

Real Metaphysics

Essays in honour of D. H. Mellor

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2 Things qua truthmakers

David Lewis

1 Truth and being

Any proposition has a subject matter, on which its truth value supervenes. Suppose that a certain proposition is entirely about styrofoam. Then its truth value supervenes upon the totality of the world's styrofoam. If two possible worlds were just alike with respect to their styrofoam – if they had styrofoam of just the same kind at just the same places and times – then, no matter how much those two worlds differed otherwise, the proposition would be true in both worlds or false in both. Conversely, if some proposition never differed in truth value between two worlds that were just alike with respect to their styrofoam, then that proposition would have to be entirely about styrofoam.

What, in general, *is* a subject matter? The answer is anything that somehow encodes the distinction between pairs of worlds that are just alike with respect to the subject matter in question and pairs that are not. A partition of the possible worlds would do, or equivalently an equivalence relation on worlds.

The present conception of aboutness and subject matters, following Lewis (1988), is intensional, not hyperintensional. It does not apply usefully to aboutness in mathematics or philosophy. The truth values of necessary and impossible propositions, regardless of whether they are expressed by sentences that speak of sines and cosines or by sentences that speak of the marital status of bachelors, turn out to supervene trivially on every subject matter.

Styrofoam is one kind of plastic. Therefore two worlds exactly alike with respect to plastic would a fortiori be exactly alike with respect to styrofoam. A proposition entirely about styrofoam is a fortiori entirely about plastic. The subject matter styrofoam is part of the more inclusive subject matter plastic. But plastic may in turn be part of other, still more inclusive, subject matters.

There is a most inclusive subject matter: *being*. Differences in being come in two sorts. There are differences in whether something is, and there are differences in how something is. Two worlds are alike with respect to being if they have no differences of either sort. Nothing exists in one but not in the other. Nothing has a fundamental property in one that it lacks in the other. No two (or more) things stand in a fundamental relation in one but not the other. And, since less-than-fundamental properties (and relations) supervene upon

fundamental properties and relations, nothing has any less-than-fundamental property (and no two or more things stand in any less-than-fundamental relation) in one but not the other. Since being is the most inclusive subject matter, two worlds that are just alike with respect to being are just alike *simpliciter*, and just alike with respect to every less inclusive subject matter. They are just alike with respect to plastic, with respect to styrofoam, And every proposition, no matter what lesser subject matter it may also have, is entirely about being. It never has different truth values in two worlds that are just alike with respect to being. In John Bigelow's (1988: 132–3) phrase 'its truth is supervenient on being'.

You might object that if there were two worlds just alike with respect to being, then there would be miscellaneous classes of worlds containing one of the two without the other. For any such class we have the proposition that is true at all and only the worlds in that class; so here we have propositions whose truth does not supervene on being. There are two replies.

- (1) A miscellaneous class of worlds does not determine a proposition at all – or, at any rate, it does not determine what we might call a *qualitative* proposition. The principle that truth supervenes on being applies to qualitative propositions only. Non-qualitative 'propositions', if we may call them that, may be ignored. Indeed, qualitative propositions are exactly those whose truth does supervene on being. Our principle has become true by definition – and none the worse for that. (Likewise when we said that less-than-fundamental properties of things supervened on the fundamental properties and relations of things, we meant the less-than-fundamental *qualitative* properties. Again our supervenience thesis was not meant to apply to non-qualitative 'properties' determined by miscellaneous classes of possible individuals. Again, what at first seemed to be a substantive supervenience thesis turns into a definition, this time of 'qualitative property'.)
- (2) The problem never arises, because indiscernibility with respect to being implies identity. No two worlds are ever exactly alike with respect to being. Therefore there are no miscellaneous classes that contain one but not the other of some such pair of worlds. Neither are there any non-qualitative 'propositions' that are true at one but not the other of some such pair. Our principle that truth supervenes on being is now not a definition, but rather a substantive thesis of identity of indiscernible worlds. (Likewise if possible individuals obey a suitable principle of identity of indiscernibles, there will be no non-qualitative 'properties' determined by miscellaneous classes of possible individuals. But identity of indiscernibles is far less plausible for individuals than it is for worlds, because it would rule out, for instance, the indiscernibilities found in a world of two-way eternal recurrence.)

Let me remain agnostic about whether there are indiscernible worlds and

non-qualitative ‘propositions’. (And even, so far as this chapter goes, about whether there are indiscernible possible individuals and non-qualitative ‘properties’ and ‘relations’.) But if it matters, let me impose a tacit restriction to qualitative propositions (and properties and relations).

2 Counterparts

I said that two worlds are alike with respect to being only if there is nothing that exists in one but not the other. But strictly speaking I say that this is never true. Nothing is (wholly) in two different worlds. (Unless it is a universal. But since no world is inhabited by universals alone, it still cannot happen that exactly the same things exist in two worlds.) What is true, rather, is that things have counterparts in other worlds, united with them not by identity but by some sort of intrinsic or extrinsic resemblance (see Lewis 1968). What I meant, then, was that two worlds are exactly alike with respect to being just in case their inhabitants correspond one–one in such a way that corresponding things have exactly the same fundamental properties and corresponding pairs (or triples or ...) stand in exactly the same fundamental relations. The correspondence is not always unique: between two indiscernible worlds of two-way eternal recurrence, for instance, there are infinitely many admissible correspondences.

However, if we do have a unique one–one correspondence such that corresponding things match perfectly with respect to all the fundamental properties and relations, then it is completely unproblematic which things are counterparts of which. Then it would scarcely matter if we mistook the counterpart relation for genuine identity. But of course this is an especially easy case. In the general case we will have many counterpart relations – or, you might prefer to say, many alternative precisifications of ‘the’ counterpart relation. These relations will weigh different respects of intrinsic or extrinsic similarity differently (or sometimes not at all), and so they will pair things off differently with their otherworldly partners. And sometimes the price to be paid for respecting (the appropriate sorts of) similarity and dissimilarity, and avoiding arbitrary choices, will be that the counterpart relation is no longer a neat one–one correspondence. One thing in this world may have one counterpart in that world, or two, or even more, or none; and two in this world may share a common counterpart in that world.

Counterpart theory makes a kind of sense of essentialism: *a* is essentially *F* just in case all of *a*’s counterparts (including *a* itself) are *F*. But this is a half-hearted and flexible essentialism. The truth of (all but the most trivial) essentialist judgements is relative to the counterpart relation. Indeed Quine (1976) once formulated his well-known misgivings about essentialism exactly as a complaint that we have no determinate counterpart relation. Such flexibility is all to the good. Our essentialist judgements *are* flexible. (Except in the case of those who follow where philosophical fashion leads, and imagine that some interesting essentialistic judgements have been established once

and for all.) Today, thinking of Saul Kripke as essentially the occupant of a distinguished role in contemporary philosophy, I can truly say that he might have been brought by a stork. Tomorrow, thinking of him as essentially the man who came from whatever sperm and egg he actually came from, I can truly say that he might never have had a philosophical thought in his life. I would be right both times, but relative to different, equally admissible, counterpart relations.

Lumpl the lump was created in the shape of a statue of Goliath, and remained in that shape until destroyed (Gibbard 1975). Lumpl *is* Goliath. Yet what might have happened to Lumpl differs from what might have happened to Goliath. Lumpl could have survived squashing. Goliath could not. How so, if indeed Lumpl and Goliath are one and the same? In another world there is something that does survive squashing. Is it a counterpart of Lumpl/Goliath? Yes and no. It is a counterpart under the counterpart relation that is called to mind when we describe Lumpl/Goliath as a lump, but not under the different counterpart relation that is called to mind when we describe the very same thing as a statue. Even the two names, when introduced in the way I did, are evocative. ‘Lumpl’ evokes a counterpart relation on which Lumpl/Goliath does have counterparts that survive squashing. ‘Goliath’ evokes a counterpart relation on which it does not. Thanks to the multiplicity of counterpart relations, we have no need to multiply entities.

Likewise, since I have no immaterial soul, I am my body. Yet my body could, and I could not, survive the complete erasure of my mental life; but I could, and my body could not, survive the transcription of my mental life into the previously blank brain of a different body, while at the same time my original body was destroyed. The solution is the same (Lewis 1971). One identical thing can have different potentialities and different essences if it has them relative to different counterpart relations. The one identical thing is both a person and a body, but these different descriptions evoke different counterpart relations. Thus we have the illusion that there are two different things.

3 Truthmaking

One way for the truth of a proposition to supervene on being is for that proposition to be made true, in any world where it is true, by a truthmaker. If a is a possible individual and P is a proposition, call a a *truthmaker* for P just in case every world where a exists is a world where P is true. By ‘world where a exists’ I mean, of course, ‘world where a has a counterpart’. (Otherwise, anything that exists in just one world would trivially count as a truthmaker for all propositions true in its world.) Note that a proposition may have different truthmakers in different worlds; and that it may have many truthmakers in a single world, any one of which would have sufficed to make it true. Note also that finding a truthmaker need not afford an informative explanation of why a proposition is true. Take the proposition that there is a cat. It is true

because it has a truthmaker. And what are its truthmakers? Cats. So it is true because there is a cat.

Call a proposition *positive existential* – for short, *positive* – just in case it has a truthmaker in any world where it is true. Some philosophers hold the *Truthmaker Principle*: they say that every truth must have a truthmaker. That is, all propositions are positive. In recent times, the Truthmaker Principle has been advocated by C. B. Martin, then by D. M. Armstrong, then (either in its original form or in revised versions) by many others (Fox 1987; Bigelow 1988; Armstrong 1989; Martin 1996; Mellor 1998: 19–28; Lewis forthcoming). But it had appeared often before, under different names in different traditions (Mulligan *et al.* 1984).

Even if the Truthmaker Principle is false, the supervenience of truth on being is unscathed. There are more ways than one for the truth of a proposition to supervene on being. Call possible individual *a* a *falsemaker* for proposition *P* just in case every world where *a* exists – or, rather, has a counterpart – is a world where *P* is false. For instance (assuming that if any possible individual is a unicorn, it is so essentially) a unicorn is a falsemaker for the proposition that there are no unicorns. That proposition is true in this world because it has no falsemakers. (Again, this is not an informative explanation.) Call a proposition *negative existential* – for short, *negative* – just in case it has a falsemaker in any world where it is false. A falsemaker for *P* is a truthmaker for not-*P*, and vice versa. So if the Truthmaker Principle is correct and, necessarily, every truth has a truthmaker, then also, necessarily, every falsehood has a falsemaker. Further, necessarily, every truth lacks falsemakers and every falsehood lacks truthmakers. In short, every proposition is both positive and negative.

But if the Truthmaker Principle is incorrect, then many more cases may be possible. A proposition may be positive, or negative, or both, or neither. If proposition *P* is true in world W_1 and false in W_2 , *P* might have truthmakers in W_1 but not in W_2 , or falsemakers in W_2 but not in W_1 , or both, or neither. And if it is neither, something in W_1 might have some fundamental property that its counterpart in W_2 lacks, or vice versa or both. Or some pair (or triple, or ...) of things in W_1 might stand in some fundamental relation, but the pair (or ...) of their counterparts in W_2 might not, or vice versa or both. In each case W_1 and W_2 differ somehow with respect to being. So each case respects the requirement that whether *P* is true must supervene on being.

4 Making predications true

The principle that truth supervenes on being is a safe fallback. Nevertheless, it is interesting to see how far we can get with the Truthmaker Principle itself. I once doubted that there were truthmakers for negative existential truths, such as the truth that there are no unicorns. I also doubted that there were truthmakers for predications, such as the truth that cat Long is black. For the time being I retain my doubt about negative existentials (Rosen and

I reconsider that question in our postscript to the present chapter), but I withdraw my doubt about truthmakers for predications.

When I doubted that there were truthmakers for predications, I was trying to remain entirely neutral about the metaphysics of modality (Lewis 2001). Under that constraint, I still do not see how a satisfactory theory of truthmaking for predications can be found. But when I abandon neutrality, and work within counterpart theory (or some alternative that matches the flexibility of counterpart theory; see Lewis 1986: 259–63), I think I can do better.

We shall consider predications of intrinsic properties. But if intrinsic predications always have truthmakers, then many extrinsic predications do too. For things have many of their extrinsic properties in virtue of the intrinsic properties of more inclusive things – perhaps the entire universe, perhaps something less. Where F is one of these extrinsic properties, the proposition Fa is implied by some Gb , where G is intrinsic and a is part of b (provided that, relative to our counterpart relation, any counterpart of b includes a counterpart of a and any counterpart of a is included in a counterpart of b). So a truthmaker for Gb is a truthmaker for Fa as well. But not all extrinsic predications are covered in this way: things have some of their extrinsic properties at least partly in virtue of negative existentials.

Consider the proposition that cat Long is black. Is there a truthmaker for this intrinsic predication? We might be tempted to redefine truthmaking so as to make it easy to find ‘truthmakers’ for intrinsic predications. Call a a *truthmaker** for P just in case every world where a exists with no change in its intrinsic properties is a world where P is true, in other words just in case every world where a has a counterpart that is also an intrinsic duplicate of a is a world where P is true (Parsons 1999). Long himself is a truthmaker* for the truth that Long is black, and for every other true intrinsic predication with Long as subject.

Truthmaking* is all very well. But what would it take to give us truthmakers for predications without having recourse to redefinition?

Imagine something, call it *Long qua black*, that is very like Long in most ways, but differs from him in essence. Long is accidentally black, and might have been striped, orange all over, or even green. Long qua black, however, is essentially black. Long has counterparts of many colours, whereas all counterparts of Long qua black are black. Indeed, the counterparts of Long qua black are all and only the black counterparts of Long. Long qua black, if there were such a thing, would be a truthmaker for the truth that Long is black. Every world where Long qua black had a counterpart would be a world where Long is black.

Better still, imagine something, call it *Long qua just as he is*, that is very like Long but having all of Long’s intrinsic properties essentially. Its counterparts are all and only those of Long’s counterparts that are also intrinsic duplicates of Long. Long qua just as he is, if there were such a thing, would be a truthmaker for the truth that Long is black, and for every other true intrinsic predica-

tion with Long as subject, in very much the same way that Long himself is a truthmaker* for these same truths.

If wishes were horses, we would believe in these qua-versions of things, and they would serve nicely as truthmakers for intrinsic predications. Since wishes are not horses, what reason have we to believe in these novel and peculiar entities we have just imagined?

One bad reason to believe in them is that we have suitable names for them: ‘Long qua black’, ‘Long qua just as he is’, and the like. But

- (1) The existence of a suitable name is no guarantee that there is something for it to name. Presumptive instances of pseudo-reference are legion: ‘Sherlock Holmes’, ‘the average taxpayer’, ‘a dearth of beer’, and so on. Anyway,
- (2) It is by no means clear that qua-phrases in ordinary language even purport to name anything.

Given a sentence of the form

NP qua Adj VP

we have a choice of two parsings

(NP qua Adj) VP
 NP (qua Adj) VP),

and the second parsing, on which the ‘qua Adj’ is an adverbial modifier of the verb phrase, is prima facie at least as plausible as the first. But if the second parsing is right, ‘NP qua Adj’ is not a syntactic constituent of the sentence at all, still less an ostensible name (see Kroon 2001). Indeed, we are free to co-opt it as a name, if we already believe in something it could suitably name. But if we do, we cannot claim to be following the lead of ordinary language.

But I deny that Long qua black is a novel and peculiar sort of thing. Long qua black is none other than Long himself. Surely you are willing to believe in a cat – and that is all I ask. Likewise for Long qua just as he is; likewise, *mutatis mutandis*, for all the other qua-versions of things that serve as truthmakers for intrinsic predications.

Long qua black *is* Long, yet the two of them have different essences. How can this one thing, Long qua black/Long, be essentially black and also be only accidentally black? My answer, of course, is that he has different essences under different counterpart relations. The name ‘Long’ evokes one counterpart relation; the (novel) name ‘Long qua black’ evokes another. The counterparts of Long qua black/Long under the second counterpart relation are just those of his counterparts under the first counterpart relation that are black. (More precisely, ‘Long’ evokes one rather indeterminate range of counterpart relations, and ‘Long qua black’ evokes another. The relations

of the second range are like those of the first except with blackness built in. Thus, the vagueness that infects the question of essentialism of origins, for instance, is unaltered.) Likewise, *mutatis mutandis*, for Long qua just as he is, and all the other qua-versions of things.

Once again, just as in the cases of Lumpl and Goliath and me and my body, the ostensible multiplication of entities is replaced by an innocent multiplicity of counterpart relations. (Compare Yablo 1987, in which the acceptance of a multitude of qua-versions of things – not his term – really is a multiplication of entities.) Once we have decided that Lumpl is Goliath, there is no need to try to understand the strangely intimate relation of ‘constitution’ that supposedly unites these two different things. Likewise for me and my body. Likewise for Long qua black and Long *simpliciter*.

5 Toil or theft?

The solution I have proposed can be parodied to its discredit. Why not provide truthmakers for negative existential propositions in a similar fashion? Let ‘Long qua unaccompanied by unicorns’ be still another evocative name for Long, one that evokes a still more peculiar counterpart relation. Under this peculiar counterpart relation, something will be one of Long’s counterparts just in case

- (1) it is one of his counterparts under the ordinary counterpart relation evoked by the name ‘Long’ (pretend for simplicity that this is fully determinate); and
- (2) it is unaccompanied by unicorns – that is, it is in a world where there are no unicorns.

Then Long qua unaccompanied by unicorns is a truthmaker for the negative existential proposition that there are no unicorns: any world where he exists – that is, any world where he has a counterpart under the counterpart relation evoked by the name I just gave him – is a world where there are no unicorns.

The same trick works for negative existential propositions generally, with the sole exception of the proposition that there is nothing at all.

It should be obvious that this is just a cheap trick, and does not give the friends of the Truthmaker Principle what they wanted. But why is it any worse than my own proposal for truthmakers for predications?

Answer: because the ‘peculiar counterpart relation’ is so very peculiar as not to be a genuine counterpart relation at all. The ‘similarity’, if we may call it that, between things that are unaccompanied by unicorns is, in the first place, one that would strike us in almost any context as an utterly unimportant similarity. It is, in the second place, an entirely extrinsic similarity. Two things both unaccompanied by unicorns could be as different as you please

intrinsically. Their surroundings too, both nearby and remote, could differ intrinsically in any respect other than the absence of unicorns.

Satisfactory counterpart relations, on the other hand, rest upon similarities that strike us as having at least some importance; and they rest predominantly upon intrinsic similarity. Not just on intrinsic similarity between the counterparts themselves, although that will often be part of what makes them counterparts. But a satisfactory counterpart relation will often give a lot of weight to intrinsic similarity between the contexts in which the counterparts are embedded in their worlds. For instance, in the case of match of origins, we have the intrinsic similarity of the pasts from which the two counterparts originated. (Indeed, essentialism of origins is at its most plausible when we have divergence between two possible worlds that are exact intrinsic duplicates up to about the time when the counterparts come into existence.) In the case of similarity in philosophical role, we have the intrinsic similarity of the philosophical events in which the two counterparts participate.

The alleged counterpart relation allegedly evoked by ‘Long qua unaccompanied by unicorns’, as well as failing to heed similarities that we would find important, also fails to heed intrinsic similarity. But the counterpart relations evoked by ‘Long qua black’ or, still more, by ‘Long qua just as he is’ place *more* weight on intrinsic similarity than the counterpart relation evoked just by ‘Long’. And that is how my proposal for predications differs from the cheap trick.

6 States of affairs

Armstrong (1997) says that the truthmakers for predications are *states of affairs*, or *facts*. I want to compare this with my proposal that the truthmakers are qua-versions of the things which are the subjects of the predications. My conclusion will not be that my proposal is preferable, but rather that there is less difference between the two proposals than meets the eye – and maybe none at all.

But first we need to clear up a troublesome ambiguity. Long is black; we have the state of affairs of Long’s being black, and the fact that Long is black. What would become of these entities if Long were not black? What does become of them in a world where Long’s only counterpart is not black, or where he has no counterpart? What Armstrong calls a state of affairs, or a fact, is something that would not exist at all if Long were not black, and this is the conception I want to discuss.

But there is another conception, on which the state of affairs of Long’s being black would still *exist* if Long were not black, but would in that case be a state of affairs that did not *obtain* (see, *inter alia*, Plantinga 1974: 44–6). It is as if ‘state of affairs’ meant ‘proposition’ and ‘obtain’ meant ‘true’. And there is a conception on which the fact that Long is black is something that would still exist if Long were not black, but would in that case be not a fact but a

falsehood. It is as if ‘fact’ meant ‘true proposition’. It is hard to see why ‘states of affairs’ or ‘facts’, so conceived, are anything other than propositions. They are useless as truthmakers for predications, since they would exist regardless of whether the subject did or did not have the predicated property. (The same goes for ersatz facts or states of affairs constructed set-theoretically or mereologically out of the subject and the property–thing–property pairs, or the like, at least if we are operating under a counterpart relation that makes the set-theoretical or mereological constitution of such a construction essential to it.) Here, let us follow Armstrong and understand the state of affairs of Long’s being black to be something that would not exist at all if Long were not black, and therefore something suited to serve as a truthmaker for the truth that Long is black.

It would be nice to borrow Mellor’s (1995: 161–2) unambiguous term ‘factum’, which means almost what Armstrong means by ‘state of affairs’. But there is one difference between Armstrong and Mellor that will concern us later, so it seems best to use Mellor’s term only when discussing Mellor’s own theory.

What does Armstrong tell us about states of affairs, and how do they compare with our qua-versions of things?

- (1) States of affairs are particulars, spatio-temporally located and unrepeatable (except for certain higher-order states of affairs that turn out to be universals in their own right and which need not concern us here, such as lawmaking relations of universals). The state of affairs of Long’s being black, for instance, is located exactly when and where Long is. The same is true of our qua-versions of things. Since Long qua black is none other than Long himself, of course Long qua black is located exactly where Long is.
- (2) Necessarily, the state of affairs of *a*’s being *F* exists just in case thing *a* and property *F* both exist and *a* has *F*. For instance, Long’s being black exists just in case Long is black. This would be a prima facie mysterious necessary connection between distinct existences, if Long and that state of affairs were distinct existences. Likewise, Long qua black exists just in case Long is black. This is a necessary connection. But it is not between distinct existences, since Long qua black is none other than Long. It is not mysterious and not objectionable. It holds just because blackness is part of what it takes to be Long’s counterpart, under the peculiar counterpart relation evoked by the name ‘Long qua black’.
- (3) The state of affairs of *a*’s being *F* is said to be composed, but not mereologically, of two constituents: the particular *a* and the universal *F*. Prima facie I cannot understand this: mereology is the general theory of composition, so ‘unmereological composition’ is contradictory. But what cannot be understood literally can perhaps be understood analogically, and the analogy that comes to mind is as follows. If necessary connections between distinct existences are forbidden, then mereological composition

(in which the whole is not distinct from its parts but rather is partially identical to each of them) becomes a licence for necessary connections. Maybe it means to say that a state of affairs that is unmereologically composed of its constituents bears a necessary connection to them: the necessary connection considered in the previous paragraph. If that is what the claim of unmereological composition means, we already have seen that it applies just as well to Long qua black.

- (4) We also have a denial that the state of affairs is mereologically composed of *a* and *F*. (Otherwise, Long's being black would exist if Long and blackness did, regardless of whether Long was black; at least under a counterpart relation that validates mereological essentialism.) Likewise I deny that Long qua black is mereologically composed of Long and blackness. Long, yes: he is part of Long qua black because he is the whole of Long qua black. But blackness, no.
- (5) We are not given a fully general denial that states of affairs are identical to the ordinary particulars that are the subjects of predications. Indeed, in one special case this identity is asserted. Let *F* be the complete intrinsic character of *a*, including all of *a*'s intrinsic properties, or, at any rate, all of them that are genuine universals. (I shall assume, questionably perhaps, that all the rest supervene upon these.) Let *a* be a so-called 'thick' particular, taken to include the whole of *F*. ('Include unmereologically', whatever that means.) Then the state of affairs of *a*'s being *F* is identified with *a* itself. I can match this. 'Thick' Long has the same existence conditions as Long qua *F* – that is, Long qua just as he is. So 'thick' Long, like Long qua just as he is, serves as a truthmaker for all true predications with Long as subject. And Long qua just as he is, like all other qua-versions of Long, is identical to Long himself.

So in the end, the only difference I can find between Armstrong's proposal and mine is that I claim in full generality, and Armstrong claims only in a special case, that the truthmaker for a true predication is identical with the subject of that predication. Should I conclude, therefore, that despite appearances the two proposals are almost the same? I doubt it, despite my failure to articulate the differences. Instead, I am inclined to think that the two proposals come out alike because they are constrained alike by the goal of finding truthmakers for predications.

7 Temporary intrinsics

Cat Long is black all his life. But there are other intrinsic properties, for instance purring, that things have only temporarily. Cat Ajax purrs, perhaps, throughout the three-millionth minute of his life, but not the minute before or the minute after.

Nothing new here, if we accept the hypothesis of temporal parts. There is a temporal part, Ajax throughout his three-millionth minute, for short

Ajax_{3m}, that has the intrinsic property of purring; and this intrinsic predication is made true in just the way that other true intrinsic predications are. I could say that the truthmaker is a qua-version of the temporal part: Ajax_{3m} qua purring. Armstrong, who accepts the hypothesis of temporal parts, could say that the truthmaker is a state of affairs, Ajax_{3m}'s purring. Either way, the same truthmaker that makes it true that Ajax_{3m} purrs, also makes it true that Ajax, a persisting cat composed of many temporal parts, purrs throughout his three-millionth minute. (Let descriptions like 'Ajax's three-millionth minute' be read as rigidified, designating in any world the time that fits that description in actuality.)

Mellor, however, does not believe that Ajax has temporal parts. He rather thinks that Ajax *endures identically*: he in his entirety is located at all the different times when he is alive, much as a saint practising bilocation, or a universal is said to be wholly present at multiple locations in space. Mellor therefore needs an account of truthmaking for temporary intrinsic predications that avoids any commitment to temporal parts. Further, he needs an account of intrinsic change that does not implicitly deny persistence altogether; that does not represent change as contradictory; that does not misrepresent temporary intrinsic properties as relations to moments of time; and that does not trade in the changing temporary intrinsic properties for the permanent intrinsic property of having such-and-such history of change. (The final option has been suggested by Parsons 2000). Mellor's ingenious solution does indeed avoid all these pitfalls, but I think it is nevertheless unsatisfactory.

Mellor (1998: 26, 91–5) gives us a theory of indiscernible facta. As previously noted, Mellor's facta are very like Armstrong's states of affairs. However, Armstrong's states of affairs are located exactly when and where their particular constituents are. Not so for Mellor's facta, in the case where the particular constituent endures identically. In that case, the factum shares only one, not all, of the many temporal locations of its particular constituent. Suppose Ajax purrs throughout his three-millionth minute. Call this time, for short, t_{3m} . (Perhaps t_{3m} should really be an instant, not a minute; but for simplicity I pretend that minutes are the smallest divisions of time.) There is a factum, Ajax's purring. This factum has two constituents, Ajax and the property of purring, but it does not have t_{3m} as a third constituent. Rather, it is located at t_{3m} . Assume that it is *essentially* located at t_{3m} . (Mellor does not say this, but it seems to be required by what he does say. It seems a safe enough assumption: similarity of temporal location is one similarity that could unite this factum with its counterpart facta in other worlds, and what countervailing differences could there be?) Then this factum is a truthmaker for the truth that Ajax purrs at t_{3m} . Necessarily, if it exists it is located at t_{3m} . (If it has a counterpart, that counterpart is located at t_{3m} , or at a counterpart of t_{3m} .) Necessarily, if it exists and is located at t_{3m} then Ajax purrs at t_{3m} .

Now suppose that Ajax purrs again at a later time, say his four-millionth minute (or some instant therein), for short t_{4m} . Again there is a factum with Ajax and the property of purring as its constituents, but this is a different

factum. It is uniquely and essentially located at t_{4m} rather than t_{3m} . Yet despite their difference in location, these two facta differ not at all with respect to their constituents. In that respect, they are indiscernible. Just as the factum located at t_{3m} is a truthmaker for the truth that Ajax purrs at t_{3m} , so likewise the factum located at t_{4m} is a truthmaker for the truth that Ajax purrs at t_{4m} . Doubtless Ajax purrs at still other times, so we have still other facta indiscernible from these two.

These indiscernible facta are temporary, just as temporal parts would be. But they are not temporal parts, and they do not have temporal parts as constituents. Rather, they have identically enduring Ajax as their common particular constituent. It is because Ajax purrs more than once, and we need different truthmakers for different truths about when he purrs, that we need different facta with different locations but exactly the same constituents.

Is that a problem? I said that I did not understand the ‘unmereological composition’ of Armstrong’s states of affairs; no more do I understand it in the case of Mellor’s facta. Since I do not understand ‘unmereological composition’, I do not know what rules it ought to follow. Therefore, I know of no reason why different facta should not have the very same constituents.

The difference between Armstrong’s states of affairs and Mellor’s facta is slight. We should have expected some such difference given that Armstrong accepts the hypothesis of temporal parts and Mellor does not. Yet this slight difference means that I cannot use qua-versions of things to imitate Mellor’s indiscernible facta in the same way that I used them to imitate Armstrong’s states of affairs, or not without having recourse to the temporal parts that Mellor rejects. Ajax qua whatever you please is identical to Ajax. If Ajax endures identically, so does Ajax qua whatever you please. Helping myself to peculiar counterpart relations is not a way to conjure up temporary entities without benefit of temporal parts.

Is there such a thing as Ajax qua purring, if Ajax endures identically? Well, there is such a thing as Ajax qua permanently purring – but not in this world, and not in any world very close to this world. And perhaps there is such a thing as Ajax qua purring at t_{3m} . Whether there is any such qua-version of an identically enduring Ajax depends on whether the hypothesis of identical endurance affords any satisfactory account of temporary intrinsic properties, something I still doubt. But if there is such a qua-version, then it is a truthmaker for the proposition that Ajax is purring at t_{3m} . Every world where this qua-version of Ajax exists – has a counterpart – is a world where Ajax is purring at t_{3m} . Under the same proviso, there is another qua-version of identically enduring Ajax, Ajax qua purring just when he does, that can serve as a truthmaker for all truths about when he is purring and when he is not.

I said against Armstrong’s states of affairs that they prima facie involved mysteries of unmereological composition and of necessary connection between mereologically distinct existences. (Perhaps these two mysteries are one and the same.) The same complaint applies against Mellor’s facta. In Armstrong’s case the complaint can be dodged if we interpret states of affairs as qua-

versions of their particular constituents. (Most likely this interpretation is unintended.) In the case of Mellor's indiscernible facta, there is no parallel way to dodge. My complaint stands; and that is why I doubt that Mellor has given us a fully satisfactory treatment of temporary intrinsic predications under the hypothesis of identical endurance.

But maybe there is another way to dodge the complaint. Mellor does not reject the hypothesis of temporal parts across the board; rather, he thinks that events have temporal parts and things – cats, for instance – do not. So perhaps we can use the temporal parts Mellor accepts as proxies, so to speak, for those he rejects. Ajax's life is one prolonged event, and presumably does have temporal parts. One of these life-parts, call it 'life-part_{3m}' occupies the three-millionth minute of Ajax's life. It has a property we can call purring*. (Not purring – it is Ajax himself, not a part of his life, that purrs – but a property that is somehow necessarily connected with purring.) 'Life-part_{3m} qua purring*' can be taken as a name for life-part_{3m} that evokes a peculiar counterpart relation with purring* built in; life-part_{3m} qua purring* is a truthmaker for the truth that life-part_{3m} is purring*; and that somehow – how? – implies that Ajax himself purrs at t_{3m}. The idea is that qua-versions of parts of lives (more generally, of histories, since not all things are alive) might imitate Mellor's indiscernible facta in roughly the way that qua-versions of things imitated Armstrong's states of affairs. I find this solution unsatisfying:

- (1) because, just as Mellor fears, I have some difficulty understanding the supposed distinction between Ajax's life and Ajax himself;
- (2) consequently, I have some difficulty understanding the distinction and the connection between purring and purring*; and
- (3) it is disappointing that a way of rejecting the hypothesis of temporal parts should succeed only because the rejection is not whole-hearted.