fine with normal ‘judge’ interpretation.

- (21) Is it always nice to visit me? [now I want YOU to self-ascribe in answering, so ‘nice for you, for you to visit me’ is natural.]

In fact, I think we can force alternations between Moltmann’s two “uses” of generic *one* by putting in pronouns that will trigger “condition b” effects (non-co-reference effects).

- (22) a. It’s useful to talk with you.
b. It’s useful to talk with me.

Moltmann has more examples showing covariation between the implicit judge of p.p.t.s with generic *one* or arbitrary *PRO* or both in one sentence. Her conclusion:

“The possibility of a single operator binding both the ‘judge’ variable and the variable introduced by generic *one* or arbitrary *PRO* means that the genericity involved in predicates of personal taste cannot be a matter of the lexical meaning of

those predicates (or of *one* of their lexical meanings). Instead it must be tied to the presence of a generic quantifier in the semantic structure of the sentence which is able to bind other elements as well.” (p.35)

5.3. Explaining intuitions of relative truth

Moltmann accepts that there is *disagreement*, but considers the impression of *faultlessness* something to be explained without saying ‘both are right’.

Disagreement: Conflicting general claims being made; the actual truth-conditions are agent-independent.

Impression of faultlessness: arises from the first-personal mode of *presenting* these claims. Understanding or evaluating such a content involves simulating a first-person application of the predicate of taste ‘as if to oneself’, so naturally different speakers will have different grounds for applying or not applying a predicate of taste to others ‘as if to themselves’.

Other advantages of the account:

- Right predictions about who serves as ‘judge’ in independent and embedded contexts.
- Accounts for why judge has a *de se* and not a *de re* status.
- Avoids the ‘meaning-intention problem’: no “standards of taste” are postulated. (One might argue that it brings in a new notion of first-person-simulation, but she appeals to arguments for that that already exist in the literature; in fact it’s argued to be developmentally very early. (Is it discussed in our ‘theory of mind’ group?)

“To summarize, to accept, entertain, understand, or evaluate the content of a sentence like *Frog legs taste good* can only mean self-applying the property in question. But this self-ascription concerns only the epistemic basis of the claim being made, not its truth. The truth conditions of the claim are agent-independent, though the content of the claim can be grasped only in a first-personal way.” (p. 36)

An added note about “simulation theory” and the “theory theory” (see her references to Goldman (2009), Gordon (2009), and others discussing simulation theory and folk psychology): There are two ‘ways’ of applying a predicate to an individual x: (i) by simulating x (quasi-first-person application), or by applying it on the grounds of a ‘theory’ about x (third-person application). Her claim: with overt judge, as in *tasty to John*, one can use either. But when a p.p.t. appears without overt judge, we can only apply it in a first-person way, either self-application or quasi-self-application (In a *de se* way, or in generic sentences, in a quasi-*de se* way.)

Note: Then I think she would hold that even when Kai says “That cat food was tasty!” and means it was tasty for his cat, that must be a case of quasi-first-person simulation, not a third-person mode of application.

5. Other type 1 expressions

Moltmann has brief remarks about other sorts of evaluative predicates – aesthetic and moral predicates and relative adjectives such as *tall* or *rich*. She also devoted a few paragraphs to epistemic modals. In general she argues for the same sort of analysis for all of those, and shows that most of them (maybe not *tall*, *rich*) show occurrences with relevant instances of generic *one* and/or arbitrary PRO.

She has another pre-final section on “retraction”, but follows Stephenson (2007a) in arguing against the relevance of retraction to the central issues concerning the ‘judge’ argument or parameter. She believes it is a special form of time relativity that arises with epistemic modals and future contingents, and has nothing to do with first-person-based genericity, nor with predicates of personal taste; it should rather be addressed as part of the study of modals.

6. Conclusions

Main point of the paper:

“The main point of this paper was that the kind of detached generalizing self-reference expressed by generic *one* is more generally associated with a range of expressions giving rise to intuitions of relative truth. The analysis of those expressions based on first-person-based genericity sheds a very different light on relative truth intuitions themselves: it is not the truth value of the propositional content that must be relativized to an agent, but rather it is the propositional content that must be grasped in a first-personal way to be evaluable as true or false. Such a content once grasped that way has agent-independent truth conditions and thus presents an object of agreement or disagreement of an entirely standard sort.

First-person-based genericity can explain why certain kinds of context-dependent expressions display intuitions of relative truth and only those expressions, namely precisely the expressions whose application conditions involve an essential first-person attribution of a property. It is thus no accident that some context-dependent expressions do not give rise to a relative notion of truth and that conversely evaluative predicates and epistemic modals do not allow for a contextualist or implicit-argument account.”

Part II. What would Lasersohn, Stevenson, Moltmann (and von Fintel & Gillies) say to each other?

Let me try to lay this out in the form of a set of issues; I’ll try to summarize the various parties’ positions on the issues, and their critiques of one another, and then add what I think they might say to each other, and what we might say.

0. *Basic positions, thumbnail*

Lasersohn: Relativist. Explicit analysis only for ppt's.

- Notes that it may not be straightforward to equate “proposition” with “sentence content” since he wants to say that a truth value for a sentence content is dependent on a judge parameter as well as a world and time.
- *Sentence contents* for him are functions from world-individual pairs to truth-values.
- *tasty* has no hidden argument, but its denotation is indexed to parameters that include judge.
- Contradiction at the level of sentence contents: p and q contradict each other if there is no world w and individual u such that $p(w,u) = 1$ and $q(w,u) = 1$.

MacFarlane: Relativist. Most explicit for epistemic modals.

- Sentences may be assigned contents whose truth values depend not just on “context of use” but also on “context of assessment”. (MacFarlane’s “context of assessment” supplies Lasersohn’s “judge” parameter.)

Stephenson: implicit argument for ppt's , judge-sensitivity for epistemic modals. (Wk 9)

Moltmann: See wks 10, 11.

von Fintel & Gillies: Their paper mostly critical, their approach sketched briefly at the end. “cloud of contexts”. Conservative semantics, rich pragmatics.

1. *Data, status of*

1.1. *Faultless disagreement: is it real or only apparent?*

Lasersohn: it's real. They really disagree (their beliefs/assertions contradict each other) and they're really both ‘faultless’ (their beliefs are each true relative to themselves as judge). That's an argument against contextualism, which would put the judge into the semantic content, and in the normal ‘autocentric’ case, A and B would not be disagreeing but simply asserting different propositions.

MacFarlane: It's real, and for him, too, it's a central argument for relativism and against contextualism.

Stephenson:

Moltmann: It's only apparent. In the case of ppt's, they may be simply ‘expressive’, in which case no disagreement, or they are truth-oriented, and those are all really generic propositions with common truth-conditions, hence real disagreement. The appearance of faultlessness results from their special property of being (quasi- or really) first-person oriented. (See last sections of Moltmann discussion above.)

von Fintel & Gillies: It's only apparent. **Many** factors make the data more complex than it has been taken to be by the “CIA agents”². ‘Denial’ is not always directed to truth-

² “CIA theories” in von Fintel & Gillies (2008) is an abbreviation for theories that claim that sentences with epistemic modals only get assigned truth-values relative to contexts of utterance, indices of evaluation, and points of assessment.

conditional content; and the utterances of both parties to the conflict may be vague and ambiguous in a number of ways. And there are many cases of *non*-disagreement that are overlooked by CIA theorists.

1.2. Which kinds of data are most important?

Lasersohn:

- Faultless disagreement is taken to be the primary argument in favor of relativist semantic analyses.

MacFarlane:

Stephenson:

Moltmann:

von Fintel & Gillies:

- The faultless disagreement data is much less strong than it's made out to be.
- So is 'retraction' data.
- Should pay *more* attention to "time lag" facts with the epistemic modals: as time goes by, knowledge accumulates. They find some apparent wrong predictions – retraction should, but doesn't, increase as time goes by. (Al Capone example, King of Spades example.)
- Should pay *more* attention to interaction of tense and modality: the CIA theories make wrong predictions about sentences with *might have* in those cases where the past tense has wide scope over the modal. (*There might have been ice cream in the freezer.*) Making the modal base sensitive to index of assessment causes the problem.
- Should pay *more* attention to various asymmetries between evidence available to speaker and evidence available to assessor.
- In general they look at a lot of compositionality issues more closely than the others.

2. Where and what is the "judge"?

Lasersohn: The judge may be expressed explicitly, as in *tasty to John*, but when it's not expressed explicitly, it's not represented syntactically at all – no implicit argument. Some predicates are judge-sensitive: their semantics makes their evaluation dependent on the judge parameter, which is another index along with world index (and/or situation, time).

MacFarlane: The judge is part of what is determined by "context of assessment", which is distinct from "context of use". Also for MacFarlane it's not represented by an empty pronoun, not "filled in" in sentence content.

Stephenson: Adopts Lasersohn-style treatment of judge for epistemic modals, but not for ppt's: She argues that there are important differences between them, and gives ppt's like *tasty* a judge *argument*, which may be (a) overt, (b) a covert variable (referential or bound), or (c) a covert PRO_J. Only in the case of PRO_J do we get dependence on the judge parameter for ppt's, whereas epistemic modals are inherently judge-dependent.

Moltmann:

von Fintel & Gillies:

3. What's the "proposition", i.e. what gets into the truth-conditional content?

Lasersohn:

MacFarlane:

Stephenson:

Moltmann:

von Fintel & Gillies:

4. What happens with assertion? Speaker vs. hearer vs. eavesdropper?

Lasersohn:

MacFarlane:

Stephenson:

Moltmann:

von Fintel & Gillies:

5. What account of propositional attitudes?

Lasersohn: His account of the judge parameter requires some changes to the semantics of propositional attitude ascriptions. (This is why he is reluctant to equate "sentence contents" with "propositions": his "sentence contents" are *not* the same kinds of things as the objects of the attitudes.)

$$[[\text{think}]]^{c; w, t, j} = [\lambda p_{\langle s, \langle i, et \rangle \rangle} . [\lambda z e . \langle \forall w', t' \rangle \text{ compatible with } z\text{'s beliefs in } w \text{ at } t, p(w')(t')(j) = 1]]$$

I believe that the "proposition" under the "propositional attitude" is just a function from worlds and times to truth-values; which proposition it is will depend on what the judge parameter is, and Lasersohn says that while it's natural for a speaker to take an exocentric perspective in that case and take the attitude-holder as judge, it's not obligatory. (His reason is the cat-examples: 'I think that cat food is tasty, because the cat has eaten a lot of it.'

MacFarlane:

Stephenson: Attitude verbs like *think obligatorily* shift the judge parameter of the embedded clause to the matrix subject. Her evidence is the obligatoriness of such an interpretation for embedded epistemic modals. (She won't have a problem with the cat food example, since she thinks *tasty* has a judge *argument* filled in, which could be a silent pronoun referring to the cat; if it's PRO_J, then it will be identified with the attitude holder.)

Moltmann: Different attitude verbs are different, and they may select for different sorts of complements. Some like *consider* allow or even require subjective content; others (especially factive verbs) want or require judge-independent propositional content. She pays a lot of attention to how propositional attitudes work, and makes the notion of 'mode of presentation' or 'mode of access' important. Her account of generic *one* and of the ppts is heavily interconnected with her account of propositional attitudes, and she would argue that you need to work on these together.

von Fintel & Gillies:

6. What about quantified subjects?

Lasersohn:

MacFarlane:

Stephenson:

Moltmann:

von Fintel & Gillies:

7. Handling of conjoined subjects, other evidence of "sharing"?

Lasersohn: Not explicit as far as I know.

MacFarlane: Not explicit as far as I know.

Stephenson: Not explicit as far as I know.

Moltmann: This is one of her strong points.

von Fintel & Gillies: They use similar compositionality issues to argue against the relativists.

8. What's the relation between "tasty" and "tasty for Sam"?

Lasersohn: The judge may be expressed explicitly, as in *tasty for Sam*, but when it's not expressed explicitly, it's not represented syntactically at all – no implicit argument. And it's not in any case an *argument* of *tasty*. He treats *for Sam* as a modifier; *for* is an intensional operator that shifts the judge parameter to the object of the preposition. Simplified (see Week 9 handout, p. 5) : $[[P \text{ for } y]]^{c; w, t, j} = [[P]]^{c; w, t, y}$.

Stephenson: Although she likes Lasersohn's treatment when applied to epistemic modals, she argues against it for the ppt's. (See Week 9, pp 6-8). (Arguments: (i) obligatory linkage to subject of attitude reports for epistemic modals, optional for ppts; (ii) independence of judge parameter for ppts from judge parameter for modals.)

So for her, *tasty* always has a second argument, and when it's not overt, it's there covertly, either as a normal free or bound variable or as PRO_J.

Moltmann: When there is no overt argument, there is a covert one, and one of the most salient possibilities – tense forms etc permitting (and maybe sometimes requiring) – is that it is interpreted as a first-person-oriented generic. Much of the novelty of her approach comes from her close look at the nature of such first-person-oriented generics and the variety of their interpretations and uses.

Arguments from Principle B: Lasersohn (2008) discusses some arguments Stephenson made against his analysis in Stephenson (2007b, to appear) (I hadn't noticed this when I wrote notes about Principle B above).

Stephenson argues that not only can the hidden argument of ppt's be PRO_J, but the implicit PRO subject of the infinitival complement of verbs like *want* and *try* is also PRO_J. (This helps explain their *de se* nature; probably similar to Moltmann's discussion of PRO_{ARB}.) Then assuming that PRO_J is not a reflexive pronoun, it shouldn't be able to have an antecedent in the same local domain. So the interpretation in (b) should be ruled out for (a), and Stephenson claims that is the observed pattern.

- (23) a. Sue wants to be entertaining.
b. want (Sue, entertaining (PRO_J, PRO_J))

But Lasersohn argues that the data are more complex. He gives a long story about John's attempts to be funny and his own doubt that he has succeeded even when other people react with laughter. So when he then considers the interpretation of *John really wanted to be funny*, he concludes that what John wanted was to be funny *tout court*, not funny 'to someone', and that he judges funniness by his own standard. That fits his own analysis better than Stephenson's.

us: When I have more time, I want to add Moltmann's discussion to this argument, because she would undoubtedly analyze Lasersohn's example as involving a first-person-based generic, which would in fact be a natural extension to Stephenson's analysis.

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