Expressing Existence
Plato's Beard: Objects that do not Exist

Alex Orenstein
The Graduate Center, City University of New York

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Should we not expect a proper account of existence sentences to do justice to claims denying the existence of objects such as Pegasus and Vulcan? Pegasus is a product of ancient mythology and Vulcan an unnecessary and discarded posit of nineteenth century astronomy. A test of such accounts is how they deal with a problem Quine dubbed "Plato's Beard."

This is the old Platonic riddle of nonbeing. Nonbeing must in some sense be, otherwise what is it that there is not? This tangled doctrine might be nicknamed Plato's Beard ..."(Quine, 1948, pp.1-2)

The puzzle bears on vacuous/empty names and inferences involving them such as:

1. **Pegasus /Vulcan does not exist**
2. Something doesn't exist. (**Word and Object** p.176)

The **Word and Object** (p.176) version of this puzzle can be expanded to suit the purposes of this chapter:

True 1. ‘Pegasus exists’ is false. Since there is no such thing as Pegasus, the sentence is false.
The puzzle relates to the reasoning from 1 through 5. 1 is true because nothing exists to correspond to the existence claim and 2 appeals to 1 stating the denial of that existence claim. 5, which is said to follow from 1 and 2, on the existential reading of 4 says that something does exist. As I see it, and would like to encourage the reader to do so too, this reasoning paradoxically derives an assertion of existence from a denial of existence. It seems to be a version of getting something from nothing. Moreover, the conclusion 5 which is said to follow from 1 is a "contradiction in terms" (Quine, Mathematical Logic, p.150) (claiming that an existing object does not exist) while 1 is a contingent truth.

On the quality paradigm the argument from 1 to 4 and 4 to 6 is sound having contingently true premises, 1 and 2, and the conclusions 4 and 6 follow from the premises (and 4 abides by the all/some - and/or adequacy condition). Neither of the premises have existential import nor do the conclusions 4 and 6. 5 does not follow and does appear to be "a contradiction in terms".

In this chapter I examine and reject some treatments which have been offered to the puzzle, and present in more detail a solution grounded along the lines of the affirmative - negative distinction outlined in chapter 1. In the next chapter I discuss a second version of the problem.

I. Object Dependence

I will use the phrase "object dependence", in an unorthodox, rather broad and comprehensive, way: if the object that the subject term of a singular sentence is used to refer to does not exist, then there is no bivalent truth vehicle. It is more commonly used to say
that such sentences don't express propositions. My use of 'object
dependence' covers:

Evans' and Walton's object dependence are examples of a no-
object-so-no-proposition view. Here the object need not be part of
the proposition (1982, p.343) (Walton, pp. 219, 391,396 );
Russellian singular propositions as in Salmon where the object
constitutes part of the proposition/truth vehicle (so no object then no
proposition)(Salmon1986, pp. 127, 170);
Strawson's view interpreted as saying no object so no
statement/truth vehicle (1950);
as well as
Strawson-Van Fraassen construed as saying no object then
bivalence is suspended, so a non true/false truth vehicle.(Van Fraassen,

Almost all the views falling under this topic deny that sentences
containing empty singular terms express contingent truths or
falsehoods. In the Plato's beard case, they focus on the premise which
is a denial of an existential, and elsewhere on non-existent sentences
containing empty names such as 'Vulcan is a planet', 'Ossian was an
ancient bard', 'Deno (a non-existent drug dealer) committed the crime',
'Ern Malley (a non-existent poet) was Australian.' etc.\(^1\). As applied to
the puzzle they deny in different ways and for different reasons that
the sentence used to state the premise constitutes a contingent truth
or falsehood. The motivation in doing so stems from convictions
derived from philosophical arguments as to the nature of truth vehicles
and/or from direct reference accounts of names.

Figures such as Evans and Salmon take propositions as truth
vehicles but they differ in their conceptions of a proposition and on the
reasons given as to why their singular propositions are object
dependent in the sense that they do not express propositions.
Strawson took statements and not the sentences used to make
statements, as his truth vehicles. On my broad use, 'object
dependence' for him involved all referring terms, all nouns (all subject
terms) and not just singular ones. As I understand his early position,
propositions as such are not truth vehicles. Strawson's truth vehicles,
his statements, are bivalent. In the vacuous case such statements
simply do not exist. Van Fraassen by contrast, with his method of
supervaluations, has truth vehicles, but they are not bivalent. They can
be neither true nor false. This allows sentences containing vacuous

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\(^1\)Deno was a non-existent drug dealer. A defendant claimed that Deno forced him to
commit a crime. This was the defense claimed by the accused and reported on in
several New York newspapers. Ern Malley did not exist. He was invented in order to
ridicule uncritical editors of a poetry journal.
singular terms to appear as premises and conclusions in arguments. In the empty singular term case the sentences are truth vehicles that are undefined as to truth values and are neither true nor false. His method of supervaluations explains how such sentences function in what is, in some ways, much like a classical logic. In a somewhat similar vein (though with less of classical logic), appeals to many valued logic allow for the presence of a truth vehicle but involve more values than the two classical truth values.

These approaches of Strawson, Evans, and Salmon violate our intuitions that sentences, such as 'Vulcan is/is not a planet', 'Atlantis/Nessie does/does not exist', 'Deno committed the murder', etc., express contingent truths and falsehoods. They certainly appear to play this role in natural languages. Moreover, one has to go to some trouble not to notice or to put aside the multitude of cases where such sentences are embedded compositionally in other sentences normally judged true or false, for example:

- in negations and conditionals, e.g., 'Though Vulcan is not a planet and does not exist; if Vulcan did exist, Vulcan would be larger than the moon'.
- in modal contexts and propositional attitude contexts of belief/imagining/pretending/etc., e.g., 'LeVerrier came to believe in the possible existence of Vulcan, later that it actually existed and was a planet and eventually that it did not exist', 'The victim's family were convinced of the fact that Deno committed the murder', 'Many people who believed that Ossian was an ancient bard, came to disbelieve it', 'Australian philosophers know that Ern Malley does not exist', and 'Many readers of fiction have imagined that Atlantis exists and is an island'.

There is also the role of such sentences in arguments for or against the existence of such items, e.g., 'Nessie/God exists', and arguments in law courts (The Deno defense., 'Does Deno exist?'), history ('Troy did exist, but Atlantis did not', 'Ossian does not exist'), science ('Vulcan is not a planet and like caloric does not exist'), etc.

1. A Methodological Assumption

Philosophers who find some favorite system to their mind.
In every point to make it fit,
will force all nature [language] to submit.
(Jonathan Swift)

The history of the relation of natural language to logical theory in the twentieth century can be interpreted as a Hegelian dialectic. The thesis is the early stage in analytic philosophy. When logical theory
clashed with natural language, it was natural language that suffered. An epidemic of charges of meaninglessness occurred. Among those charged as linguistic deviants were such purported perversions of use as singular existentials, strings with vacuous singular terms, and the improper mating of objects or expressions of the wrong type. The title of Ryle's famous essay "Systematically Misleading Expressions" captures the ethos of that period. The essay documented purported cases of natural language usage which were perceived to be at odds with certain logical forms provided at the time, and, predictably for that period, the fault was located in natural language not in the logical forms suggested by Principia Mathematica. The antithesis in this dialectic is ordinary-language philosophy, where such clashes lead to downplaying the role of logical theory and upgrading natural-language considerations. A favored practice of this period consisted of dissolving philosophical problems by illustrating that they had their roots in the misuse of ordinary language. The problem would disappear upon abandoning some theoretical infringement on natural language and by carefully sticking to ordinary language. The synthesis (the hero in Hegelian fictions) is the present period, and especially the position taken by the author of the fiction. Here, natural language considerations and those of logic go hand in hand. This is due to a number of factors: a growth in logical theory, a more flexible attitude towards logical forms (competing theories of logical form are tolerated) and the growth of linguistics as a theoretical and somewhat formal theory of natural languages.

Part of our project is to provide logical forms. A theory providing a logical form is governed by the same constraints as other theories, e.g., explanatory power, simplicity, conservatism, etc. In this work, we shall abide by the maxim of being conservative in revising background assumptions. Quine refers to it as being a maxim of minimal mutilation. Explanations should not rule out more than is necessary of previously accepted beliefs. Of two theories, other things being equal, the one that clashes least with background beliefs is to be preferred. Mutilations should not be multiplied beyond necessity. Ruling out cases of the expressive force of natural language and/or intuitively acceptable-plausible logical inferences is inflicting mutilations.

My concern is with a family of cases where natural language has been unduly mutilated in the cause of assigning certain "Procrustean logical forms". By 'logical form' I intend a minimal conception, namely,
that of providing a framework in a logical theory for sentences that
play roles in intuitively acceptable inferences within natural language:
explaining our intuitions as to which are valid and which are not. I take
it that this is what has taken place historically, e.g., Aristotle on
categorical sentences, Frege and Peirce on multiple quantification and
relational notions, work on modal logic, proposals such as Davidson's
for action sentences, ongoing work on the logical form of belief
sentences, etc. So construed, logical form is in its essence a theory
bearing on the valid and invalid inferences sentences enter into.

My methodological assumption is: the fewer intuitions about
natural language sentences ruled deviant the better, and the more
intuitively valid inferences recognized and accounted for the better. So
'Pegasus is a flying horse', 'He does not exist', 'Vulcan is a planet'.
'Vulcan exists' or 'Vulcan doesn't exist', 'Deno forced me to commit
the murder', 'Deno lives in the Bronx', 'Deno [Ossian] exists', 'Deno
[Ossian] does not exist' are all intuitively meaningful and should be
treated as contingent truths and falsehoods. They have "street-cred."
Dismissal of arguments containing such sentences and such truths and
falsehoods, e.g., 'Pegasus doesn't exist so something doesn't exist', is
unacceptable. Moreover, treatments of such sentences as not fully
serving as bivalent premises or conclusions is unacceptable. (In these
cases I am not concerned with such terms as they bear on problems
pertaining to fiction as a literary genre, i.e., to such terms occurring in
an "in the story" context. 3 (For more on fiction and empty names see
see Appendix A on fiction.)

facilitate logical inference, but to attest to conceptual clarity. What does not fit
retains a tentative and more provisional character."

3 The position taken in this work on ‘Sherlock Holmes lived on Baker Street’, ‘Hamlet
was a prince of Denmark’ and their like is not an original one. I distinguish these
sentences when they are used as “inside the story” remarks and as “outside/
independent of the story” remarks. Another way of referring to
“inside the story” remarks, when they are so to speak “dictated” by the story, is as
fictional truths. The remark made inside Conan Doyle’s stories above is a fictional
truth that is “dictated” by the story. The remark made inside the story that Holmes
was an arch villain is fictionally false. The expression ‘fictional truth’ is an idiom (it is
non-compositional). ‘S is fictionally true’ does not imply ‘S is true’. Others have
made the same point. David Lewis (pp. 263-4) says the following..

" Many things we might say about Holmes are potentially ambiguous. ----
Consider these sentences:
Holmes lived in Baker Street.
---Holmes was just a person – a person of flesh and blood.
Holmes really existed. ---

All of them are false if taken as unprefixed [not prefixed by ‘In the Sherlock
Holmes stories’], simply because Holmes does not exist. (Or perhaps at least
some of them lack a truth value.) All of them are true if taken as
Early versions of the deviant-string approach appeared in Frege's and Russell's view that singular existentials are meaningless and Hilbert's that improper strings with definite descriptions are not well formed formulas. Hilbert's position is open to the above line of criticism. (Orenstein, 1975) Unlike object dependent accounts, Frege and Russell's views would allow non-existential sentences with vacuous singular terms, such as 'Vulcan is a planet', to play a role as true or false and as parts of arguments. However, at times they ruled out both vacuous and non-vacuous existentials with singular terms, e.g., 'Julius Caesar exists but Zeus doesn't'. All singular existentials and their denials were said to be deviant. This view is like object dependent ones in being quite counterintuitive. Ordinary usage is full of such existentials, e.g., 'I exist', 'God does (does not?)', 'Troy exists but Atlantis doesn't' (Orenstein, 1995a, pp. 230-5)

Almost all object dependent views violate the maxim of conservatism in denying that the premise 'Vulcan does not exist' is a contingent truth. Some object dependent theorists would hold that since there is no proposition or statement here, and, if arguments are made up of propositions or statements, then there is no argument. Others would hold that there is an argument and there is a premise, but it is neither true nor false. The premise has no truth-value. (In the next chapter I will examine David Wiggins' version of this.) Some object dependent theorists make departures from classical logic. This is a drawback. It seems inadvisable to switch to some other logical framework, especially when a classical alternative is available along the lines of the quality paradigm.

2. Maximal Expressibility versus Object Dependence

Many proponents of object dependence maintain direct reference theories of names. On some versions, all names are either directly referential or are rigid designators. A singular sentence with an empty name is seen as defective, and the defect is frequently said to be that the sentence fails to express a proposition. Such sentences are, in some sense, either meaningless or fail to provide a truth vehicle and

abbreviations for prefixed sentences [prefixed by 'In the Sherlock Holmes stories']."

I would argue that given Lewis's position on the sentence 'Pegasus really exists', he would maintain a similar position on 'Pegasus is (or really is) Pegasus'. One ought to maintain that the identity claim while true in the story is false independent of the story. For more on this topic see Appendix A to this chapter.
are neither true nor false. This is incompatible with giving empty names the roles I accord them.

One can and should argue that the direct reference theory is correct for an important (and quite likely the most basic) type of names, but that it does not cover the entire spectrum of names. Directly referential names are a subset and make up only one species of names. Divide ordinary names or natural language names into directly referential and "vulgar". The classification is reminiscent of Russell's' logically proper names and ordinary names. The vulgar includes empty names, non-unique names and mere names of laziness (disguised definite descriptions). Both kinds are the singular terms that occur in natural language as parts of understandable sentences. To that extent they are, in some minimal sense, meaningful.4

So, you can keep your favorite theory of directly referential or genuine singular terms for that subclass of natural language names. Indeed, it seems plausible that the category of names, in the broader natural language sense I am arguing for, is grounded in some ways on the directly referential names. Directly referential names are more basic in that the institution of names in the more inclusive sense is based on the directly referential ones. We learn the more general category of names by first learning some directly referential ones. Moreover, we would not teach someone the use of names by way of empty names. It seems likely that languages containing names get started by introducing names with genuine singular terms, and then, for reasons such as those given below concerning the varied functions of names, are expanded to allow for empty names.

An argument can be mounted for the broader view of names by expanding on some ideas of Dagfinn Follesdal (1986, p.108). He talks of "genuine singular terms". I will assume this expression applies to what others have in mind by "directly referential names". Follesdal outlines three functions genuine singular terms perform with respect to gaining knowledge about the world via knowledge of its objects.

1. Pursuing our Interests in further features of the object named;
2. Our need to follow the object through its changes;
3. Correcting wrong beliefs.

4 Some model directly referential names on variables in first order logic and their natural language co-relative pronouns. But, just as the pronouns of English are not limited to the ones that are models for direct reference, and also include pronouns of laziness, so the category of names includes directly referential ones and others that may be akin to the pronouns of laziness. The latter "names of laziness" may be derived from definite descriptions.
I will concentrate on expanding on the third role.

To begin with, one type of false belief that we correct involves empty names. Consider the belief that Epimenides was the originator of the liar's paradox. Quite a few philosophers believe this. However, reputable scholars believe it is false and that Eubulides (a contemporary of Aristotle) originated the paradox. (Bochenski, p.131) Furthermore, one respected historian argues that Epimenides never existed and that the name is of the same sort as 'Orpheus' (Bury, p.171). One way in which we correct mistaken beliefs involves denials of existence, general and singular. To deny that F's exist or that a exists is to inform investigators that a certain path of investigation should be avoided.

Follesdal's account also needs to be expanded to include the role of names in arriving at theories. What we need is some minimal conception of language and names, so as to allow for the ability to arrive at alternative hypotheses. The possibility of arriving at correct conjectures requires having the capacity to arrive at incorrect ones. Follesdal's considerations need to be generalized and related to the entire institution and practice of using names. To arrive at a correct account of the objects a that are F, we need an open ended ability to deal with forms of this sort. As long as an expression is of the grammatical category of Fa and there are expressions of the grammatical categories of a and of F, then Fa is understandable and meaningful, and can be used in framing hypotheses. Such conjectures can go wrong in that a exists and is not an F or that there are no Fs or that there is no a, e.g., Vulcan. The possibility of arriving at correct conjectures requires having the ability to arrive at incorrect ones, and one form of incorrectness is a conjecture with an empty term. In developing a theory we sometimes employ inference to the best explanation. This can involve positing the existence of an object to explain some data, and it can take place where we are not directly acquainted with the object. Take LeVerrier's positing of Vulcan as a case in point. In attempting to fix the reference of an expression there is no guarantee that there is such an object.

Follesdal has a section entitled ‘Rigidity as an ideal’. I would like to adapt it to my purposes. (1986, p. 111) A name that refers to an existent object and the same object in every possible world is a case of a special type of successful use of a singular term. But there are unsuccessful uses of singular terms and they are necessary in the attempt to get at truths about objects. Speculation and the freedom to get things wrong (in lots of different ways) underlie the opportunity
to learn new truths. So the category of names should include empty names.

Names are also used in performing other functions than arriving at knowledge.

Fiction: Whatever deep needs are satisfied by telling stories, empty names play a conspicuous role. So with the play of imagination involved in fiction, we expand the category of names from genuine singular names to empty names. (See Appendix A)

Deception: Evolutionary psychologists have called attention to the survival value of deception. A species (the King snake) having the same markings as a poisonous species (the coral snake) is more likely to be avoided. Likewise, all too human uses of deception are thought to be useful. Examples abound: In the 18th century Macpherson tried to cash in on a vogue for ancient poets. He wrote poetry in the form of ancient Scottish bards and attributed it to a non-existent Ossian. It served the purposes of some members of the National Rifle Association to send letters from a non-existent Mr. Fiddleman questioning President Clinton's policies. The defense (it came to be called the Deno defense) in a trial for a particularly brutal murder claimed that the murder was ordered by a non-existent drug dealer Deno.

Not all cases of human deception serve unethical purposes. Two Australian poets tried to discredit pretentious and arbitrary judgements on the value of some poetry. They constructed a "poem" by assembling random lines and sent it to a journal that was the target of their criticism. The editors proclaimed that the work had great value and that the author - Ern Malley - was a fine poet. Ern Malley does not exist.5

Coming up with theories, creating fiction and the natural tendency to deception, justify taking empty names seriously and they provide a reason for being skeptical about incompatible object dependent theories.

3. Further Problems for Object Dependence

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5 From a correspondence with David Oderberg "--- it's a famous case, the case of 'Ern Malley', the fictitious poet invented after the war by the brilliant poets James McCauley and Harold Stewart (both deceased). David Lewis published a piece in the Australian magazine Quadrant trying to prove that the name 'Ern Malley' was derived from an associate of Meinong's (ha ha) called by a similar name (Ernst Malley or something). It's rubbish, since the name is simply the Aussie name Ern plus the name of the Mallee bush, found in Australian scrubland."
In the next chapter, an extended version of the Plato's beard problem is presented. It indicates that even when we assume object dependence, the problem still exists in another form.

I close this section by calling the reader's attention to the following point. Object dependent theorists need to provide evidence for their position. While it seems clear that sentences like 'Vulcan is a planet', 'Vulcan exists', and 'Sherlock Holmes lived in London' (outside of fiction) are not true, this does not show that they are neither true nor false, i.e., not true and not false. It seems as if the more modest conclusion to draw from the fact that these sentences are not true, is that they are false. It certainly does not follow that they are neither true nor false i.e., not true and not false. The fact that they are not true does not imply that they are not false. In fact, if they are not true, this would seem to suggest, if not imply in some sense, that they are false. One can, of course, propose a theory stipulating that they are neither true nor false, but this needs some sort of argumentation: what evidence is there that the sentences are not false, other than appealing to the theory in question and intuitions driven by it? Moreover, the object dependent theory would have to be compared and judged in terms of generality, conservatism, etc., with the competing view offered here.

II. "Meinongian" Views

Though "Meinongian" approaches vary, I will assume that they all employ quantifiers which range over non-existent objects. This allows for a solution in accord with our intuition that the conclusion 'Something doesn't exist' is a contingent truth. On my reading, such views can be tough-minded (robustly realistic) about the use of the word 'exists' while being tender minded on the use of 'object'. They could agree with Russelliens, Quinians, Lesniewskians, Terminist logicians etc., that Pegasus, Vulcan, Ossian, Nessie (probably), Deno, etc. do not exist. The difference between Meinongians and the others lies in the notion of an object. Whereas the others take the expressions 'exists' and 'is an object' to be coextensive, they make the notion of an object a more inclusive one. For Meinongians Pegasus, Nessie, etc. do not exist but they are objects and the conclusion that some things (some objects) do not exist is taken as "true" and justifiable within the standpoint of this theory.

However there are at least two reasons for not being Meinongian on such puzzles. The first is parsimony - dispensability. It is worth seeing whether one can provide a non-Procrustean treatment without positing objects over and beyond existing ones. A word on terminology.
When Russell employed the expression "robust sense of reality" to contrast with Meinongian views it may partly have been in the spirit of favoring a more parsimonious view. His other criticisms have not fared as well, (see Parsons and Lambert for rejoinders to Russell). A confusion of terminology arises with the expression 'realism' in realism versus anti-realism controversies. Hence, to speak here of Russell's "robust realism" sounds strange since Meinong is now dubbed the realist on this issue and Russell the anti-realist.

In addition to the parsimony/dispensability point, there is a dilemma. It consists of inquiring whether vacuous singular terms in a special extended sense are allowed or not. Consider vacuous singular terms which not only do not have an existent that they denote but don't even have Meinongian objects that they denote. Let us use the expression 'vacuous as to existence' for ordinary vacuity and 'vacuous as to objecthood' for the vacuity I have in mind. The Meinongian solution to the Plato's beard puzzle consists of two moves:

1) having no vacuous-as-to objecthood singular terms, and
2) construing quantification in a Meinongian spirit, i.e., 'Some objects don't exist',

and thus not as producing the contradiction in terms,

5) 'Some existing things don't exist'.

A parallel puzzle arises when the Meinongian allows for vacuous as to objecthood singular terms. Let us assume that 'Pppegasus' is such a term (pronounced by sounding out the separate 'P's). Perhaps it is a term with a history of non-objecthood in a Meinongian universe that parallels the history of 'Pegasus' in a non-Meinongian universe. Assume there is a Pppegasus story and 'Pppegasus' is a bona-fide meaningful singular term. We now have a true puzzle premise:

Pppegasus is not an object.

By the second move of the Meinongian strategy, we construe the quantifiers as ontologically committing us to Meinongian objects. We get a Meinongian contradiction in terms as a conclusion:

Some objects are not objects.

The puzzle remains or recurs, when Meinongians allow for vacuous as to objecthood singular terms.

On the second horn of the dilemma, the Meinongian will deny that a syntactically meaningful term can be vacuous simpliciter (with respect to objects as well as existents). This is to subscribe to the policy that there are no vacuous singular terms (or perhaps more strongly that there could not be any). Now the premise: 'Pppegasus is not an object' is false, and the false conclusion (contradiction in terms) seems less of a problem. But a question remains as to why a singular term, if part of a language - a linguistic entity (or a representation of some sort) - should always have a denoted item. Singular terms, if construed as linguistic items, are customarily distinguished from the non-linguistic items that the singular terms denote. What argument is
that being a member of the set of such linguistic items guarantees that there is a member of the set of denoted (or possibly denoted) non-linguistic items for each term to denote? In today's realist/anti-realist parlance, Meinongians are construed as holding a realist thesis that certain items really are in some independent sense the subject matter of true-false attributions. The more one poses this realist construal of Meinong (the more realist in the current sense - the less robustly realist in the Russellian sense), the greater the difficulty in framing an argument for there being Meinongian denotations for all singular terms.

What guarantees that all names have a denotation, even when we grant that there are objects that don't exist? What argument is there on realist grounds that all names have objects that they denote? If some names do not have objects, then the puzzle reappears, and, if they all do, we are owed an explanation of this. The problem of empty names remains unsolved.

III. Chosen Object Theories

There is an instrumentalist stance which some take and which should be rejected (Orenstein, 1990, p. 271). It has its roots in Frege's suggestion for improper definite descriptions and consists of letting such vacuous expressions stand for some actually existing object. David Kaplan aptly calls it "the chosen object theory" for dealing with vacuous singular terms (Kaplan, 1970, p. 210). Just choose an existing object for the vacuous term to stand for and get on with your business. The null set has been a favorite chosen object. This instrumentalist ploy gives the wrong results. In Mathematical Logic, Quine adopted the chosen object view and remarked (tongue-in-cheek?) that it is not a question of the existence of God or Pegasus but of their nature.(p.152) If you say that 'Pegasus', which is otherwise vacuous, is not vacuous and has as its referent the null set, the intuitively false sentences, 'Pegasus exists', 'Pegasus is identical with Cerberus', and 'Every set includes Pegasus as a subset', get evaluated as true. The trouble with the chosen object theory is that it changes the subject. In using the expressions 'Pegasus' and 'Vulcan', we are simply not talking about some chosen existing object.

There are a number of different ways of looking at solutions offered to problems concerning empty singular terms. One can group together approaches that in one way or another deny that the prima facie empty names are empty. This "no empty name approach" is clearly exemplified in the chosen object theory. It is also present in Meinongian views that guarantee that every singular term has an object. Object dependent theories do not recognize empty names, i.e., in their finished statement, all the relevant singular terms playing roles
in arguments are non-empty. For instance on the no object so no
proposition views, there are no propositions with empty singular terms.
So, in a sense, object dependent theorists are in the no-empty name
tradition. As we shall see Quine's elimination of names in place of first
order variables which are never vacuous is also a variant.

IV. Free Logic (Construed Narrowly)

To understand how some free logicians might attempt to resolve
the puzzle, a word must be said about their definition of 'free logic'. K.
Lambert and E. Bencivenga, two leading spokesmen for free logicians,
stipulate that the phrase applies exclusively to logics that allow for
vacuous names and that read the particular quantifier, '(∃x)',
existentially (Lambert, Bencivenga). Unless otherwise specified in this
work, the phrase 'free logic' shall be used in a less restrictive way.
Before the restricted nomenclature was adopted, the term had the
broader connotation of a logic free of existence assumptions. On the
earlier, broader connotation, and the one taken in this work, views such
as those in this work, Lesniewskian views, as well as reliance on
substitutional quantifiers construed non-existentially, could all be
regarded as free logics. After all, what could count more as a logic
free of existence assumptions than accounts which free the particular
quantifier of existential significance and which also allow for vacuous
names?

The usual direction that free logic in the restricted stipulated
sense takes is to deny the ordinary and intuitive particular/"existential"
generalization rule and the universal instantiation rule. Instead of the
familiar

'...a...', therefore, '(∃x)...x...',

the new free-logic rule tends to be a variant of

'...a...' and 'a exists', therefore, '(∃x)...x...'.

The inference from 'a is an F' to 'Something is an F' is now invalid and
the argument from 'Pegasus does not exist' to 'Something does not
exist' is invalid. This revision of standard logic violates our intuitions
that the argument and the familiar rule are valid. Forcing the existential
reading on the particular quantifier and allowing for vacuous names
leads to denying the otherwise solid intuition that is embodied in the
standard rule. The revision also violates the material adequacy
conditions for the quantifiers adopted earlier. Particular generalization is analogous to disjunctive addition. Maintaining this analogy requires that just as 'Fa' implies 'Fa v Fb vFc v etc.' , so 'Fa' implies '(3x)Fx'. The Plato''s beard argument as it stands is invalid for such a free logician. When we supply the purportedly missing premise to turn the invalid argument into a valid instance of free particular generalization we get

Pegasus does not exist.
Pegasus exists.
Therefore, something does not exist.

While this argument should be considered valid because of its grosser sentence-logic form (from a contradiction everything follows), it does not help to save our intuition that the original argument was valid as it stood. It also requires supplying the false second premise, making this version mutilate even further our original intuition that the original argument was sound. Last of all, the conclusion, in the invalid and the valid forms remains a contradiction in terms, given the existential reading of the quantifier that is incorporated in this conception of free logic. In the next chapter I will return to issues surrounding this conception of free logic.

V. Quinizing names

1. Dispensing with Names

Quine has been an important corrective force to excessive charges of linguistic deviance. He did not extend the concept of meaninglessness beyond strict violations of syntax and challenged charges of meaninglessness in at least two ways. The first was the avoidance of type theory and some of its philosophical spinoffs. Russell's solution to his own paradox involved multiplying cases of meaninglessness for type violations. This furnished a precedent, in the thesis period of the dialectic and beyond, for talk of category errors and meaninglessness. Quine has argued that type violations/category errors can be regarded quite simply as obvious falsehoods. Secondly, one can interpret Quine's criticisms of verifiability tests of meaningfulness as the more modest claim that assertions about the Absolute, etc., do no work in empirical inquiries. These are more modest charges than claiming meaninglessness, and they should be sufficiently damning. Charges of non-syntactical meaninglessness in its several forms constitute Procrustean overkill.
However, there are unconservative Procrustean elements in Quine's solution. To begin with, his most distinctive way of dealing with names, vacuous or not, is to accord them no status in his canonic notation. They are supposed to be, in some serious sense, dispensed with, in favor of predicates and variables of the category of singular terms. Wherever there is a name in natural language, we form, instead, a predicate which applies to the object (if any) that the name applies to. Then, we use Russell's theory of definite descriptions in connection with the predicate version of the name. I have been told that David Kaplan puts this as follows: “We Quinize the name and Russell away the description”. The starting point of the puzzle 'Pegasus exists' is, in turn, treated as

'There is one and only one object which pegasizes'

and in canonic notation appears as

\[(\exists x)(Px \land (y)(Py \rightarrow y = x))\].

It is false and so we can take its denial as Quine's version of the second line of our puzzle:

\[\neg (\exists x)(Px \land (y)(Py \rightarrow y = x)).\]

The only singular terms present are variables (and bound ones at that). There is no troublesome vacuous name to "existentially" generalize on and yield the puzzle. But then there are no names for the “natural” natural deduction rules of generalization to apply to. This violates our intuition that inferences with names be allowed as they stand, and, in particular, that the puzzle inference is sound as it stands. If there is a problem about vacuous names, a more intuitive - less Procrustean - way of dealing with it would be preferable.

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6In Mathematical Logic he did offer an argument from the syntactical form of quantification claims, and the view that existence is what existential quantification expresses, that singular existentials construed as a quantifier concatenated with a singular term, e.g., '(\(\exists x\))a' is not a well formed formula. However, this should be distinguished from the type-theoretical arguments offered by Fregeans and Russell. Quine came to agree with more current views that assign a different and bona fide logical form to singular existentials, e.g., '(\(\exists x\))(x = a)' . In order to deal with the Word and Object form of the puzzle, special provisos would be made, in effect making the singular term inaccessible to quantification. This may well be a procrustean move inhibiting ordinary inferences involving names. And here, too, the intuitively meaningful and contingently true conclusion is transformed via the existential reading of the quantifier into the contradiction in terms 'There exist things which do not exist'.

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There does appear to be a semblance of an inconsistency in Quine's treatment of the puzzle in *Word and Object* (p.176) where he uses intuitive inferences with names to create the puzzle, thereby implicitly acknowledging their intuitive appeal, and then offers a solution which would deny that one can make such inferences. Names even appear in a somewhat more systematic fashion on the way to a final solution which dispenses with them. Schematically

'Fa', where 'a' is a name or schema for a name,

becomes

'(\exists x)(x=a \text{ and } Fx)';

then 'a' is treated as though it were a simple predicate without any internal structure. Let us try to do justice to Quine and attempt to make a case for his using natural language inferences involving names as a ladder to be abandoned once he has reached the higher goal of eliminating names. The issues involved parallel an argument of Russell's: common sense leads to physics, and if physics is right then common sense is wrong, so if common sense is right, then it is wrong; therefore it is wrong. Should we consider Quine as replying to common-sense intuitions as to reasoning with names as follows: natural language leads to logical theory and logical theory (at least Quine's version) if right shows that natural language is wrong, so if natural language is right then it is wrong; therefore it is wrong. Take the puzzle and the problems concerning vacuous names as a case in point for re-deploying Russell's common-sense-to-physics argument. So used, it purports to justify a Procrustean point of view: sacrifice our common sense intuitions for logical theory. But there are differences between the folk physics and the folk logical theory cases. The greater explanatory power gained by mutilating folk physics compensates for that mutilation. It is not at all obvious that the mutilations or sacrifices made on behalf of Quine's solution to the puzzle of vacuous names are compensated for by an increasing gain in logical theory. The *Pursuit of Truth* has two opening quotations which favor empiricism. The first is Plato's "save the phenomena/appearances". The second is a pun on a paint company's advertisement: "Save the surface and you save all." Quine requisitions this ad as an advertisement for empiricism. Let us add "Save the surface grammar."

I will interpret Quine as holding the view that Quinizing names (replacing names with predicates and variables) and Russelling away the associated descriptions, is in some sense, the best theory for dealing with the problem of vacuous names. How should we understand the claim that he has dispensed with names?
A point worth stressing here is that there is only a cosmetic terminological difference between names, in the ordinary sense and as used so far in this chapter, and variables. This is a matter which has not gone unnoticed. Dummett remarks:

In regard to any open sentence, such an assignment confers upon the free variables occurring in it the effective status of individual constants or proper names (p.16).

Shaughn Lavine says something to the same effect:

In Quine's case, generality is assured because any object can be assigned to x. .... Thus, even Quine in effect makes use of the notion of a tag [name of a sort], under the guise of an assignment. (Lavine, p.271)

My own recognition of this point arose independently of the above authors when comparing Tarski on satisfaction and Mates' beta-variant truth conditions. (Mates, *Elementary Logic*, pp. 54-63) I take it that an individual constant is to an artificial language what names in some paradigmatic sense are to natural languages. The method of beta-variants gives truth conditions for atomic sentences in the usual way, i.e., 'Fa' is true if and only if the semantic value of 'a' is a member of the semantic value of 'F'. The distinctive feature of this method lies in its truth conditions for generalizations. A universal/particular generalization is true if all/some of its beta-variants are. To repeat, the idea is that a generalization such as '(x)(x is in space)' is true if and only if we form an instance of the generalization and we keep reinterpreting the individual constant so that on each interpretation (beta-variant) it is assigned a different object. So take 'Alex is in space' as an instance of that generalization', evaluate that singular sentence, then assign a different object to the singular term 'Alex', evaluate the sentence under that interpretation and so on. A universal generalization is true if, given an instance of it, that instance remains true under every new interpretation of (assignment to) the individual constant in question. A particular generalization is true if, given an instance of it, that instance remains true under at least one interpretation of the individual constant in question. These conditions for generalizations involve quantifying over interpretations. Tom Baldwin (1979, p.225) argued for the naturalness of this approach by explicating the truth of generalizations, e.g., 'Everything is in space', by appeal to the truth, e.g., of instances containing demonstratives

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7 Mates' use of this condition differs from my use in this work. He assumes that all the individual constants are non-vacuous. Let us put aside the problem of vacuity for just a moment.
'That is in space', 'That is in space', etc., where the demonstrative 'That' is assigned different objects. One does not appeal to open sentences; they can be treated as ill-formed strings. (This is in keeping with a worthy tradition in logical theory which does not sanction open sentences.)

On Tarskian semantics, satisfaction is a relation between open sentences and objects (sequences of objects, to be more exact). A generalization is satisfied if all/some objects (sequences) satisfy an open sentence. On the Tarskian account, we quantify, so to speak, within one interpretation, over sequences which involve different assignments to the same variable. The universal generalization \((x)(x \text{ is in space})\) turns out true when the open sentence 'x is in space' is satisfied by every object (sequence of objects to be more exact). The expression 'x' in the open sentence is assigned different objects.

What does the difference between the two methods indicate about first-order variables and names? The Tarskian method quantifies over objects or sequences of them within one interpretation. The beta-variant approach quantifies over interpretations. Both seem to involve assigning different objects to a singular term, in Tarski to a variable and in Mates to an individual constant. In Mates, the connection of variables to constants/substituends is brought to prominence. In Quine-Tarski, the relation is one of variables to objects without the intermediary substituend-constant. Many of those familiar with Tarski, on first hearing of the beta-variant view, strenuously maintain that it is the same as Tarski's. Perhaps what provokes this reaction is, in part, the recognition of there not being much difference between variables assigned different objects in Tarski and the individual constants reinterpreted in Mates. As Dummett and Lavine have pointed out, Tarskian style variables are misleadingly categorized when they are thought of as somehow seriously different than names. Perhaps the fault is due to a way of considering open sentences. When they are considered without assigning an object to 'x' in 'x is in space', the open sentence, is in this respect, disinterpreted and seems to suggest that the expression 'x' is not namelike. But let us take a lesson from the Quine of "Carnap and Logical Truth" (p. 109) about not being misled as to the philosophical-semantic significance of disinterpretation. A disinterpreted string tells us little about the semantic status of its constituents. The question then would appear to be one of the difference, if any, of the variable 'x' in 'x is human' under an assignment and individual constants/names. In the Mates account individual constants, the artificial-language correlate of names, are explicitly present, syntactically and semantically. The truth conditions for quantifications and variables essentially involve names.

On Quine's Tarskian inspired account, syntactically there are no individual constants. But the individual variables semantically are quite namelike. It is hard to see more than a cosmetic terminological
difference between a variable under an assignment and a name. What is the difference between how 'x' functions when 'x' is assigned Alex (or the sequence of which Alex is the significant element) in the open sentence 'x is in space' and the individual constant/name 'Alex' in 'Alex is in space'? To label 'x' under an assignment a variable, and so argue that it is not a name, has much in common with arguing that the glass is half empty and so is not half filled. It seems merely terminological whether to classify variables as being opposed to names or as being a variety of names. The remark that Quine "dispenses with names" or "that names are defined away (where definition is elimination)" must be taken with some qualification.

Another point to note about Quinizing names and Russelling away the descriptions is that it is a species of no-empty singular terms solutions. On Quine's approach, there are supposed to be no names in the ordinary sense, hence no empty names. The only singular terms are variables and these are never vacuous since variables are construed in a Tarskian spirit. Variables as per the open sentences in which they occur are satisfied by objects and there are no vacuous variables. Thus, no singular terms, i.e., variables or ordinary names (reconstructed as per variables and predications), are empty. It will prove of interest to compare this feature of Quine's approach with other accounts, such as the one adapted from Mates which allow for variables having substituends which are vacuous.

2. Two Accounts of Predication

To clarify the difference between Quine's approach and the one being proposed we turn to examine the accounts of predication that go with these two approaches. By 'predication' I focus on sentences of the form 'Fα', where 'F' is a position that can be filled by predicates of the type that occur in base clauses of truth or satisfaction conditions, e.g., 'is a human', 'is white', 'runs'. For ease of exposition, and since it is not relevant to my argument, I confine myself to one-place predicates. The points apply as well to many place predicates. I use the notion of a predicate in the Fregean-Rheme sense, as roughly speaking, everything in an atomic sentence other than the singular terms. The issues I am interested in can be discussed equally well as bearing on truth conditions for atomic sentences and their negations.

The first account of predication, Quine's, is tailored to fit a Tarskian account of satisfaction. It has the consequence that

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A number of different views share a common feature. When all is said and done, they do not recognize empty names, i.e., in their finished statement all the relevant singular terms are non-empty. Object dependent theorists refuse a role to empty names. Meinongians and Chosen object theorists supply referents for what most people take to be empty names. On Quine's view there are no names, hence, no empty names, and the variables have values to go with them.
negations of atomic sentences have existential import and are involved in ontological commitments. The second account is found in Terminist logicians such as Ockham, Buridan, the Psuedo Scotus, and in the Lesniewskian tradition. It will be reconstructed via Mates-like truth conditions. This second view does not have this existential consequence. If one wished to be historical, there is a sense in which the first view might be dubbed Platonic and the second Terminist or Lesniewskian.

Plato has been cited as saying

Whenever there is a statement it must be about something, and that, he claimed, holds for false statements as well as true ones. ... Statements true or false, speak of objects (Marcus, p.112).9

Terminists such as Ockham, Buridan and others, as did Lesniewski, held an anti-Platonic view, in that affirmative sentences "speak of objects" i.e., have existential import, whereas negative ones need not.

Quine's Tarskian inspired view of predication dovetails with Tarski's theory of truth. What concerns us here are the relevant accounts of satisfaction for base (atomic) clauses, e.g., 'x is human', and for their negations, e.g., '¬x is human'. From these, the tailored-to-fit predications will follow. Both satisfaction and predication are taken here as being semantic relations between words and objects. The expressions involved in the satisfaction relation are open sentences, a predicate and a free variable, e.g., 'x is human', 'x is white', and their negations, conjunctions, etc. The units satisfying an open sentence are sequences of objects or, allowing further simplification for the purposes of this chapter, the objects in the sequences themselves. So, for example, an open sentence 'x is human' is satisfied by the author (or an appropriately ordered sequence containing the author and his shirt). Satisfaction of this atomic open sentence requires the existence of an object. The satisfaction clause for a negation (I restrict myself to negations of atomic open sentences, though, of course, the negation clause is of much broader application) such as '¬ x is human' is satisfied by some non-human object such as the author's shirt (or an appropriately ordered sequence of objects made up of the shirt, the author, etc.). Once again the negation of an

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9I am taking liberties in construing Marcus as dealing with the same problem as Quine, and adapting her remarks to suit my purposes. In conversation Leslie Brown convinced me that the problems discussed in the Sophist were not so much about vacuous terms and quantification as about there being something factlike corresponding to true negative existentials. If this is what Marcus had in mind, then my use of the quotation is not warranted. I leave it to the reader to judge whether it helps explain the significance of Quine's stubble.
open sentence, such as '¬ x is human', has existential import, involving the existence of some non-human object.

A predicate is here part of an open sentence, and, when speaking of its semantic relation to objects, one speaks of the predicate 'is human' or 'runs' as applying to objects, being true of objects, or multiply denoting objects. A predication based on satisfaction would amount to saying that the closed sentence obtained by replacing the variable 'x' in the open sentence 'x is human' by a singular term such as 'Alex' is true, i.e., that the predicate 'is human' applies to the object which the term 'Alex' singly denotes. Such predication inherits the ontological import which attends the satisfaction relation. This treatment of atomic sentences should accord with the one Quine intended in his account of predication.

Predication joins a general term and a singular term to form a sentence that is true or false according as the general term is true or false of the object, if any, to which the singular term refers (Quine, 1960, p.96).

What interests us is the case where the singular term is vacuous. Taken by itself, at first glance the passage just given seems as if it would allow that the negation of a sentence involving a predication, e.g., 'It is not the case that Pegasus is a unicorn', should be true without requiring the existence of any object. The phrase "if any" seems to suggest that predication for Quine doesn't always require the existence of an object. However, instead of the relevant negations having no existential import, when we combine this account (as Quine would) with aspects of Tarski we get a quite different picture. Thus, the negation of an atomic sentence, e.g., '¬ this shirt is human' is true because the open sentence '¬ x is human' is satisfied by some non-human object, e.g., this shirt. As Quine, speaking of satisfaction puts it:

The relevant logical trait of negation is not just that negation makes true closed sentences out of false ones and vice versa. We must add that the negation of an open sentence with one variable is satisfied by just the things that sentence was not satisfied by; .... (Quine, 1986, p.36)

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10 It is not easy to make sense of this account of predication when the singular term, a name, is vacuous. Quine seems to want to make allowance for the vacuous singular term when he speaks of the 'the object if any, to which the singular term refers'. How are we to understand 'true of an object' or 'false of an object' where there is no object? In the text to follow I follow the thread that enforces the connection between predication and Tarski on satisfaction.

11 This Tarskian inspired view of predication takes such external negations of atomic,
'Pegasus is not a unicorn' and even 'Pegasus does not exist', i.e.,
\( \neg \text{Ex} \ (x = \text{Pegasus}) \)' require as part of this account of satisfaction and,

hence, truth that something exists, viz., objects that are not Pegasus. If true, the sentences '\( \neg \text{Fa} \)' and '\( \neg (\exists x)(x \text{ exists}) \)' require that there
be objects satisfying them (as parts of the sequences that are open sentences' correlates). This is the aspect of the truth condition for

negation that Quine is indicating in the above quote. In effect, then in

order for 'It is not the case that Pegasus is a flying horse' to be true,

'is a flying horse' must be true of (denote) objects that are not flying

horses. The truth of 'It is not the case that Pegasus exists' requires

that there exists something other than Pegasus (an object in a

sequence containing at least one thing that is not Pegasus). So, in

such cases of negation, not being-not existing, turns out to be a

matter of there being/existing something else which something is not. Not being becomes being different than something else. This seems

questionable whether the domain is empty or not. If the domain is

empty, we are hard pressed to say what object it is that flying horses

or Pegasus are not. In a populated domain, it does seem to change the

subject. It raises a different question, making the truth of these

sentences about one sort of item, flying horses or Pegasus (albeit non-

existent), require the existence of another different item.

The Terminist/ Lesniewskian view of predication and of truth

conditions for atomic sentences and their negations accords existential

commitment to atomic sentences but not to their negations. In

chapter one, this Quality oriented view was introduced and informally

motivated. Assume that the sentences, 'Socrates is human', 'This

shirt is made of cotton', are atomic. They are true when the subject

and the predicate stand for the same thing, i.e., the subject's referent,

its singular denotation, is one of the things to which the predicate

applies. The standard set-theoretic variant says that the sentence is

true when the semantic value of the subject 'Socrates' is a member of

the set that is the semantic value of the predicate 'is human'. As on

the Tarskian theory, an atomic sentence 'Fa', 'Socrates is human' 

requires for its truth that a (Socrates) exists and that F's (humans) 

exist. However, the Terminist view differs on how atomic sentences 

can fail to be true. Modifying the usual model theoretic account, an 

atomic sentence fails to be true, when it has vacuous parts (either 

subject or predicate, or both). This suffices for the truth of the 

negation of that sentence, and, so, such negations have no existential

\(~(Fa), \) sentences and treats them as though they were sentences with internal 

negations, (~F)a . There is little if any difference between the two when the singular 
term is not vacuous, but when the singular term is vacuous, if the atomic sentence 
without the internal negation is false, its negation is true, while the sentence with the 
internal negation is false.
import, nor do sentences that are logically implied by them. Only those sentences that require the truth of atomic sentences have existential import and ontologically commit us.

On this second view, a sufficient condition for the falsity of an atomic sentence is the vacuity of its subject or its predicate, and this suffices as well for the truth of its negation. Buridan put this point well (perhaps so elegantly that some might think it applies only to negative existentials). It is remarked on as being a sufficient condition for the truth of the negation of a singular affirmative sentence (or any sentence grounded on such a negation), that in predicate logic notation would take the form of a negation of a singular-atomic sentence with a base-clause predicate.

I agree that Aristotle's horse [a vacuous term] does not exist. .... It is true because the subject stands for nothing, so the subject and predicate do not stand for the same thing, which suffices for the truth of a negative (Buridan, 1966, pp. 94-6).

Negations of atomic sentences have no existential import. They involve no ontological commitment, nor do the sentences that are logical consequences of them. Only atomic sentences and sentences requiring the truth of atomic sentences have existential import. These factors justify the positive claim of Manley Thompson's maxim that quality (the affirmative/negative distinction) determines existential import.\(^{12}\)

3. Mates-like Truth Conditions

It is time to provide a semantic framework for these informal remarks. By adapting the set of truth conditions Mates gave for the language of first order predicates logic, we can explicate these quality paradigm themes. Mates defines the notion of an interpretation \(I\) and what it is for a sentence to be true on an interpretation. (Mates, pp.54-63) An interpretation, \(I\), of a first order language, is an assignment to all the individual constants and the predicates respectively of individuals and sets (relations) from a non-empty domain. Mates then gives truth conditions for atomic sentences and truth functional complexes of them. After doing this, he introduces truth conditions for generalizations in terms of reinterpretations of sentences containing atomic sentences and truth functional complexes of them. The key idea is that a universal generalization, e.g. .

\(^{12}\) As mentioned earlier I am indebted to Manley Thompson's work. However, his use of this maxim differs from mine. For me quality, the affirmative / negative distinction, is tied to atomic sentences and their negations, whereas Thompson ties it to the four categorical sentences.
'Everything is in space' is true just in case an instance of it such as 'Alex is in space' is true and remains true when we keep reinterpreting the individual constant 'Alex', re-assigning it to all the other objects in the domain. A particular quantifier is true when there is at least one interpretation on which the sentence is true. To put matters crudely, a universal/particular generalization is true when its instance remains true on every/at least one such reinterpretation.

I adapt Mates' account so as to allow for vacuous names (and, for use in the next chapter, to allow for the domain being empty). In stating my truth conditions, I underline the changes-additions I am making to Mates original account. An interpretation, $I$, of a language of first order logic, is an assignment of objects to some or all of the individual constants and an assignment of sets (relations) to the predicates. These objects, sets and relations assigned are included in the domain. We leave it open as to the domain being non-empty.

The truth conditions are:

Atomic Sentences: If a sentence $A$ is atomic, then $A$ is true under $I$ if and only if objects are assigned to the individual constants in $A$ and the objects assigned to the individual constants are included in the set or related (when taken in the order in which their corresponding constants occur in $A$) by the relation $I$ assigns to the predicate in $A$.

Negation: If a sentence $A = \neg B$, then $A$ is true under $I$ if and only if $B$ is not true under $I$.

Conjunction: If a sentence $A = (B \& C)$ for sentences $B, C$, the $A$ is true under $I$ if and only if $B$ is true under $I$ and $C$ is true under $I$.

Bivalence: $A$ is false under $I$ iff $A$ is not true under $I$.

It is important to note here, that on this truth condition when an individual constant in an atomic sentence is not assigned an object (as would be part of an intended interpretation for a vacuous name), that atomic sentence containing the vacuous constant is not true (and by a later clause, is false). An atomic sentence has existential import. The negation of an atomic sentence does not have existential import.

To arrive at conditions for generalizations, the notion of a beta-variant must be introduced. In Mates account below: $Ba$ is an open sentence with the bold faced italicized $a$ as the variable (i.e. $Ba$ is the open sentence which is the subformula-subquantificate of a
generalization such as \( (a)B \). \( Ba/b \) is the result of substituting a constant \( b \) for the variable \( a \).

A \( b \)-variant \( [\beta\text{-variant}] \) assigns a different object to the constant \( b \).

Mates account of generalizations:

Universal generalization: If a sentence \( A = (a)B \), then \( A \) is true under \( I \) if and only if \( Ba/b \) is true under every \( b \)-variant of \( I \).

Particular generalization: If a sentence \( A = (\exists a)B \), then \( A \) is true under \( I \) if and only if \( Ba/b \) is true under at least one \( b \)-variant of \( I \).

On our account, we want to allow generalizations to be based not only on non-vacuous terms as in Mates account. To accomplish this, we change the truth conditions to take account of sentences with vacuous terms. We allow for the \( b \) in \( Aa/b \) to be a vacuous term.

To illustrate: The conclusion of the puzzle 'Something does not exist' is a sentence of the form \( (\exists a)B \). It is true under \( I \) since a vacuous term such as 'Vulcan' serves as the constant \( b \). With 'Vulcan' as the constant, given the truth condition for atomic sentences and the vacuity of 'Vulcan', the sentences 'Vulcan is a planet' and 'Vulcan exists' would not be true. The negations '¬Vulcan is a planet' and '¬Vulcan exists' would be true. These negations are instances which serve to make the generalizations 'Something is not a planet' and 'Something does not exist', \( (\exists a)B \), true.\(^{13}\)

\(^{13}\) There is another way, a hybrid of sorts, to provide truth conditions, whereby the premise of the puzzle is true and the conclusion (a particular generalization), which is also true, follows from the premise. The truth condition for an atomic sentence in the true case can be the model theoretic one. However, unlike the usual model-theoretic account, when either the singular term or the predicate is vacuous, the sentence is false. The latter suffices for the truth of the negation of such an atomic sentence. All other aspects of truth-functional connectives remain the same. The vacuity of 'Pegasus' in the premise guarantees its truth whether we assume 'exists' is a predicate \( ab \text{ inito} \) or 'a exists' is defined. If it is defined in terms of atomic predicates, then vacuity in those atomic contexts guarantees the premise's truth. As examples, consider defining 'exists' in terms of identity, a Lesniewskian copula, or base-clause predication. In each case 'a exists' is true iff some atomic predication is true, e.g., 'a=b' or 'a is a b' [Lesniewskian 'is a'] or 'Fa' [base-clause 'F']. Where a term is vacuous, the atomic sentence is false, and the object is said not to exist, as is required for the truth of the premise.

The truth conditions given for generalizations (and so for the conclusion) are a hybrid combining substitutional and non-substitutional approaches. We want to capture the advantages of each and avoid each’s drawbacks. Among the advantages of the substitutional interpretation of quantification (as it is typically construed) is its ability to readily allow substituends that have no denotations. These include vacuous names which, while of the same category as names, have no denotations, and
Had we not provided this semantic framework and were writing from the perspective of our antithesis, the period of ordinary-language philosophy, we might claim to have dissolved the problems associated with Plato's beard. The problem was dissolved by conforming to intuitions based on natural language. The argument in English:

Pegasus does not exist.
so, something does not exist.

is intuitively sound. In ordinary usage, 'some' does not have existential import. However, unlike the ordinary-language stage of twentieth-century philosophy, we have provided sufficient logical theory, e.g., truth conditions, to support these natural-language intuitions. The natural-language reasoning from 'Pegasus doesn't exist' to 'Something doesn't exist' is valid, indeed sound, and a non-Procrustean account should capture its logical form as it stands, i.e., its surface grammar should dictate its logical form. We should be on guard against three ways in which these intuitions can be mutilated.

1. The premise is a contingent truth.
2. The conclusion is a contingent truth.
3. The argument is valid as it stands.

substituends such as predicates, sentences, and connectives, which are not of the category of denoting expressions. The disadvantage of substitutional quantification is the problem of not being guaranteed enough names for all the objects in a quantifier's domain. An advantage of a non-substitutional approach (as it is typically construed) is that it accounts for all of the objects in a domain without requiring that each have its own name. The disadvantage may be in the treatment of non-denoting variables, i.e., vacuous names, non-names, e.g., variables for predicate positions.

The solution is to say that a universal generalization is true iff its substitutional interpretation conditions are met and its non-substitutional conditions are met. A particular generalization is true iff either the substitutional or the non-substitutional conditions are met. The non-substitutional account we employ is the method of beta-variants. It is exactly the one found in Mates (I assume here that it is non-substitutional). A universal/particular generalization is true in a language with at least one individual constant iff the instance of that generalization is true in every/at least one beta-variant. A beta-variant is a new interpretation where the given individual constant is assigned a new object from the domain. We go on reinterpreting the individual constant, assigning different objects to it in different interpretations and the universal/particular generalization is true since it is true in every/at least one such interpretation.

On this account, a universal generalization is true iff every substitution instance and every beta-variant is true. A particular generalization is true iff at least one instance is or at least one beta-variant is. The conclusion 'Something does not exist' is true since one substitution instance is true, viz., the premise: 'Pegasus doesn't exist'.
The Terminist inspired Quality framework can preserve all of these intuitions. It provides truth conditions whereby the premise (which is either a negation of an atomic sentence with 'exists' treated as a simple predicate or follows from a negation of an atomic sentence - as on the \( \neg (\exists x)(x = \text{Vulcan}) \) representation ) is true, and the conclusion (a particular generalization), also true, follows from the premise. The truth condition for an atomic sentence in the true case can be the model theoretic one. However, unlike the usual model-theoretic account, when either the singular term or the predicate is vacuous the sentence is false. The latter suffices for the truth of the negation of such an atomic sentence. All other aspects of truth-functional connectives remain the same. The vacuity of 'Pegasus' in the premise guarantees its truth whether we assume 'exists' is a predicate \textit{ab initio} or 'a exists' is defined. If it is defined in terms of atomic predicates, then vacuity in those atomic contexts guarantees the premise's truth. As examples, consider defining 'exists' in terms of identity, a Lesniewskian copula, or base-clause predication. In each case 'a exists' is true iff some atomic predication is true, e.g., 'a=b' or 'a is a b' [Lesniewskian 'is a'] or 'Fa' [base-clause 'F']. Where a term is vacuous, the atomic sentence is false, and the object is said not to exist as is required for the truth of the premise.

The truth conditions given for generalizations (and so for the conclusion) are not substitutional, but they do allow, as on the substitutional interpretation, for vacuous variables, i.e., variables whose substituends are vacuous, and generalizations on them. Among the advantages of the substitutional interpretation of quantification (as it is typically construed) is its ability to readily allow substituends that have no denotations. These include vacuous names which, while of the same category of names, have no denotations. A disadvantage of substitutional quantification is the problem of not being guaranteed enough names for all the objects in a quantifier's domain. An advantage over the substitutional approach is that on our adaptation it allows for vacuous variables and accounts for all of the objects in a domain without requiring that each have its own name in one given interpretation. In addition, the Mates approach can readily be generalized for quantifying with regard to predicate and sentence positions without necessarily requiring an increase in ontological commitment to properties or propositions. (This feature will play a role in chapter six.)

The non-substitutional account we employed was Mates' method of beta-variants. A universal/particular generalization is true in a language with at least one individual constant iff there is an instance of that generalization that is true in every/at least one beta-variant. A beta-variant is a new interpretation where the given individual constant is assigned a new object from the domain. We go on reinterpreting the
individual constant, assigning different objects to it in different interpretations, and the universal/particular generalizations are true since they are true in every/at least one such interpretation.

On our account, a particular generalization is true iff at least at least one beta-variant is. The conclusion 'Something does not exist' is true since the instance, the premise: 'Pegasus doesn't exist', is true on an interpretation.

By way of summary, let us note the undesirable Procrustean elements in Quine's account. Our intuitions are that the ordinary-language argument is sound as it stands and should be regarded as wearing its logical form on its sleeve. Save the surface grammar, and you save the whole inference. On Quine's view, however, premise, conclusion and inference are mutilated.

1) While the first premise is treated as a contingent truth, the logical form accorded it is not as close to the original as one would desire. There are no names (in the somewhat superficial cosmetic names-versus-variables sense) and hence no valid inferences with sentences containing them.

2) Given the existential reading of particular generalizations, the intuitively contingent true conclusion 'Some things do not exist' is mutilated by being construed as a contradiction.

3) The original argument appears to be valid, in fact sound, but Quine's version makes it invalid. The canonical version of the English sentence, i.e., 'It is not the case that exactly one thing pegasizes' is false. Since it contains no singular terms fit for "existentially" generalizing on, the conclusion does not validly follow. By contrast, the Terminist inspired account preserves our beliefs that the argument is sound. It preserves the intuition that there is no puzzle since the contingently true premise containing a name, a vacuous one at that, formally implies the contingently true conclusion.

4. Quine's Stubble

In "On What There Is" we were told:

This is the old Platonic riddle of nonbeing. Nonbeing must in some sense be, otherwise what is it that there is not? This tangled doctrine might be nicknamed Plato's beard ...(Quine, 1948, pp.1-2)

Ruth Marcus puts such issues in a somewhat broader context about erroneous beliefs (which I construe as bearing on negations, and, in particular, denials of nonbeing).
Plato, in arguing against the Sophists’ claim that erroneous beliefs are not about anything, says, 'Whenever there is a statement it must be about something,' and that, he claimed, holds for false statements as well as true ones. ...... Statements true or false, speak of objects (Marcus, p.112).

The Terminist-Lesniewskian view is that a denial of a singular sentence should imply nothing substantive. Denying that Fa, does not imply anything substantive. To illustrate this, consider a Carnapian state description account or a modest modal view where the falsity of an atomic sentence does not imply anything substantive, i.e., some other atomic sentence or its denial or anything non-tautological that follows from these. To deny that a exists does not intuitively imply anything other than itself (or tautologies) even that anything at all exists or that something other than a exists and is a non-F. From the denial of Pegasus is a flying horse it does not follow that there is something other than Pegasus and that it is a non-flying horse. But on Quine’s view, Russelling away a name and doing it in a Quine/Tarski manner, has a substantial consequence. Accept a Quinian denial of nonbeing and you counter-intuitively acquire a substantive assertion of being.

Quine's solution to the riddle of Plato's beard is not as deflationary as one might have been led to believe. Quine, in his Tarski-based use of Russell, provided a special case of a Platonic approach. Ruth Marcus' version of Plato's position, that both false as well as true statements must be about some object, suggests the following Platonic alternatives:
1) in denying nonbeing we are implying nonbeing;
2) in denying nonbeing we are implying being.
Quine sees himself as being anti-Platonic. But he is so only in the first sense. He is Platonic in the second sense. The quality paradigm of existential import denies both versions of the Platonic view. If the former Platonic view is dubbed Plato's beard, the latter might be nicknamed Quine's stubble. It is the counter intuitive doctrine that denials of nonbeing involve being.14

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14 We are also left with some anachronistic and unanswerable questions of scholarship. Would Russell have agreed to embedding his theory of definite descriptions in Quine and Tarski’s accounts of satisfaction-predication? Would he have acquiesced in the view that Pegasus’s not existing implied the existence of anything else? Was Russell Platonic or Terminist?
Appendix A: Fiction: “Giving life to things that do not exist”\(^\text{15}\)

Sherlock Holmes does not exist, at least not on a serious account of ontological commitment. He is not necessary for a theory of fiction. Neither do we need the Meinongian non-existent object Holmes, the mere possibilum Sherlock, nor the abstract object (dependent or otherwise) Holmes for fiction. If Meinongian objects, possibilia, abstract objects, are necessary for some other purposes, that is a different matter. A proper account of fiction is in no way hostage to the fortunes of Meinongian views, finding suitable possibilia or abstract object versions of Dr. Watson’s companion.

I shall argue for this position by way of making two points: 1. that fiction in some well-evidenced sense involves non-veridical/non-factive propositional attitudes; and, 2. that the content sentences for these can be false, and yet the fiction can and ought to be assented to. This should explain the sense in which such sentences are intuitive. I am arguing for a variant of Kendall Walton’s position that propositional attitudes are required for the processing or understanding a sentence or remark as fiction. However, there are also clear points of disagreement with Walton.

If someone asks me to tell him something about Sherlock Holmes, I can use the following sentence and make the following remark: "Holmes lived in London." If someone asked me what I could tell him about the prime minister Tony Blair, I could say that he lives in London. I might be asked if there is any difference between the two, Holmes and Blair? My answer will consist of pointing out that Holmes is only a fictional character in a story, a mere product of make believes, whereas Blair is not something that I or anyone else just made up or imagined. In some way, Holmes and the properties attributed to him depend on thinking about him in a way that Blair does not. Holmes is mind-dependent and \((\text{pace} \text{idealism and forms of social constructivism})\) Blair is not. Blair’s existence and most of his properties do not depend on what is thought about him. Evidence about the truth of the Blair sentence can be had without asking anyone what they think or even what is written about Blair, but this is not so in the Holmes case. To find out whether, in the relevant sense we should assent to the Holmes sentence/remark, we need to do something like read a book, see a movie, watch a TV program, talk to someone, or think about Holmes.

\(^{15}\) A remark attributed to Carlo Ponti in his obituary from the N.Y. Times of January 11\(^{\text{th}}\), 2007. Compare this with Shakespeare’s poet (\textit{A Midsummer Night’s Dream}) who “gives to airy nothing a local habitation and a name”. 
Imagine a remark about North America and one about Lilliput: that they both are separated by a body of water from Europe. Lilliput’s separation is mind dependent and North America’s is not. The geological facts about North America are in place whether or not there are minds. Not so the geological facts about Lilliput. If there were no minds (and when there were no minds), North America still existed and was an object separated by water from Europe, not so Lilliput.

The solution to the ontological problem of the status of fictional objects such as Holmes, is that, as fiction, they are made up. So while in one sense, it is literally the unvarnished naked truth that Holmes does not exist and did not live in London, in another, in the sense of fiction, we assent to it and find it intuitive that he lived in London. The problem is that of specifying the sense in which we assent to it and might even hold that it is “intuitively true” (where “intuitively true” does not imply true). The answer can be simple. In the sense that the remark that Holmes lived in London is understood as fiction, it comes to saying that according to, or in the story, Holmes lived in London, i.e., it is fictionally true. The sense in which it is false is that independent of the story, London contained no such person. I will use a metaphor to distinguish the two senses or ways of taking the sentence/remark: the nude remark where the sentence is stripped of its fictional status. Here we take the remark as though it were not made as part of fiction. The second way of taking the remark is as clothed or fictional. Here we take the sentence, "in a non-technical" way of speaking as being embedded in (involving) an in-the-story context. I assume here that "in the story" is cashed out in terms of some non-veridical propositional attitude such as imagines, makes believe, ought to make believe, pretends, etc. For "Holmes lived in London" to be assented to, requires, in some way, that someone imagine that, pretend that, make believe that, etc. (In a later section I will offer some evidence for the involvement of propositional attitudes.) The nude remark S is the remark understood outside of (independent of) the story and the clothed remark as inside or according to the story S, so to speak, attired in a propositional attitude.

To illustrate this distinction and show that it is readily recognized, I will relate and thereby ruin a skit from a TV comedy program (Saturday Night Live). The skit takes place on a New York subway platform. There is a person waiting for a train (played by Jeff Goldblum) and a street musician playing the guitar and singing. The song goes like this: "I am poor and hungry. Please help me get some food." Goldblum listens to the song and puts down some money for the singer. The singer is outraged and says: "What's wrong with you? It's just a song!" Goldblum shamefacedly takes back the money. The singer starts up again, singing with more emotion and convincingly: "I am really very hungry and really need some help. Please, please give me some money." Goldblum kindheartedly comes back and contributes
a second time. The singer is even more outraged and repeats that it is a song, only a song. The joke trades on, recognizing the distinction between a nude (independent of the story) and a clothed (inside the story) remark.

The topic of concern is Sherlock Holmes. Semantically ascending, expressions of this type are empty names. In the body of this work, I have taken the stance that the relevant nude singular sentences which contain empty names are false. So the nude remark about Sherlock Holmes is false. However, the clothed remark in some way involves a non-veridical propositional attitude and is readily assented to.¹⁶

Having said the above, I want to leave answers to the following questions open.

a. While I argue that fiction requires propositional attitudes, I wish to leave open the answer to the question of exactly which non-veridical propositional attitude is the correct one. I shall use "imagines", "makes believe", "pretends", etc., as stand-ins or dummy expressions for whatever turns out to be the correct answer. For most of this appendix, these terms merely baptize my ignorance of the true cause.

b. I intentionally speak loosely of "involving a propositional attitude", "having a propositional attitude as an operator", "being embedded in a propositional attitude". Once again, in using these phrases, I am baptizing my ignorance of the correct answer to a question. Given that certain non-factive propositional attitudes are required for fiction, exactly what is their relation to the nude Holmes remark? Here are some alternatives I wish to leave open.

1. Should the propositional attitude be represented as an operator with the nude sentence as the content sentence?
2. Is the attitude a presupposition?
3. Is this a case of an indirect speech act (saying one thing and meaning another)?
4. Is this a case of Walton's verbal participation in a game of make believe?

¹⁶ I would like to bolster my approach by citing Davidson on this topic.

"I do want to insist on a principle to which any correct theory [of proper names] must conform: a meaning which can be grasped without knowledge of whether it was generated in the context of history or of fiction cannot depend on that context. Our response may differ according as we think it as fact or fiction ---- If we apply this simple thought to the case of proper names, I think we should reverse the usual strategy of making the "referring use" primary and the "non-referring use" a play or pretend use. Using names in fiction is, as I said, a real use of language; so how names function in stories not only can, but must be how they function elsewhere. (This is not to deny that we might never have come to understand the function of proper names had we not been exposed to cases in which names had a reference.)"

("Locating Literary Language" in Davidson, 2005, pp.175-6)
c. I also leave open a solution to the problem of how fictional truths are generated. Granted that a text contains certain sentences and that these present no problem in that they directly indicate some fictional truths, a major question is how to account for the multitude of other imaginings/fictional truths that go along with the work in question. We are explicitly told that Holmes lived on Baker Street. Did he live closer to Paddington than to Waterloo Station? How do we decide such questions? How do we decide whether Holmes in “The Speckled Band” didn’t travel to Mars at times in the story when his action is not accounted for? How might we debate whether Holmes was cleverer than Poirot or cleverer than all real detectives? As a convenient way of describing the issue, let us call the base class of imaginings/fictional truths the explicit or explicitly given ones and the remainder the implicit ones. Much has been written on this subject and I add nothing here.

My very limited treatment of fiction can benefit by further defense. I offer two arguments to bolster the view that fiction involves propositional attitudes.

Arguing for the Obvious

While it seems obvious that fiction involves propositional attitudes, I would like to put this claim on a firmer footing. It is a point that can and should be established empirically, requiring little theory and being directly tied to observations. It is so simple that it is likely to be unfairly criticized as being simplistic. Shakespeare perhaps had this slur on his mind when he wrote "Simple truth miscalled simplicity." (Sonnet 66).

Given the accepted technique of "disambiguating" a remark, we can ask a speaker who assents to: "That's funny", whether he meant "That's amusing" or "That's strange." In a similar way ask someone who assents to the remark that Vulcan is a planet, whether he accepts it as a nude or a clothed remark, i.e., according to the theory. We can also perform the same experiment for the remark that Holmes lived in London. I believe the evidence will show that assent to the Vulcan and the Holmes remarks are, to them, clothed in a propositional attitude.

Validity Forms - Evidentials

Linguists of an anthropological stripe have noted the existence of what are called "validity forms" in American Indian Languages, such as Hopi and Wintu (Hoijer, p. 263, Kroeber, pp. 563,9).17 This is a

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17 The anthropologist Edgar Gregerson introduced me to the topic of evidentials.
widespread feature found in many other languages as well. Validity forms are also called "evidentials". With these, the speaker indicates the source of evidence for his/her remarks, e.g., "speaking from inference or from hearsay or from first hand knowledge" (Hoijer, p. 263). A speaker of Hopi must use these forms in making the relevant remarks (Hoijer, p. 203). As far as I know, neither Hopi nor Wintu has a fiction validity form. However the linguist Janet Fodor has informed me that evidentials for telling stories do occur in some languages. We can now, in principle, design empirical tests to see whether fiction involves propositional attitudes. These would consist of translating a story into one of these languages and seeing whether a validity form is supplied to indicate that the remark is not translated as a nude remark, but as having its source "in a story."

But even if, in fact, there was no separate validity form /evidential for fiction in a given language, we can construct a thought experiment to determine the presence of this feature. Assume that English is changed so that an "in the story", "pretend that" or "make believe" evidential is mandatory for telling a story. It would appear then that when the clothed remark is used, it would reveal the presence of such a propositional attitude.

A Recent Meinongian View on Fiction

Amie Thomasson maintains that Holmes is a dependent object, and I agree with this. He is an artifact, something made/created. But more must be said about this, before we take the point (as she does as) justification for treating a sentence about Holmes as having a referent - namely, an abstract object. On Thomasson's strategy, given that Holmes, Vulcan, etc., are not ordinary objects, and, that as artifacts they are dependent, then we need to posit a new category of objects - dependent abstract objects as the referents in question. (Thomasson pps. 5-7, 37-42, 131-4) This move is much too quick. In what sense is Holmes a dependent object?

It should seem clear that the sense in which Thomasson says Holmes is a dependent object can be adequately explained by the well recognized point that Holmes is mind dependent. In a sense, Holmes comes into being with thoughts about him, and, in a sense, would cease to be were no one to think about or mention him. It also seems clear that the kind of thinking involved, i.e., the kind of mind dependence involved, is captured by the non-veridical propositional attitudes we have been discussing.

If this is correct, then there is no need to posit objects such as Holmes. Holmes is referred to in the story by the name being embedded in a non-veridical (non-factive) propositional attitude. The clothed sentence we are concerned with is warranted, while the nude sentence is false, on the grounds that Holmes does not exist. On my
description, the strategy of Meinongian realists like Thomasson is to give the expressions in the nude sentence semantic values, such as referents for empty singular terms. What motivates doing this? Possibly the correct insight that merely saying that the nude sentence is false or neither true nor false, does not do justice to its use as clothed. But, while the clothed sentence is in some sense literally correct (has warranted assertability), this does not require assigning referents to the nude sentences' empty nouns.

This sort of error is not limited to Mienongians writing on fiction. Its parallel has been documented in connection with metaphor. While Searle and Davidson disagree in many ways, they agree that there is an error in looking for distinct species of meaning, viz., metaphorical meaning (in the sense of semantic meaning), to account for metaphors. Both hold a two-stage view of metaphor (the first stage triggers the second one). For Searle, the nude remark "Harry is a block of ice" has a semantic meaning, which, in a normal context, makes it incongruous with its use. This triggers its speaker's meaning ("the metaphorical point" that Harry is unemotional). Davidson appeals only to notions from the theory of reference. The blatant falsity of that nude sentence, given the reference of its expressions in the language, triggers an awareness of "the metaphorical point." Though there are important differences between these two authors, they agree on two points. 1. All there is to meaning/reference is what is given in the language. 2. "The metaphoric point" should not be taken as being somehow a new type of semantic meaning or reference. Searle tells us...

... sentences and words have only the meanings that they have. Strictly speaking, whenever we talk about the metaphorical meaning of a word, expression or sentence, we are talking about what a speaker might utter it to mean, in a way that departs from what the word, expression or sentence actually means. (p.77)

Davidson puts the matter as follows

I depend on the distinction between what words mean and what they are used to do. I think metaphor belongs exclusively to the domain of use. It is something brought off by the imaginative employment of words and sentences and depends entirely on the ordinary meanings of those words and hence on the ordinary meanings of the sentences they comprise.

It is no help in explaining how words work in metaphor to posit metaphorical or figurative meanings, or special kinds of poetic or metaphorical truth. (p.31)
The error involved in positing metaphorical meaning in some strong sense as a kind of semantic meaning, that is, as meaning or reference in a language (and not merely as a way of talking about "the point of the metaphor") consists of trying to build into the semantic meaning (the nude sentence) the second component "the metaphorical point." A similar error arises in connection with realist views about fiction. The desire to account for the fictional truth or warranted assertability of the clothed sentence leads some people to endow the nude sentence with features that will make this false nude remark true, e.g., supplying referents for "Holmes" among Meinongian objects, possibilia, or abstract objects. One can restate Davidson's remark for fiction as the error of introducing fictional objects in addition to ordinary objects, and fictional truths as an additional species of ordinary truth.

Walton's Object Dependence

Walton maintains an object dependent view for strings such as "Holmes lived in London," In Mimesis and Make Believe we are told that they don't express propositions. (pp. 219, 391,396)

My position is that the sentences have no meanings beyond their ordinary literal ones, and I prefer to regard those appearing to denote purely fictional entities as not expressing propositions at all. (Walton, p. 396)

If there is no Gulliver and there are no Lilliputians, there are no propositions about them. So there would seem to be no such thing as the proposition that Gulliver was captured by the Lilliputians. (p. 391)

Unfortunately, Walton does not tell us enough about these proposition-less sentences. I argued in this chapter that such sentences are meaningful and have a truth-value. As nude sentences in the language they should be taken as false. There are several senses in which some say that they fail to express a proposition. In his book, Walton does not say which sense he has in mind. An extreme view would be that they are meaningless. At a conference Walton explained that what he meant is that these sentence are meaningful. But, since the sentences do not express propositions and propositions are taken here as the truth vehicles, then the sentences are neither true nor false. This kind of object dependence still leaves several matters in need of clarification:

1. What constitutes the sentences being meaningful? If it simply is their syntactical well-formedness and that they are understandable in a minimal sense, then we can do as well (if not
better) and say that such sentences are false. Those who say that the nude versions of Holmes and the "Vulcan is a planet" sentences are neither true nor false, i.e., not true and not false, need to provide more evidence for their view.

2. Most anti-realisnts who are party to the dispute agree that these sentences are not true. However, it does not follow, from that fact alone, that they are not false. That is, it does not follow that they are neither true nor false. In fact, if they are not true, then an argument can be mounted (appealing to conservatism and abiding by classical bivalent logic) for saying that they are false.

3. Walton does not tell us what a proposition is. One can provide a revisionary Fregean account of a proposition that incorporates themes from direct reference theory and avoids object dependence (see chapter 3. section IV subsection 1).18

Walton’s Verbal Participation and Object Dependence

On Walton’s account, as fiction, the sentences/remarks: "Holmes lived in London." and Walton’s own example: "Tom Sawyer attended his own funeral.", are clothed in a propositional attitude. (p. 396) A relevant use of such sentences is in a situation where I respond to a question about where Holmes lived? In responding, I verbally participate in the associated game of make believe and act appropriately by uttering the sentence: "Holmes lived in London". My act is appropriate to the given game of make believe and by performing this act I am sanctioning this utterance.

18 Here is a sketch of such a view. Let us modify the Kaplanesque ordered n-tuple view of a proposition. On the object dependent version of this view, a proposition for a singular one-placed predication such as "Socrates is human", is the ordered pair made up of the property of being human and the existing individual Socrates. We can modify this view and abandon object dependence by taking the proposition to be the ordered pair made up, not of the property and the individual, but of two properties. The first property is the property of being human. The second is the property represented by "= Socrates", i.e., the property of being identical with Socrates. The truth condition for such propositions \( \langle F_s = a \rangle \) is that the object the property \( F \) denotes/applies to contains the object the property "= a" denotes/applies to. The truth condition for these propositions can quite naturally be taken as indicating that the propositions expressed by the Holmes and the Vulcan sentences are false. That is, the proposition \( \langle [\text{living in London}], [= \text{Holmes}] \rangle \) is false. This is a revision of Frege who said that sentences with empty names have a sense, but then, unlike the present approach, he denied them a reference.
So - making the sounds - reproducing verbally the proposition-less string - "Holmes lived in London."
, may signal that this is the thing to do (to perform that act), but that is not to assert that Holmes lived in London or even to make the assertion that it is all right to make that sound.

Is Walton's proposal for the Holmes sentence at bottom simply the anti-realist appeal to doings (appropriate acts, correct behavior) rather than to forging truth vehicles? If so, it would be the same strategy common to instrumentalists, who urge that theories should be regarded as appropriate tools that work, and the wrong category for expressing truths as these are ordinarily understood.

What's more, an aspect of the point just made about Walton's "verbal participation" being a signal, but not an assertion, raises the question of how a string without a truth value can be part of genuine verbal participation. Verbal participation seems to require understanding meaningful and truth valued units of what is participated in. In addition, the product of the participation seems to require something equally truth valued.

I think we can safely assume that to verbally participate in the Holmes story we should be able to reason with the Holmes sentence. The sentence should be usable as a premise or a conclusion. Walton would agree that in some cases we would reason from the premise that Holmes lived in London to the conclusion that he lived in England. Assume, as a suppressed premise, that London is in England. The conclusion is formally implied by (is a logical consequence of) the premises. This is readily understood, when our logic and semantics are the usual ones of classical first order logic where bivalence obtains. On the view proposed in this work, the first premise and the conclusion are false as nude sentences, but the argument is valid. On Walton's object dependent account we appear to abandon classical logic and bivalence. Given object dependence, the first premise and the conclusion are neither true nor false. Walton has told us nothing about how to explain this inference. While there are several proposals for such non-classical logics, it is at least arguable that such views suffer from being less conservative than staying with classical logic, since each of the non-classical approaches has its own problems.