Fictional Reports: A Study on the Semantics of Fictional Names[*]

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ABSTRACT: Against standard descriptivist and referentialist semantics for fictional reports, I will defend a view according to which fictional names do not refer yet they can be distinguished from one another by virtue of their different name-using practices. The logical structures of sentences containing fictional names inherit these distinctions. Different interpretations follow.

Keywords: fictional reports, fictional names, sententialism, interpreted logical forms, gappy propositions, name using practices.

I

When you and I recollect the content of Conan Doyle's *A Study in Scarlet* we could say:

1. Sherlock Holmes smokes a pipe.

I assume that reports about the content of a fictional story are best understood as implicitly prefixed by Lewis's (1978) intensional operator, which transforms a proposition like *Sherlock Holmes smokes a pipe* into a true one if it is part of the story content[1]. Hence, (1) is of the more complex form 'It is part of the fiction that S'. But what is the meaning of the name 'Sherlock Holmes' and what kind of proposition is the one expressed by (1)?

If we were to consider fictional names as genuine names we would probably assume one of two main referentialist options. On one side is Millianism, whose core idea is that the meaning of a proper name is exhausted by its referent (Salmon 1998, p. 278). On the other side is direct reference theory, which says that the truth-conditional contribution of certain singular expressions – including names – is not given through the mediation of definite descriptions (Kaplan 1989, p. 483). Upholders of both views argue that sentences containing (non-empty) singular terms refer to individuals directly and express singular propositions. However, we all know that Sherlock Holmes does not exist, that he is merely the product of Conan Doyle's imagination. In both theories, a name without referent has no semantic content, and sentences containing

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[1] Whether this option can dispense with the notion of pretense is an independent issue that does not concern us in this essay.

empty names do not have any semantic content either, that is, they do not express any propositions.

Critics of referentialism consider it inadequate for the analysis of fictional reports for two reasons. First, referentialism does not allow (1) to have any truth-conditional content. Second, it does not account for a speaker's genuine understanding of (1) and, consequently, of the content of stories involving fictional names. Alternative solutions have been proposed by different descriptivist analyses in which 'Sherlock Holmes' is not a genuine name and its meaning consists of one or more definite descriptions. Kaplan (1973), Currie (1990) and Lamarque and Olsen (1994) defended different versions of this view.

Nevertheless I believe that there are good reasons to consider standard descriptivist analyses of fictional names as inadequate, and I will offer a critical discussion of them in section two. In section three I will present my own positive account, inspired by Richard's (1990) sophisticated sententialism for propositional attitudes but also by Larson & Ludlow's (1993) account of propositions as interpreted logical forms and by Braun's (2005) gappy proposition theory. I will contend that the logical form of a sentence containing a specific name (with or without referent) is determined by its previous individuation through the notion of name-using practice. The logical structure of a sentence containing a name inherits the relevant component and can be fully identified. Even though a fictional name does not contribute any referent to the truth-conditions of a sentence, the gappy propositional content will consist of an interpreted logical form fully individuated by its specific logical structure. In Section four I will draw my conclusions.

II

Two main versions of descriptivism should be carefully distinguished. For upholders of the strong version (henceforth SD), originally introduced by Russell (1905), fictional names are not genuine names. Their truth-conditional contribution consists of one or more synonymous definite descriptions, and the content of sentences containing fictional names is a general proposition with a quantificational structure. In the contemporary debate, Currie's exemplary and complex version of SD is often taken to be paradigmatic but the criticisms I will put forward are independent of his specific holistic proposal[2]. For this reason I will define SD as the view in which the semantic content of 'Sherlock Holmes' is the Φ, i.e. the name is an abbreviation for the complex predicate Φ that encompasses (ideally) all or most of the properties attributed by the author to a specific character in the story. When recollecting the content of *A Study in Scarlet* one could say:

2. Holmes is the Φ.

By replacing 'Holmes' with its synonym set of definite descriptions we obtain the following:

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[2] Specific criticisms of Currie's holism are made in Adams, et al. (1997).

3. If anyone is the unique Φ, then that is Sherlock Holmes.

Namely, if anyone is *the unique intelligent English detective who lives at 221B Baker Street, smokes the pipe* etc. then that person is Sherlock Holmes. Hence, if SD is correct, (3) is analytically true, i.e. it is a logical truth.

Others might maintain that fictional names are names (albeit of a special kind) and yet endorse a weaker version of descriptivism (henceforth WD) that is compatible with direct reference theory. To my knowledge, no author has offered a full account of fictional names on these lines[3], but its potential upholders may argue that one or more reference-fixing descriptions associated with a fictional name *n* constitute its meaning and determine its referential content, if any. And yet in the anti-realist framework that I endorse, weak descriptivism would be subject to the same criticisms that are directed at referentialism. It would hold that sentences containing fictional names without referents do not express any semantic content. It would also hold that speakers can have only a *deficient* or *incomplete* understanding of such sentences by grasping their associated cognitive contents[4]. Even though 'Holmes' does not refer to anything, its meaning is expressed in terms of one or more definite descriptions such as *the pipe smoker*, *the intelligent detective living at 221B Baker Street* and so on, which serve both as conditions on reference and as cognitive contents available to competent users of the name. Hence, WD entails analyticity at the level of character. There are several notable arguments against SD and WD.

Kripke's (1980) semantic argument concerns what the name would actually denote if the conditions represented by Φ were in fact obtained. If, for example, someone were to find out that there really was an intelligent English detective who lived at 221B Baker Street, smoked a pipe and was and did everything that Conan Doyle tells us of the fictional Sherlock Holmes, both SD and WD would force us to conclude that Sherlock Holmes really existed. But this is counterintuitive. We know that Holmes does not and cannot exist in the actual world. In fact, Conan Doyle intended to tell us a story about a merely fictional character. Descriptivists have generally recognized the force of this argument, and their solution consists in adding some kind of reference to the specific act of storytelling by the author.

Kripke's (1980) epistemological argument concerns the truth-value of a sentence like (1), which is allegedly true by definition, when we consider it with respect to certain imagined circumstances that are epistemically possible. If SD were correct, and (3) were analytically true, we should know it *a priori*, by mere reflection on the concepts synonymous with the name or associated with it (by stipulation or convention). Just as we know that 'bachelors are unmarried men' is true by definition, we would also know that 'Sherlock Holmes is the Φ' is true by definition. However, there seems to be a genuine difference between the two terms. It is difficult to imagine alternative circumstances in which 'bachelors are married men' is true, but it is not at all difficult to

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[3] Stalnaker tentatively suggested a view of this kind at the end of *Assertion*.

[4] See Section 4.5 of Currie (1990) for a criticism on these lines of Stalnaker's diagonal propositions as the propositions understood by readers of fictional stories.

imagine several alternative circumstances in which it turns out that 'Sherlock Holmes is not the Φ' is true. We can imagine circumstances in which Sherlock Holmes is not an intelligent English detective, that he does not live at 221B Baker Street, that he is not a pipe smoker, etc. We may even imagine alternative circumstances for the possible world of the story in which his parents baptized him with another name. Hence, we cannot rule out *a priori* that 'Sherlock Holmes is not the Φ' could be true.

Furthermore, Predelli (2009) points out a logical argument against SD nominalist theories, namely those descriptivist interpretations according to which the semantic content of a name *n* is given by a condition δ such as *being called 'n'*. This is what he calls a content-necessary condition, i.e. a function k_c from possible worlds to individuals such that for any possible world *w*, $k_c = i$ (where *i* is the individual that satisfies δ in w). The argument appeals to our inclinations to consider as invalid certain inferences entailed by SD. An example of an invalid inference goes from (4) to (5):

4. Socrates is wise.

5. There exist at least two individuals.

Predelli uses the term 'individuals' to exclude properties, hence wisdom is not taken to be an individual. However, as he notes, one could add properties and then modify (5) to read *there exist at least three individuals* yet we would be faced with the same problem. In fact, no sentence of the form *F(a)* entails $\exists x,y \ (x \neq y)$; all that *F(a)* requires is that one individual be *F*. In our case it requires that one individual be wise. But for nominal SD there is a further condition on (4), one involving the existence of 'Socrates'. Suppose that no individual bears this name in the possible world of context *c*, then [[Socrates]]$_{c,w}$ would not satisfy the condition δ, *being called 'Socrates'*, in the possible world of context c^5. The content-necessary condition of SD would not be satisfied in that possible world. From this we reach the conclusion that there are two individuals *i* and *j* such that *i* bears *j* in c_w. But this is not what is logically entailed by *F(a)*.

Let us now consider what I call the disagreement argument, which was originally proposed by Stacie Friend (forthcoming). Take the following:

6. Gregor Samsa was transformed into a cockroach.

7. No, he was not. Gregor was transformed into a beetle.

Vladimir Nabokov (1980) discusses the fact that after his awakening at the beginning of *The Metamorphosis* Gregor Samsa had been transformed into a beetle. He argues against the interpretation usually proposed by other commentators, who say that Gregor had been changed into a cockroach. But given that there is no Gregor, there is nothing for the commentators to discuss. Nevertheless, the disagreement seems to be genuine, and yet disagreement is possible when disputants have different attitudes towards one and the same object. If, coherently with SD, the truth-conditional contribu-

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[5] The formalism comes from standard double-index theory in which a semantic value [S]$_{c,w}$ is assigned to any sentence *S* with respect to a context *c* and a possible world *w* (i.e., in Kaplan's terms, a circumstance of evaluation). In our case the semantic value [[Socrates]]$_{c,w}$ is assigned to the expression 'Socrates' with respect to a context *c* and a possible world *w*.

tion of 'Gregor Samsa' is a set of descriptions, then by changing just one of them one would change the set. So, when two literary critics A and B discuss whether Gregor was transformed into a cockroach or into a beetle, they would express two different propositional contents:

A: 'If anyone is the unique Φ, then that is Gregor Samsa.'

B: 'If anyone is the unique Ψ, then that is Gregor Samsa.'

But then how could A and B disagree about the same thing?

A different version of the same argument can be applied to any potential version of WD. If we stipulate two different reference-fixing descriptions γ_1 and γ_2 for one and the same name as used in the same context c_w, what we are actually doing is determining two different contents for that name. If we stipulate that 'Gregor Samsa' be associated with the reference-fixing description γ_1, *being transformed into a beetle in c_w*, then γ_1 will pick out whoever has been transformed into a beetle in c_w. If, however, we stipulate that 'Gregor Samsa' be associated with the reference-fixing description γ_2, *being transformed into a cockroach in c_w*, then γ_2 will pick out whoever has been transformed into a cockroach in c_w. Hence, the two different conditions γ_1 and γ_2 will pick out two different referents for (6) and (7) and will determine two different contents for the two disputants. So, again, how could they disagree about the same thing?

There is a descriptivist version of the causal historical theory of reference known as *causal descriptivism* (for instance, see Kroon 1987), in which a token of a name *n* has the semantic value of the definite description 'the individual dubbed in the ceremony connected by a causal-historical chain to *t*', where *t* is a token of *n*. One might think that this version of descriptivism could block the disagreement argument. However, as Friend herself explains, this tentative solution will not really work because the same fictional character might have different names (e.g. 'Odysseus' and 'Ulysses', not to mention common cases of translation such as the English 'Juliet' and the Italian 'Giulietta' in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*) and still be taken to refer to the same character (without any ontological commitment).

III

Fictional names have no truth-conditional content. Classical Millians conclude that they are meaningless. But what can they say about sentences containing them? Most direct reference theorists and Millians think that sentences such as (1) do not express any proposition. In particular, Evans (1982) and Walton (1990) contend that in fiction one pretends to use fictional names as if they refer, but the problematic sentences do not have to be accepted as true. Pretense affects the force of certain speech acts: what looks like an assertion has to be treated as merely a pretend assertion. In particular, Walton's view is that an utterance of (1) is an act of pretend assertion in a game of make-believe authorized by Conan Doyle's *A Study in Scarlet*. Such an act is of a specific kind, which (following Walton) we shall call *K*. In any coherent theory of speech acts, the minimum conditions for the individuation of *K* should be offered not just in terms of its illocutionary force but also as a pair constituted by a sentence and its in-

terpretation. But this is exactly what Walton denies: in his view there is no available interpretation for the content of *K*. So, what is a speaker pretending to assert when uttering (1)? How can we individuate *K*?

If there are no individuating conditions for *K*, one cannot distinguish a pretend assertion of (1) from any other pretend assertion of sentences involving empty names because they all say the same thing, i.e. nothing at all. But in fact we do distinguish a pretend assertion of 'Sherlock Holmes smokes a pipe' from 'Sherlock Holmes lives at 221B Baker Street', both said in a game of make-believe for Conan Doyle's *A Study in Scarlet*. Furthermore, it is a fact that we can translate (1) into different languages. But what is the content that we translate from one language to another? How can we say that 'Sherlock Holmes smokes a pipe' has the same meaning as 'Sherlock Holmes fuma la pipa' in Italian or '*Sherlock Holmes* raucht eine Pfeife' in German? How can these sentences say the same thing if they say nothing at all? Walton's pretense theory clearly lacks the explanatory power to account not just for the intuitions of meaningfulness of fictional names but also for the individuation of speech acts like *K* and for intuitions of sameness of content.

The view that I will defend here is a form of sententialism partly inspired by Richard (1990) that is not susceptible to the usual criticisms of other sententialist versions of fictional discourse. For instance, Larson & Ludlow (1993) offer a sententialist analysis of fictional reports involving non-referring terms as uninterpreted logical forms. Within this framework, one could try to explain the notion of truth in fiction in terms of prescriptions to imagine that *S*, where *S* is an uninterpreted sentence. According to this view, the objects of fictional reports are uninterpreted sentences, thus there can be no distinction between believing (or imagining) *that* a sentence is true and believing (or imagining) that *what the sentence says* is true. Furthermore the proposal may be subject to the famous objection expressed by Church (1954) to the form of sententialism defended by Carnap (1947) that was later amended by Putnam (1954). In Carnap's version of sententialism, truth conditions depend on the logical structure of sentences and on their specific syntactic items. So Church's objection to the following fictional case would be as follows: the translation of a sentence in English such as 'FICT^K(Juliet is in love)' into a corresponding sentence in Italian such as 'FICT^K(Giulietta è innamorata)', where FICT^K is Lewis's fictional operator, would result in the two sentences having different truth conditions.

Given the inadequacies of the standard referentialist proposal of Evans and Walton and the kind of sententialism for fictional discourse proposed by Larson and Ludlow, it is clear that any semantics for fictional reports must be propositional. This is in line with Richard's own account of propositional attitude reports. What we need is to make the information encoded by utterances of sentences sensitive to the way in which readers grasp the proposition, while insisting that it is a singular proposition.

Sentences have syntactic structures that are given (more or less) by the output of a grammar and are usually called Phrase Structure Markers (henceforth PSMs). Linguists usually indicate PSMs with labeled bracketing, as the structure of an ordered set. An interpretation of a PSM is a corresponding ordered set with expressions replaced by intensions. The result is a set of structured intensions – that is, a proposition. In Rich-

ard's proposal, sentences in context express propositions that are represented as tuples of pairs of linguistic expressions and their interpretations, which he calls *Russellian annotated matrices*, comprising both the semantic contents of sentences and the contents of beliefs. However, strictly speaking it is not the linguistic expression itself (the syntactic item) but rather the speaker's internal representation associated with it that plays the role of a mode of presentation in propositional attitude ascriptions. In my view something similar can be said of fictional reports, but the solution I propose will dispense with internal representations by focusing on constraints on the use of names. The subjective notion of an internal representation is in fact of no use for an account of the objective content of a story.

If one were to assume that a sentence such as 'Holmes smokes' is true if and only if [Holmes] is an element of {x: x smokes}, it would follow that the sentences below are both untrue (or false) because in fact neither [Holmes] nor [Watson] are elements of the class of smokers:

8. Holmes smokes.

9. Watson smokes.

And yet we would like to say that (8) is fictionally true whereas (9) is fictionally false. So, we need to explain how these two fictional reports can have different truth-values and how a reader of *A Study in Scarlet* may in fact assent to (8) while denying (9), without being irrational in doing so.

Let us use the ordered-pair representation of propositions expressed by simple sentences of the form $F(n)$: $<i_n, j_F>$, where i is the intension associated with n, if any, and j is the value of F. (8) and (9) express the same labeled proposition $< g_n, j_F >$ where g is a dedicated element of the universe (the gap) assigned to both [Holmes] and [Watson] and j is the intension in predicate position for [smokes]. The simple sentence 'Holmes smokes' is neither true nor false[6], and the use of indexes to indicate the lexical items in the proposition literally expressed by (8) and (9) does not make any difference. For any fictional names n and m, $<g_n, j_F> = <g_m, j_F>$. Furthermore, following Lewis's analyses of truth in fiction, any (interpreted) sentence $F(n)$ embedded within the fictional operator might be true either by virtue of the author's stipulation or because it is implicitly derivable from the explicit truths of the story in conjunction with factual premises and the overt beliefs of the author and her intended audience. And yet this leads us to conclude that in *A Study in Scarlet* both (8) and (9) must have the same truth-value. This is unacceptable.

The gappy proposition theory put forward by Braun (2005) has similar problems. It cannot account for the different truth-values of (8) and (9) and it cannot explain the rationality of a speaker's assenting to and denying one and the same proposition. Braun takes belief to be a two-place relation between a subject and an object, but he has to appeal to ways of believing in order to explain the different beliefs a subject can have towards the same propositional content. Transferring the same strategy to a speaker assenting to (8) and denying (9), Braun would distinguish different ways in

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[6] Braun (2005) argues that it is false.

which the same gappy proposition is imagined. When assenting to (8) a speaker imagines the gappy proposition <_, being a smoker> in a Holmes-ish way, whereas when denying (9) the same speaker imagines the same gappy proposition but now in a Watson-ish way. But as long as speakers can assent to and deny one and the same content their rationality cannot be preserved, so Braun's solution is in fact no solution at all.

It is necessary to complete the theory with a technical move that differentiates (8) and (9) at the level of propositional content. At this point let me briefly introduce the notion of a name-using practice[7]. Fiction writers do not introduce a fictional name with the intention to refer. Conan Doyle knew that Sherlock Holmes did not exist, he was merely pretending to use the name as a genuine referring expression. But by telling his story to an audience he introduced them to a use, albeit a pretend one[8]. A fictional name is passed from the author to his readers in communication chains where each utterance is causally linked to the original source. Participation in a name-using practice explains how we can have discriminatory knowledge of names without referents. We can distinguish uses of 'Sherlock Holmes' from uses of 'Watson' as introduced by Conan Doyle in *A Study in Scarlet* not because we understand them as referring to different individuals, since there are in fact no fictional individuals. Rather, we distinguish them because their uses are causally linked to different name-using practices. Their uses are constrained by the causal links originated by the first act of introduction of each one performed by Conan Doyle in his storytelling.

If a name-using practice were individuated by the sounds and spelling of a particular name, it would be impossible to give a unique account of the way in which we understand a name that undergoes a process of corruption and translation. Yet this would in fact be an inversion of the relation between a name and its name-using practice. Names are individuated by their name-using practices, and not *vice versa*. Let us distinguish between two subsets of the lexicon L: the set of names N and the set of predicate expressions E. Let us introduce the function f that takes elements of N to their name-using practices NP. Let $\{n \in N: f(n) = NP\}$ be the class of names such that $n_1 \ldots n_n \in \{n \in N: f(n) = NP\}$ if and only if $f(n_1) = f(n_n)$. So, for instance, all translations of 'Holmes' belong to $\{n \in N: f(\text{'Holmes'}) = NP\}$, i.e. the name-using practice of 'Holmes'. The function f constrains proper uses of 'Holmes' (and of all its possible corruptions and translations) to its name-using practice. But this occurs before the semantic calculation starts. Perry (2001) theorized what he calls *presemantic uses of context* where context provides information for identifying an utterance, i.e. the words that are used, the language in which they are used, the syntactic structure and even the mean-

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[7] Sainsbury (2005) introduced the expression 'name-using practice' to account for speakers' understanding of names. Here I offer only a brief sketch of my notion of name-using practices for fictional names.

[8] Whether one misunderstands the intentions of the author and uses a fictional name as if it were a genuine referring expression, in the false belief that the name refers, or whether one correctly understands Conan Doyle's intentions and uses the name in pretence, by imagining that it refers without actually believing that it does, neither of these possible approaches precludes the understanding of both kinds of utterances as *uses of a name*.

ings with which they are used. For example, presemantic contexts disambiguate homonymous words (as in Perry's example of the word 'Ich', which might create ambiguity between the German translation of 'I' and the American word for expressing disgust), but they may also contribute to distinguishing between different names, independently of whether they refer or not. We can distinguish uses of 'Holmes' from uses of 'Watson' not because we understand them as referring to different individuals, since there are in fact no fictional individuals. Rather, we distinguish between them because their uses are causally linked to different name-using practices individuated by the first act of introduction of each one performed by Conan Doyle in *A Study in Scarlet*. As a result, it is now clear that the logical structures of (8) and (9) can be distinguished by virtue of having different components, in this case different names, individuated by their different name-using practices. It follows that they also receive two different interpretations.

We can now formulate a rule for truth in fiction where j is the intension of the predicate expression e, n is a fictional name and $^\frown$ is the operation of linking syntactic items:

> An utterance of '$n^\frown e$' is true if and only if for some n $\in$ {n $\in$ N: f('n') = NP}, the proposition $<g_n, j_e>$ is stipulated to be true in the fiction F by the author x or is derivable from the explicit truths stipulated by x in F.

The quotation marks indicate a specific sentence S together with its syntactic items, but there is no reference to the specific internal composition of each of the syntactic items in S. In fact, for the purposes of my definition it does not matter whether S is an English or German sentence or whether the name in S is a translation of the original name introduced by the author. What is important is the internal logical structure of S and its interpretation.

It is now clear that (8) is certainly true in its fictional context whereas (9) is not:

> 8. *An utterance of* 'Holmes$^\frown$smokes' is true if and only if for some 'Holmes' $\in$ {n $\in$ N: f('Holmes') = NP}, the proposition $<g_{Holmes},$ smokes$>$ is stipulated to be true in *A Study in Scarlet* by Conan Doyle or is derivable from the explicit truths stipulated by Conan Doyle in *A Study in Scarlet*.

> 9. An utterance of 'Watson$^\frown$smokes' is true if and only if for of 'Watson' $\in$ {n $\in$ N: f('Watson') = NP}, the proposition $<g_{Watson},$ smokes$>$ is stipulated to be true in *A Study in Scarlet* by Conan Doyle or is derivable from the explicit truths stipulated by Conan Doyle in *A Study in Scarlet*.

Conan Doyle did not stipulate that the sentence 'Watson$^\frown$smokes', where 'Watson' $\in$ {n $\in$ N: f('Watson') = NP}, is true in *A Study in Scarlet*, and a speaker's different attitudes towards (8) and (9) can now be distinguished as having two different propositional objects. A speaker assenting to a report of (8) and denying a report of (9) is now perfectly rational in doing so. Furthermore, we now also have a solution to Friend's disagreement argument. Proper uses of 'Gregor Samsa' are constrained by the same name-using practice, so that we now have:

6. An utterance of 'Gregor⌢Samsa⌢was⌢transformed⌢into⌢a⌢cockroach' is true if and only if for some 'Gregor Samsa' ∈ {n ∈ N: *f*('Gregor Samsa') = NP}, the proposition <*g*_{Gregor Samsa}, being-transformed-into-a-cockroach> is stipulated to be true in *The Metamorphosis* by Franz Kafka or is derivable from the explicit truths stipulated by Kafka in *The Metamorphosis*.

7. An utterance of 'Gregor⌢Samsa⌢was⌢transformed⌢into⌢a⌢beetle' is true if and only if for some 'Gregor Samsa' ∈ {n ∈ N: *f*('Gregor Samsa') = NP}, the proposition <*g*_{Gregor Samsa}, being-transformed-into-a-beetle> is stipulated to be true in *The Metamorphosis* by Franz Kafka or is derivable from the explicit truths stipulated by Kafka in *The Metamorphosis*.

Disputants can disagree about (6), the proposition <*g*_{Gregor Samsa}, being-transformed-into-a-cockroach>, by assenting to and denying it as they can do with (7), once the use of the name in (6) and the use of the name in (7) have been individuated as constrained by the same relevant name-using practice.

IV

In this essay I have described what I consider to be the inadequacies of the standard descriptivist and referentialist semantics for fictional reports and put forward an original account of how we might interpret fictional reports containing fictional names. Fictional names do not refer, and yet they can be distinguished from one another not on the basis of their contents (they have none) but by virtue of having different causal histories. The information communicated through each name-using practice does not play a role in fixing the referent of the name. Rather, the discriminatory work should be explained in causal terms. We distinguish uses of 'Holmes' from uses of 'Watson' by individuating their different causal histories in the presemantic uses of context. Logical structures of sentences containing one or other, or even both, of the two names inherit these distinctions in the sense that two different names (with different histories) are involved and offer a further tool for discrimination between sentences. Different interpretations follow. Surely this view might be further developed by accounting, for instance, for derivations of implicit fictional truths from the explicit truths and by extending the proposal to other kinds of fictional discourse such as storytelling by authors and debates between literary critics.

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