

The Ludovician Mysteries

BENJ HELLIE

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1. What would it be like to be a ‘piecemeal, unsystematic philosopher’ (Lewis 1983b, ix)?
2. Does Lewis’s ‘principal interest’, ‘to figure out what [he] should believe’ (Lewis 1983b, x), influence the philosophical doctrines at which he arrives?
3. What commitments lead Lewis to the view that there are extensive ‘analogies between space, time, and modality’ to be ‘exploited’ (Lewis 1983b, xi)?
4. The 1984-composed preface to *Phil Papers II* announces that his papers ‘fall into place within a prolonged campaign on behalf of [] Humean supervenience’ (Lewis 1986, ix). Is this true? How much of the pre-1983 stuff is available to someone who does not affirm Humean Supervenience?
5. The starting point of the ‘plan of battle’ in this ‘campaign’ is a view of laws of nature advanced by ‘(a short temporal segment of) Ramsey’ (Lewis 1986, xi). What competing view was embraced by other temporal segments of Ramsey? Why did Ramsey abandon the view Lewis takes up?
6. Why does the ‘Big Bad Bug’ arise only for *chances* (Lewis 1986, xiv), rather than something comparable arising earlier in the campaign?
7. What cases does Lewis advance across various papers—‘Argument for the identity theory’ (Lewis 1966), ‘Psychophysical and theoretical identifications’ (Lewis 1972), ‘Reduction of mind’ (Lewis 1994)—for the claim that ‘the definitive characteristic of any experience as such is its causal role’ (Lewis 1966, 99)? What is the best version of this case?
8. Lewis illustrates that claim with an analogy to programmable bike locks (Lewis 1966, 100). Is that analogy credible?
9. Footnote 5 of ‘AIT’ (Lewis 1966, 101) makes explicit that what is ‘definitive as such’ of experiences is a matter of the *senses* of experience-predicates, rather than their *referents*. The story in ‘Languages and language’ (Lewis 1975, 168–9) maintains that meanings can be fixed only for truth-conditions of sentences, with subsentential meaning a matter of theoretical preference (Lewis 1975, 175–7). But predicates aren’t sentences, and (on a contemporary understanding, anyway) truth-conditions are part of *referent* rather than *sense*. Can these conflicts be finessed?
10. The last paragraph of ‘AIT’ begins by presupposing that the ‘common man’ subscribes to a ‘dualism’ (Lewis 1966, 106). How does the common man come by this dualism, if not by virtue of what is ‘definitive of experiences as such’ (Lewis 1966, 99)? (Compare the much later discussion in ‘Should a materialist believe in qualia?’ (Lewis 1995).)
11. ‘How to define theoretical terms’ (Lewis 1970c) takes a ‘syntactic’ or ‘formal mode’ perspective that is generally uncharacteristic of Lewis (compare the slams against mental representation in ‘L&L’ (Lewis 1975, 175–7), ‘Index, context, and content’ (Lewis 1980a, 24), and ‘Reduction of mind’ (Lewis 1994, 310–12); and the ‘how the facts determine the facts’ insistence in ‘Radical interpretation’ (Lewis 1974, 110)). Thinking from a more ‘semantic’ (or ‘metaphysical’) or ‘material mode’ perspective, how would we explain

what ‘HTDTT’ is about?

12. Lewis ‘presupposes’ in ‘Radical interpretation’ that ‘the facts’ about Karl as a physical being do indeed ‘determine the facts’ about Karl’s psychology (Lewis 1974, 118); and that talk of a ‘mighty knower’ is ‘safe enough, so long as we can take it or leave it alone’ (110). What happens to the ‘first-person perspective’ here? (To dramatize the question, perhaps *uncertainty* is essential to understanding Karl’s psychology: he himself is uncertain about a lot, and to appreciate what it is to harbor this uncertainty, the mighty knower would have to bracket their opinions on all this. The dual of uncertainty is *inconsistency*: in the later ‘Logic for equivocators’, Lewis proposes that someone with inconsistent beliefs is ‘fragmented’ (Lewis 1982, 103): this is something for the mighty knower to say. But Lewis maintains also that as soon as the inconsistency comes to light, the fragmentation ‘vanishes straightaway’—no one ever seems fragmented to themselves. So again, to appreciate Lewis’s self-apparent non-fragmentation, the mighty knower would have to bracket the opinions that lead them to postulate the fragmentation.)
13. ‘RadInt’ assumes a classical decision theory-style approach to psychology, where the psychological states of fundamental importance are ‘belief’ and ‘desire’, both with propositional contents (and, in more complex versions, with a credence-measure for the former and an intensity-scale for the latter: Lewis 1974, 113–4). Does this choice have further influence on Lewis’s philosophy of mind, or on other aspects of his philosophy (compare the case against ‘bestowing meaning’ in ‘L&L’: Lewis 1975, 178–9)?
14. How did the ‘mass of platitudes’ that ‘implicitly define’ the terms of psychology, according to ‘RadInt’, become our ‘common property’ (Lewis 1974, 111–12)? Is it a problem for this if these ‘platitudes’ must involve in terms for ‘raw behavior’ (114)? Is Lewis correct that ‘if anyone prefers, we could restate the Rationalization Principle in terms of [] nonraw behavior’? Is there a comparable dialectic in the offing for the opposite end of the spectrum, pertaining to *perception*?
15. The ‘Dutch Book’ case for classical decision theory in ‘Why conditionalize?’ (Lewis 1972/1997) has a diachronic appearance to it. How diachronic is it really? Also, is that Dutch Book argument compatible with the ‘time-slice rationality’ view Lewis would eventually take up in ‘Attitudes *de dicto* and *de se*’ (Lewis 1979a)? Also, if someone doesn’t like the psychology postulated by classical decision theory, how should they react to the Dutch Book argument?
16. ‘General semantics’ attacks a ‘Semantic Markerese’ proposal on the grounds that ‘semantics with no treatment of truth conditions is not semantics’ (Lewis 1970b, 190). Why not—what is it about *meaning* that is only revealed by a statement of truth-conditions? Having answered this, are those desirable features of a theory of meaning concluding with truth-conditions captured by a theory of meaning concluding instead with something psychological—*assertability*-conditions, perhaps, or *endorsement*-conditions? On an alternative front, Lewis argues that Semantic Markerese is *insufficient*, but then goes on to treat it as also *unnecessary*. Why not have both Markerese and truth-conditions?
17. The point of ‘GS’ section IV, Lewis advocates replacing ‘Carnapean intensions’ with ‘compositional intensions’ (Lewis 1970b, 198). But Carnapean intensions had been previously given a certain job: does the approach involving compositional intensions manage to still do this job?
18. The treatment in ‘GS’ of quantification introduces ‘binders’ (Lewis 1970b, 210). What job does he assign these? Is it a problem that binders are absent from the apparent syntax of English? Can the demand for ‘compositional intensions’ be weakened in a way that does away with binders? Observe that Postscript B recommends getting rid of categorial grammar, and ‘investing in the means for variable-binding outside the categorial framework’ (Lewis 1970b, 231). But why isn’t the need for variable-binding an artifact of the categorial framework?
19. The treatment in ‘GS’ of nondeclarative language (Lewis 1970b,

VIII) maintains that imperative and interrogative sentences are in fact declarative sentences. How is this striking claim arrived at?

20. Compare the treatments of ‘actually’ given in ‘Anselm and actuality’ (section IX) (Lewis 1970a, 19) and the ‘Solidarity forever?’ section of ‘ICC’ (Lewis 1980a, 43). Are these the same? The underlying issue here goes under the label ‘double-indexing’: ‘ICC’ offers a mea culpa of sorts in regard to that issue (42–3). Compare the treatments of the Kripke argument for dualism in ‘Reduction of mind’ (Lewis 1994, 303–8) and ‘SMBQ’ (Lewis 1995, 328–9); and compare these with the related issue discussed in ‘Mad pain and Martian pain’ (Lewis 1980b); and with the issue about ‘senses’ from ‘AIT’ (Lewis 1966, 101). It is hard to avoid the issue that Lewis’s grip on double-indexing remains hazy through the early 1990s. But if so, there is surely some doctrinal matter that sets up the cognitive blindspot: what might it be?
21. ‘Anselm’ is the wellsprings of Lewis’s ‘modal realism’ (Lewis 1970a, IX). What is the case there for this oddball view?
22. ‘L&L’ maintains that to know a language (say, English) is to be a member of a community which commonly knows that its members have a common interest in speaking sentences only when they are true-in-English, and in trusting-in-English sentences that are spoken (Lewis 1975, 166–8). Is this necessary for knowing English? Sufficient? Why believe it? How does this bear on Lewis’s objections against Chomsky-type approaches which theorize about ‘internal representations’ (178)? How does this bear on Lewis’s rejection of any ‘objective sense’ to be made of claims about ‘grammar’ that go beyond sentential truth-conditions (177)?
23. ‘L&L’ stipulates that ‘conventions are regularities [] which are arbitrary but perpetuate themselves because they serve some common interest’ (Lewis 1975, 164). Lewis then maintains that human languages are conventions of a certain sort (166–8). But it does not seem that my practice of speaking English, rather than Japanese or Catalan or . . . , perpetuates itself because it serves my interest: En-

glish is the *only* language I know how to speak (aside from a bit of German). How effective is Lewis’s treatment of this worry in the long list of objections and replies (objections 12 and 15, 180–1)? What hangs on the worry?

24. Consider, in ‘L&L’ (Lewis 1975), the replies to the following objections:
 - (a) The second (171–2): Is the apparatus here present in ‘GS’ (compare Lewis 1970b, 195)? Why not? How does this bear on the stuff about double-indexing, discussed above (Mystery 20)?
 - (b) The ninth (178): Is the attack on ‘bestowing meaning’ (compare Mystery 13) directed against the strongest possible version of the bestowal hypothesis? What hangs on the outcome of this dispute?
 - (c) The twentieth and twenty-first (183–4): Are the treatments of non-literal and unserious use of language plausible? How much would we need to depart from Lewis’s basic approach for adequate treatments of these phenomena to become available?
25. ‘ICC’ offers an explanation of what formal theory of meaning is all about (Lewis 1980a, section 2). This explanation differs dramatically from what you will find in pretty much any semantics textbook, where the subject-matter is something Chomskyish, dealing with ‘internal representations’. What is the source of Lewis’s heterodoxy? Does it have consequences for the doctrines in ‘ICC’?
26. The ‘Solidarity Forever’ proposal in ‘ICC’ (Lewis 1980a, section 12) maintains that Lewis, Stalnaker, and Kaplan are all on about the same thing. But, famously, Kaplan is an ‘internalist’ and Stalnaker is an ‘externalist’. Are there respects in which Lewis must ‘massage’ their views in order to eliminate this contrast?
27. Why does ‘ICC’ make such a big deal out of the ‘complex but constant’ versus ‘variable but simple’ dispute (Lewis 1980a, section 9)? The only adherent to ‘complex but constant’ is the ‘GS’ Lewis (36), with Kaplan, Stalnaker, and the ‘L&L’ Lewis all going for ‘variable

- but simple'; and in the final section, Lewis renounces the 'GS' approach (42–3). So the 'complex but constant' approach is mistaken, right?
28. Why not take the 'schmentencite' way out (Lewis 1980a, section 8)? A 'cheap and pointless' 'victory' (33) is still a victory.
 29. Lewis starts, in 'Counterfactuals and comparative possibility' (Lewis 1973b) (and the *Counterfactuals* book: Lewis 1973a) with the *subjunctive* conditional as the primary object of analysis, rather than the *indicative* conditional. But indicative and subjunctive are related grammatically as present to past tense: intuitively, the present tense is simpler than the past tense. Why do it this way?
 30. What options are available for Lewis, for a treatment of the indicative conditional that adjusts the *Counterfactuals* treatment of the subjunctive (Lewis 1973b, 10) so as to respect the observation about tense?
 31. 'Survival and identity' (Lewis 1976c) and 'Paradoxes of time travel' (Lewis 1976a) address circumstances in which first-personal patterns of anticipation and recollection diverge from the norm: 'SurvId', with the fission subject potentially anticipating two distinct futures and the fusion subject potentially recollecting two distinct pasts; 'ParaTT', with the prospect of anticipating doing something one recollects observing oneself having done (inter alia). But Lewis ducks these issues, instead locating the interest of the discussion in logical questions about how to describe fissioning or time-travelling entities, which would arise regardless of whether those entities are psychological beings. What is the doctrinal source of the cognitive blindspot? Do such cases require adjustments to the Dutch book case from 'Why conditionalize?' (Lewis 1972/1997)?
 32. 'Truth in fiction' (Lewis 1978) returns to 'L&L' objection 21 (Lewis 1975, 183). Intuitively, fictional assertion involves a complicated *speech act* of assertion within, or enrichment of, a hypothesis; assertion *about fictions*, by contrast, is literal assertion of 'meta-discourse' subject-matter. 'Truth in fiction' proposes to reduce the fictional assertion to assertion about fiction, by appeal to a special syntactic operator with a primitive meaning (Lewis 1978, 262–3). But intuitively, fictional assertion is prior to assertion about fiction. How does Lewis propose to understand this special operator? And what compels him to propose this bizarre view?
 33. 'Probabilities of conditionals and conditional probabilities' (Lewis 1976b) is a very complicated presentation of the following dialectic: if the indicative conditional $P \rightarrow Q$ is (as it is by all appearances) a 'Ramsey-test' conditional (meaning, in effect, that upon supposing P , we conclude Q), then having information just as strong as $\neg P \vee Q$ suffices to accept $P \rightarrow Q$ while having information just as strong as $\neg P \vee \neg Q = \neg(P \wedge Q)$ suffices to reject $P \rightarrow Q$; so if \rightarrow is a straightforward connective, $P \rightarrow Q$ is at least as weak as $\neg P \vee Q$ and at least as strong as $P \wedge Q$ —so \rightarrow is not a straightforward connective. Lewis's response, however, is not to follow the dialectic all the way out, but is instead to identify $P \rightarrow Q$ with $\neg P \vee Q$, and deny the appearance that believing $\neg(P \vee Q)$ suffices to reject $P \rightarrow Q$ (Lewis 1976b, 142–5, 162–6). Why does he not instead say the obvious thing, that the indicative conditional is a Ramsey-test conditional, and \rightarrow is not a straightforward connective?
 34. 'Possible-worlds semantics: a rejoinder' (Lewis 1977) considers the expedients of adopting a very complicated syntax and abandoning compositionality in order to deal with an objection that should not be too hard to handle. What is it that freaks Lewis out here?
 35. 'A problem about permission' (Lewis 1979b) describes a command-language game, in which a Master's commands shrink a 'sphere of permissibility' within which action by a Slave is required to locate the actual world. The supposed problem is that *lifting* a command to A then opens a permission to do anything compatible with not A -ing—including a bunch of crazy stuff. But this is a problem only if commands are the *only* constraints on the Slave, rather than an 'overlay' of mandates on an external body of expectations—without which the prohibition on the crazy stuff has no source in the first place. Why does Lewis overlook this 'two-tiered' character of genuine command discourse?

36. ‘Mad pain and Martian pain’ (Lewis 1980b) takes up (at last) the first-person conception of sensation, maintaining that it, and the third-person conception, are distinct, but related—so that sensation-terms like ‘pain’ are ambiguous, but manageably so. The ‘AIT’ approach is preserved for the third-person conception: it provides an indexically-variable intension for ‘pain’, which, evaluated at a member of a certain population, has as extension the physical state typically occupying the pain-role in that population (this allegedly handles the ‘multiple realizability’ of sensation—‘Martian pain’—by providing a different extension for ‘pain’ at Martian-indices than at human-indices). The intension of the first-person conception, relative to an individual, rigidifies the extension of ‘pain’ evaluated at that individual (this allegedly handles the first-person aspect of sensation—‘mad pain’, in which pain comes apart from pain-behavior—by insulating the extension of ‘pain’ at a specific human-index from the peculiarities of that specific human, linking it instead to humans in general).

Why is Lewis working with this primitive circa-1970 index-only framework, following the developments of the 1978-composed ‘ICC’ (Lewis 1980a)? How is the compositional semantics for the non-rigid sensation-predicates supposed to work—are terms for subjects of psychology type-lifted to become index-shifting operators? Relatedly, the treatment of the ‘mad Martian’ would appear to require rigidifying to *Martians*, which would violate the unshiftability of context (Lewis 1980a, 30): what does Lewis have in mind here?

37. In fn. 2 of ‘Mad pain and Martian pain’, (Lewis 1980b) Lewis rejoins to Kripke’s conceivability argument against physicalism (Kripke 1972/1980, 149ff) that it relies on the rigidity of ‘pain’, and then stonewalls, insisting that ‘pain’ is in fact nonrigid—but then two sections hence, generates a rigid concept of pain, while overlooking the prospect of running Kripke’s argument with that concept: why the neglect?

38. Combining these worries, ‘ICC’ recognizes the use of its framework in analyzing ‘Kripke’s well-known distinction between the *a priori*

and the necessary’ (Lewis 1980a, 42)—with the former involving diagonal rigidity and the latter involving horizontal rigidity—while Kripke’s argument is unambiguously cast in terms of the former. How does Lewis manage to overlook the need to apply the ‘ICC’ apparatus in discussing Kripke’s argument?

39. In ‘Reduction of mind’ (Lewis 1994, 304), Lewis returns to the Kripke argument, again attacking the horizontal rigidity claim: when one has pain, one is not thereby aware of which brain state that involves. But first, one *is* thereby aware that one has pain, so that—the core observation of Kripke’s argument—pain is conceptually distinct from brain states: why, as it appears, does Lewis misunderstand the Kripke argument? And second, earlier in the same paper (Lewis 1994, 296), Lewis brings what is in effect the ‘ICC’ apparatus to the project: why does Lewis still insist on treating the Kripke argument by attacking horizontal rigidity?

40. In ‘Should a materialist believe in qualia?’ (Lewis 1995), Lewis finally cottons to the point of the Kripke argument: ‘pain’ is diagonally rigid, but distinct in diagonal intension from any brain state (‘making discoveries in neurophysiology is not so easy!’: Lewis 1995, 329). Why now?

41. ‘SMBQ’ (Lewis 1995) replies to the Kripke argument by proposing that the diagonal rigidity of ‘pain’ is somehow severable from other aspects of folk psychology. Of course, possible worlds content does not come in identifiable chunks (part of the ‘problem about permission’: Lewis 1979b), so any ‘severing’ has to be done at the syntactic level. But in ‘Reduction of mind’ (Lewis 1994, 310–12) (as well as an a number of earlier locations, such as ‘Languages and language’: Lewis 1975), Lewis denies that we have any conception of ‘internal representations’ of concepts, of the sort that would be required for meaningful discussion of folk syntax. Is there a way to make this all coherent?

42. ‘Attitudes *de dicto* and *de se*’ (Lewis 1979a, I) maintains that the objects of attitudes cannot be ‘miscellaneous’, because otherwise it

would be hard to describe their logical relations. What is Lewis's conception of logic such that this is so? Is there an alternative?

43. 'ADDDS' (Lewis 1979a, III) presents an 'arbitrary restriction' argument to the effect that *modal realists* should be particularly friendly to centered-world content—a surprising incursion of metaphysical doctrine into semantical matters. Does this argument work?
44. A number of alleged cases of self-locating ignorance or error are discussed in 'ADDDS' (Lewis 1979a, IV, VI, VIII), on behalf of centered-world content. Do these succeed: in particular, what should a friend of propositions (perhaps amplified with a distinctive belief-related attitude of self- and present-identification) make of these cases?
45. Compare the contention in 'ADDDS' (Lewis 1979a, VI) that Heimson and Hume 'believe the same thing' to the 'Dutch book' argument from 'Why conditionalize?' (Lewis 1972/1997): are the strategies for identifying beliefs the same? If not, can a comparable Dutch book argument be given for the centered-worlds approach? (Compare, in particular, the discussion of the insomniac in 'ADDDS' VII.) Similarly, compare this to the account of communication in 'L&L' (Lewis 1975, II) and 'ICC' (Lewis 1980a, I): what alterations to the latter are necessary to make them cohere?
46. What is Lewis presupposing about 'causal roles' in the 'states of the head' argument from 'ADDDS' (Lewis 1979a, VI)? Is there a way to affirm the 'Radical interpretation' (Lewis 1974) picture of psychological concepts while avoiding the 'states of the head' argument?
47. Toward the end of 'ADDDS' (Lewis 1979a, XI), Lewis maintains that 'very little' changes about standard decision theory when propositions are swapped out for properties. Is this true? If not, why did Lewis make this error?
48. 'Scorekeeping in a language game' (Lewis 1979c) significantly enriches the earlier model of communication, with:
 - (a) *Salience*, to handle referential shifts for definite descriptions

- (b) *Presupposition*, to handle various presuppositional phenomena
- (c) *Imputed perspective*, to handle expressions like 'coming' and 'going'
- (d) *Practical supposition*, to handle conditional planning

Do all these incursions leave various fundamental presuppositions in place? For example, must (or *can*) we still insist that 'semantics with no treatment of truth-conditions is not semantics', or that knowledge of language emanates from a convention of truthfulness and trust, or that subjunctive-conditionality and fictional discourse can be handled just in the semantics, or that the indicative conditional is just the material conditional?

49. 'New work for a theory of universals' (Lewis 1983a) and 'Putnam's paradox' (Lewis 1984) exploit a notion of *naturalness*, officially to handle the *grue* problem. as it arises in a number of applications. Are these all *legitimate* in the sense that the *grue* problem arises 'endogenously', rather than as a consequence of Lewis's various theoretical commitments?

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