Abstract  Direct reference theorists tell us that proper names have no semantic value other than their bearers, and that the connection between name and bearer is unmediated by descriptions or descriptive information. And yet, these theorists also acknowledge that we produce our name-containing utterances with descriptions on our minds. After arguing that direct reference proponents have failed to give descriptions their due, I show that appeal to speaker-associated descriptions is required if the direct reference portrayal of speakers wielding and referring with public names is to succeed.

Keywords  Proper names · Descriptions · Direct reference · Kripke

Direct reference theorists maintain that name reference is not effected via speaker-associated descriptions or descriptive information.¹ And yet, these theorists also acknowledge that we produce our name-containing utterances with descriptions on our minds: Saul Kripke, in the midst of rejecting the description theory of names, pauses to acknowledge that, for every speaker A and name “x”, “…there corresponds a cluster of properties, namely the family of properties ϕ such that A believes ‘ϕx’,“² and Scott Soames writes that “[d]ifferent speakers who use the

¹ See Kripke (1980). Kripke acknowledges that descriptions do sometimes serve as reference-fixers when a name is introduced, but he maintains that no description, whether reference-fixing or otherwise, need be invoked in an explanation of how speakers refer with names. Arguments similar to Kripke’s—against descriptivism and in favor of a causal (or “historical”) account of reference—were offered independently by Keith Donnellan in his rich (1972), the title of which inspires that of the present paper.

² Kripke (1980, p. 64).
name ['Carl Hempel'] to refer to the same man may, and standardly will, associate widely different descriptive information with it.\textsuperscript{3}

In this paper, I make the case for including descriptions in the direct reference account. After arguing that neither Kripke nor Soames have given descriptions their due, I show that speaker-associated descriptions must play a role in the direct reference portrayal of speakers wielding and referring with "public names".\textsuperscript{4}

1 Public names

Direct reference theorists argue that name reference cannot proceed by means of speaker-associated descriptions, since speakers frequently use names to refer to things that do not uniquely satisfy the associated descriptions. Instead, these theorists explain reference by emphasizing the name used rather than the name user. On their view, a name comes into existence as a name of a particular thing, and it is passed, referent-complete, from speaker to speaker, all intending "...to use it with the meaning or reference it has already attained."\textsuperscript{5} A name user need not have an accurate conception of that to which he refers; rather, he must have encountered a public name, and must subsequently use it with the appropriate intention(s).

Having anchored names to referents, the direct reference theorist is required to account for speakers' uses of a particular public names on occasions of utterance. Though Kripke writes that "...the receiver of the name must, I think, intend when he learns it to use it with the same reference as the man from whom he heard it," (italics mine)\textsuperscript{6} he also tells us that someone may use a public name with no awareness of the circumstances in which he first encountered it.\textsuperscript{7} Thus, though there is, for each public name in a speaker’s vocabulary, a fact regarding when

\textsuperscript{3} Soames (2008, p. 282).

\textsuperscript{4} This label is applied by direct reference theorist Howard Wettstein in his (2004), where he writes that "the notion of what we might call a public name...provides us with a way of getting at things which does not depend much upon the vicissitudes of our epistemological situation. There is, then, no special problem about reference in the absence of a substantial cognitive fix." p. 90.

\textsuperscript{5} Soames (2007, p. 420). Also: "[t]hrough various sorts of talk the name is spread from link to link as if by a chain," Kripke (1980, p. 91), italics mine; "...it’s in virtue of our connection with other speakers in the community, going back to the referent himself, that we refer to a certain man." \textit{ibid.}, p. 94.

\textsuperscript{6} \textit{ibid.}, p. 96. Kripke provides, as contrast, a case in which no such intention is present: "If I hear the name ‘Napoleon’ and decide it would be a nice name for my pet aardvark, I do not satisfy this condition." This shows that, though Kripke has characterized the crucial attitude as an intention to use a name with the same reference, it might be better expressed as an intention to use the same name. If I decide, upon hearing “Napoleon”, that it would be a nice name for my aardvark, then I intend to introduce a new name, not to use the name that I received with a different referent. In contrast, in intending to use the name “Napoleon” that I heard, it seems that I \textit{automatically} intend to use it with the same reference as the person from whom I heard it, since its identity as a name is (at least partly) constituted by its being the name of a particular thing.

\textsuperscript{7} Kripke writes: "...it is not how the speaker \textit{thinks} he got the reference, but the actual \textit{chain of communication}, which is relevant." (\textit{ibid.}, p. 93) Kripke thus distinguishes between his view and one