

# Haecceitism and counterpart theory\*

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August 29, 2022

## Abstract

David Lewis argues at length against haecceitism and goes as far as claiming that, on a certain counterpart-theoretic construal, the doctrine is unintelligible or inconsistent. I argue, contra Lewis, that both qualitative and non-qualitative counterpart theory are in fact committed to haecceitism, but that this commitment is harmless since what is really at stake for a counterpart theorist such as Lewis are more general supervenience claims that are independent of haecceitism. I further argue that Lewis's formulation of the doctrine suffers from two important defects that, once remedied, free counterpart theory of its haecceitistic commitments. Along the way I discuss an objection to the effect that the cheap substitute is inconsistent in the presence of an 'actually' operator. This paper therefore brings together important critical discussion on haecceitism and counterpart theory.

## 1 Introduction

When David Lewis sets up his attack against haecceitism, he cites David Kaplan's introduction of the doctrine:

The doctrine that holds that it does make sense to ask—without reference to common attributes and behavior—whether *this* is the same individual in another possible world, that individuals can be extended in logical space (i.e., through possible worlds) in much the way we commonly regard them as being extended in physical space and time, and that a common “thisness” may underlie extreme dissimilarity or distinct thisnesses may underlie great resemblance, I call *Haecceitism* [. . . ] The opposite view, *Anti-Haecceitism*, holds that for entities of distinct possible worlds there is no notion of trans-world being. They may, of course, be linked by a common concept and distinguished by another concept—as Eisenhower and Nixon are linked across two moments of time by the concept the president of the United States and distinguished, at the same pair of moments, by the concept the most respected member of his party—but there are, in general, many concepts linking any such pair and many distinguishing them. Each, in his own setting, may be clothed in attributes which cause them to resemble one another closely. But there is no metaphysical reality of sameness or difference which underlies the clothes. (Kaplan, 1975, pp. 722–723)

Anti-haecceitism thus understood amounts to the claim that what a world represents *de re* concerning an individual supervenes on the purely qualitative facts. Given Lewis's more general attraction

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\*I would like to thank Alessandro Torza and the audiences at “Issues on the (im)possible 2014” and “The Society for Exact Philosophy 2016”, as well as an anonymous referee of this journal.

to what he calls *Humean supervenience*, the thesis that “any contingent truth whatever [for a world like ours] is made true, somehow, by the pattern of instantiation of fundamental properties and relations by particular things” (Lewis, 1994, p. 473), it is no surprise that he rejects haecceitism which he takes to be “the denial of a supervenience thesis” (Lewis, 1986, p. 221).

Lewis’s formulation of haecceitism importantly differs from Kaplan’s. First, he defines what he calls a haecceitistic difference between worlds: two worlds exhibit a haecceitistic difference if they differ in what they represent *de re* concerning an individual without differing qualitatively. He then defines haecceitism as the doctrine that there exist haecceitistic differences between worlds, i.e.,

**Haecceitism:** There are at least two worlds that differ in what they represent *de re* concerning an individual without differing qualitatively.

Lewis formulates the doctrine this way rather than as a claim about transworld identity—how can we know when *a* from one world is identical to *b* from another world?—because for the modal realist there is no problem about transworld *identity*; nothing literally exists in more than one world. There is the analogous problem concerning whether a thing exists *according to a world* which Lewis answers in terms of counterpart theory: a thing exists according to a world just in case it has a counterpart there, and it has a counterpart there just in case something that exists there sufficiently resembles it according to some contextually determined threshold for similarity. Importantly, this answer in no way involves anything like a primitive thisness to which many haecceitists are committed.<sup>1</sup>

Given counterpart theory, how could two worlds differ in what they represent *de re* concerning something without differing qualitatively? The only way is if the counterpart relation is *non-qualitative*. For if the counterpart relation is purely qualitative, and if counterparthood is what determines what a world represents *de re* concerning something, then no two indiscernible worlds can differ in what they represent *de re* concerning something. Lewis’s attack against haecceitism therefore amounts to an attack on non-qualitative determinants of counterparthood, a topic we will come to in §3.

In the remainder of the paper I wish to challenge Lewis on several issues concerning haecceitism, most importantly (i) whether non-qualitative counterpart relations are coherent or mysterious, (ii) whether counterpart theory is committed to haecceitism, and (iii) whether a commitment to haecceitism undermines certain other supervenience theses to which Lewis is wedded, such as Humean supervenience.

## 2 Counterpart theory (1968) and haecceitism

According to counterpart theory (CT), a *de re* modal predication of the form ‘It’s possible that *x* is  $\phi$ ’ is true relative to a context iff, relative to that context, *x* has a counterpart that is  $\phi$ .<sup>2</sup> A counterpart is to be thought of as representing a (maximal) way an individual might be, and the counterpart relation serves as a more flexible substitute for transworld identity. Since individuals cannot be said to be any which way, at least relative to usual contexts, there must be certain restrictions on what is to count as a legitimate counterpart relation. In his original presentation of CT (Lewis, 1968),

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<sup>1</sup>For Lewis, sets of possibilities are properties, and since there are sets that cannot be specified purely qualitatively, such as a singleton set, Lewis believes in haecceities, i.e. properties that are not specifiable purely qualitatively. But he does not believe in haecceitism.

<sup>2</sup>This suggested translation of ordinary modal discourse into CT is problematic for various reasons, one of which Lewis already notes in (Lewis, 1968), viz. that ‘It is possible that *x* not exist’ has an inconsistent translation into CT. For my purposes, these problems can be ignored.

taken as a first-order formal theory, Lewis lays out some general restrictions including the following fifth of eight postulates:

**P5:** Nothing is a counterpart of anything else in its world.

I want to focus on this postulate specifically because, as we will see, it spells trouble for the anti-haecceitist.

Even if P5 has some intuitively plausibility, it is puzzling why Lewis promotes it to the status of a *postulate*.<sup>3</sup> Perhaps he was persuaded by his own justification of the semantic condition on counterfactual conditionals that he calls (strong) *centering* (see (Lewis, 1973)), i.e. the condition that any world is more similar to itself than any other world, including qualitatively identical but numerically distinct ones. He says:

as surely, no other world is quite as similar to a world *i* as *i* itself is; even if there were a world *j* qualitatively indiscernible from *i* (imagining for the moment that possible worlds are not the sort of things that obey a non-trivial law of identity of indiscernibles) we might still argue that *i* does, and *j* does not, resemble *i* in respect of being identical to *i*. (Lewis, 1973, p. 29)

One could justify P5 on similar grounds since if  $x$  and  $y$  are qualitatively identical worldmates,  $x$  may be said to be more similar to itself in virtue of failing to share all of its properties with  $y$ , such as being identical to  $x$ .

Note, however, that Lewis's justification for centering appeals to the *non-qualitative* property of being identical to *i*, and that this makes the resulting relation of comparative similarity amongst worlds non-qualitative. For even if *i* and *j* are qualitatively indiscernible, *i* will always be more similar to itself than *j* will be to *i*. Yet a binary relation is qualitative in the relevant sense only if it relates  $x$  and  $y$  iff it relates  $x'$  and  $y'$  when  $x'$  is qualitatively indiscernible from  $x$  and  $y'$  from  $y$ .<sup>4</sup>

For the same reason, a counterpart relation satisfying P5 is non-qualitative since it prohibits any indiscernible but distinct worldmates from being counterparts of each other. By way of example, think of a symmetric world containing only two indiscernible spheres. According to P5, each sphere will be a counterpart of itself but not of the other. This poses a problem for an anti-haecceitist such as Lewis since it leaves open the possibility that two indiscernible worlds differ in what they represent *de re* concerning an individual, i.e. that haecceitism is true.

To see how the problem arises, consider a world  $w$  of one-way eternal recurrence (whose existence is guaranteed by the principle of recombination). Suppose there is a qualitatively indiscernible world  $w'$ . By P5, the actual world represents the inhabitants of the first epoch of  $w$  as *not* inhabiting the second epoch. But since the  $w$ -inhabitants have counterparts in every epoch of  $w'$ , they have counterparts in the second epoch. Hence  $w'$  represents them as inhabiting the second epoch.

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<sup>3</sup>Allen Hazen (Hazen, 1979) states that P5 “demonstrably does no work in the model theory, and has semantic consequences only on certain theories of possible worlds” (Hazen, 1979, p. 331, fn. 17). It is not clear to me what he means since P5 is independent of the seven other postulates, and as such the class of models satisfying P5 differs from the class of those that do not. At any rate, whether P5 does semantic work depends on the language, a point that becomes clear in §7 with the discussion of an actuality operator.

<sup>4</sup>Lewis would deny this unrestricted closure condition on qualitateness for certain relations he considers qualitative, preferring a world-restricted condition instead. For instance, the primitive spatiotemporal relations that he considers qualitative cannot satisfy the unrestricted condition, for if they did, qualitatively indiscernible individuals from different worlds would be spatiotemporally related, hence worldmates. Obviously the closure condition on a counterpart relation cannot be restricted to worldmates since it is a transworld relation, and in any case Lewis makes it clear that qualitative counterparthood must satisfy the unrestricted closure condition.

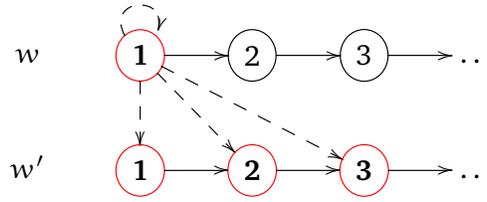


Figure 1: Haecceitistic differences between  $w$  and  $w'$  assuming P5

Whence, we have what Lewis calls a haecceitistic difference between these two worlds.<sup>5</sup> P5 therefore implies haecceitism *if* there are indiscernible worlds.<sup>6</sup> See Figure 1 for an illustration, where dotted arrows (and bold numerals) show in which epochs the  $w$ -inhabitants have counterparts, assuming P5 holds.

We do not yet have a full-blown commitment to haecceitism, for we don't yet know whether there are indiscernible worlds (of the right sort). Indeed, Lewis argues that the modal realist has good reason to remain neutral on their existence.<sup>7</sup> But if he has independently good reason to remain neutral on their existence, he has at least some reason to reject haecceitism *simply on those grounds*, for the truth of haecceitism requires giving up on neutrality. This is peculiar, however, because whether there are non-qualitative determinants of counterparthood, i.e. whether haecceitism is true for Lewis, should be a separate issue from whether there are indiscernible worlds. To me, this reveals a problem in Lewis's formulation of the doctrine that will be remedied in §6 by a reformulation that is more intuitive and breaks the dependence of the doctrine on a controversial claim about what kinds of worlds exist. The reformulation also has important consequences for whether a qualitative counterpart theorist can maintain anti-haecceitism, as Lewis hopes to do.

Where does that leave us? We have seen that P5 implies that counterparthood is non-qualitative; thus, if there are indiscernible worlds, haecceitism follows. Even if we remain neutral on the existence of indiscernible worlds, this is still an undesirable implication to swallow for a fierce anti-haecceitist such as Lewis. This is the reason Lewis attacks non-qualitative counterparthood generally, making the issue as to whether there are indiscernible worlds, and thus whether there is potential threat to anti-haecceitism, irrelevant. As I will show, however, Lewis's strategy for rejecting haecceitism is too heavy-handed, for in his crusade against the doctrine he is forced into making contentious claims about counterparthood. Moreover, the claims that are central to Lewis's metaphysics that he thinks he is protecting in denying haecceitism are in fact independent of whether or not haecceitism is true.

### 3 Non-qualitative counterpart relations

Non-qualitative counterpart relations are congenial to haecceitism which Lewis rejects, so it is unsurprising that he attacks non-qualitative counterpart relations. But while he makes a number of critical remarks against them, it is neither clear what his *arguments* against them amount to, nor

<sup>5</sup>Boris Kment in (Kment, 2012) gives a similar example that he argues leads to a worry for the anti-haecceitist. But while Kment takes the intuitive truth of the modal claim that any inhabitant of  $w$  could have lived in any epoch as explaining the truth of the corresponding counterpart-theoretic claim, Lewis takes the order of explanation to go the other way around. What I say below, concerning what possibilities should be for the anti-haecceitist, suggests a solution to Kment's worry, but since it is tangential to my concerns here, I will not discuss the point further.

<sup>6</sup>To be more precise, there must be indiscernible worlds *of the right sort*, e.g. of one-way eternal recurrence. Lewis uses the example of duplicate worlds of one-way eternal recurrence to show that qualitatively identical, overlapping worlds can exhibit haecceitistic differences when the counterpart relation is identity. See (Lewis, 1986, p. 228).

<sup>7</sup>However, while I agree with Lewis on neutrality, see (Divers, 1994) for an argument to the contrary.

why he thinks these remarks apply generally. For instance, many of Lewis's remarks are purely rhetorical. He says, e.g., that "there is no way to make sense of a non-qualitative counterpart relation" (Lewis, 1986, p. 230), that the term 'non-qualitative counterpart relation' is "a contradiction in terms" (Lewis, 1986, p. 229), and that "a non-qualitative counterpart relation would be a very mysterious thing to have to take as primitive" (Lewis, 1986, p. 259–260). He gives, however, no arguments that would support the generality of these claims. While Lewis is right to be skeptical about the coherence of non-qualitative counterpart relations of *a certain stripe*, he has no grounds for claiming that any such relation is mysterious, let alone inconsistent or incoherent. Surely there is nothing incoherent about his original presentation of CT according to which counterparthood is non-qualitative. The problem, to reemphasize, lies in Lewis's heavy-handed strategy of rejecting haecceitism by rejecting non-qualitative counterparthood generally.

To make the point clearer, consider the following additional examples of non-qualitative counterpart relations whose coherence is not in question for Lewis. Lewis objects to one special non-qualitative counterpart relation, identity, when overlap is permitted, but that is because he objects to overlap, and not because he objects to the coherence of identity.<sup>8</sup> There is nothing mysterious about identity for Lewis who says that it "is utterly simple and unproblematic [...] everything is identical to itself; nothing is ever identical to anything else except itself [...] there is never any problem about what makes something identical to itself; nothing can ever fail to be" (Lewis, 1986, pp. 192–193). And yet identity is a special case of a non-qualitative counterpart relation that is compatible with haecceitism (as Lewis defines it). For instance, if we inhabit the *n*th epoch of a world of eternal recurrence and there is an indiscernible world in which we overlap with a different epoch, then we are there represented as inhabiting a different epoch which amounts to a haecceitistic difference. The haecceitism that results in this way is far from mysterious or incoherent because neither overlap nor identity is mysterious or incoherent.

Let us pause for a moment to think about what would be untoward by the haecceitism that results from overlap (and identity). First, as we have already observed, the view is neither incoherent nor mysterious. Second, it requires that we reject the claim that *de re* modal truths supervene on the purely qualitative facts. But is this really so bad? Lewis must already admit that some truths fail to supervene on the qualitative facts; e.g. in a symmetric world containing exactly two indiscernible spheres called 'Castor' and 'Pollux', that Castor occupies a particular spacetime region is non-qualitative. For specifying the qualitative facts does not suffice to specify which sphere is Castor. Given modal realism with overlap, the fact that *a* could have inhabited the *n*th rather than *m*th epoch fails to supervene on the qualitative facts for the same reason, for the fact is semantically equivalent to an irreducibly non-qualitative fact in the language of CT. Modal realism with overlap is harmless because, while it increases the stock of non-qualitative facts (*viz.* *de re* modal ones), it does so without introducing a new category of mysterious facts, such as ones concerning primitive thisnesses.<sup>9</sup>

The main challenge Lewis cites for the haecceitist is that he cannot see how an account of non-qualitative counterparthood can avoid circularity by singling out non-natural, non-qualitative relations or properties that play the primary role in telling us when two things are non-qualitative counterparts. It is for this reason that he calls such counterpart relations "mysterious" (Lewis, 1986, p. 230). The objection, as far as I understand it, comes in two parts. The first is that, the

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<sup>8</sup>Lewis rejects overlap because (i) (on certain natural assumptions) it entails that things have their intrinsic properties necessarily (what he calls *the problem of accidental intrinsics*), and (ii) it requires taking the worldmate relation to be, at least potentially, primitively modal.

<sup>9</sup>It should be noted, however, that while haecceitism from overlap is not in principle worrying, the only plausible version of overlap is one that overcomes the problem of accidental intrinsics, hence one that arguably introduces a primitive worldmate relation that Lewis wants to avoid.

haecceitist cannot pick out the relevant class of non-qualitative determinants by saying that they are the ones that play a role in determining counterparthood or transworld “identity”, as that would be circular. The second is that any plausible non-qualitative determinant the haecceitist can offer will be mysterious by Lewis’s lights. If that is the challenge, then it seems to me to be met by all kinds of non-qualitative determinants such as identity (which, one might note, is required in stating P5). Moreover, given the fact that counterparthood is contextually-determined, it would be remarkable if the properties made salient by any possible context that go toward determining similarity and hence counterparthood are *always* qualitative. For instance, even Lewis seems to suggest that relative to some contexts my origins go toward determining at which worlds I exist. But then counterparthood is sometimes non-qualitative.<sup>10</sup> Yet the property of originating from some particular matter (e.g. a zygote), for instance, is neither mysterious nor qualitative. While Lewis may have good reason for rejecting *mysterious*, non-qualitative determinants of the counterpart relation, these reasons are insufficient to undermine non-qualitativeness across the board, and hence insufficient to establish anti-haecceitism.

Lewis argues that he has good reason for rejecting P5, for its rejection is necessary in accounting for what he thinks are compelling cases of haecceitistic possibilities. Once P5 is banished and the counterpart relation is freed of non-qualitative determinants, these “compelling” haecceitistic possibilities can be got on the cheap without a commitment to genuine haecceitism. This is where Lewis offers what he calls the *cheap substitute for haecceitism*. The problem is that once the counterpart relation is purely qualitative, possibilities cannot be identified with possible worlds, and CT turns out committed to genuine haecceitism after all.

#### 4 Lewis’s cheap substitute for haecceitism

While Lewis rejects haecceitism, he not only thinks CT can accommodate certain intuitively compelling cases of haecceitistic differences once P5 is banished, but that it would be “very implausible and damaging [...] to defy the intuitions” (Lewis, 1986, p. 230).<sup>11</sup> However, whatever these haecceitistic possibilities amount to, they do not for Lewis constitute genuine haecceitistic differences, i.e. differences between qualitatively indiscernible worlds in what they represent *de re*. He gives the following as an example of a *compelling* haecceitistic possibility, though whether it is even coherent—let alone compelling—is certainly open for question:

consider the thought that I might have been someone else. Here am I, there goes poor Fred [...] I am contemplating the possibility of my being poor Fred, and rejoicing that it is unrealised. I am not contemplating a possibility that involves any qualitative difference in the world - not, for instance, a world where someone with origins just like mine suffers misfortunes just like Fred’s. Rather, I am contemplating the possibility of being poor Fred in a world just like this one. The haecceitist will suggest that I have in mind a qualitative duplicate of this world where the non-qualitative determinants of representation *de re* somehow link me with the qualitative counterpart of Fred. But this distorts my thought: I thought not just that I might have lived Fred’s life, but that I

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<sup>10</sup>Lewis says “Counterparts are united by similarity, but often the relevant similarity is mostly extrinsic [...] In particular, match of origins often has decisive weight” (Lewis, 1986, p. 88). However, he may be thinking of origins as qualitatively specifiable. In any case, as fn. 11 later makes clear, he accepts that some “resolutions of vagueness of the counterpart relation” satisfy P5, thereby accepting that counterparthood is sometimes non-qualitative.

<sup>11</sup>Concerning his cheap substitute, Lewis writes “[i]n ‘Counterpart Theory and Quantified Modal Logic’ I took it as axiomatic that nothing can have any counterpart besides itself in its own world. I would now consider that requirement appropriate under some but not all resolutions of the vagueness of the counterpart relation” (Lewis, 1986, p. 232, fn. 22).

might have been Fred living Fred's life. Maybe I misunderstood my own thought—it's hard to be sure—but let's see if the haecceitist's amendment is really needed. (Lewis, 1986, p. 231)

Once P5 is lifted, a context may determine a counterpart relation on which Fred is a counterpart of Lewis, making it possible that Lewis *actually* be Fred.<sup>12</sup> So the cheap substitute for haecceitism is got simply by waiving P5. There is a further, more elaborate and general story concerning joint possibilities for sequences of individuals that gives us a clear sense in which differences between possibilities need not constitute differences between possible worlds, but we can ignore it for our purposes. The cheap substitute can be understood simply as the way of getting haecceitistic possibilities through the lifting of P5.<sup>13</sup>

Here Lewis has provided a way of obtaining haecceitistic possibilities without a commitment to haecceitism. And better, it *avoids* haecceitism even if we assume that there are indiscernible worlds of one-way eternal recurrence, the existence of which *implied* haecceitism in the presence of P5. Is there any cost? Lewis says: "I think there is—simply the cost of making a break with established theory, on which all differences between possibilities are supposed to be differences between possible worlds" (Lewis, 1986, p. 235). For instance, consider two identical twins. The possibility that one be the other would normally amount to a difference between two distinct but indiscernible worlds, but for the cheap substitute the difference is got from the actual world alone. Thus, according to CT, differences between possibilities does not always amount to differences between worlds.

Lewis suggests that this break from established theory is the result of waiving P5, but this is not true. It is due to allowing that a thing have multiple counterparts in a world (actual or not). For instance, I have no twin but I could have, and the possibility of me being one and the possibility of me being the other, which are distinct possibilities, can be got from a single world where I have twin counterparts. This difference between possibilities can be obtained from a single world regardless of whether P5 holds. It is unclear, then, from Lewis's writings what cost is incurred by the cheap substitute for haecceitism.

There is another, separate way of making the break from established theory, viz. by way of multiple counterpart relations. Consider a statue and the coinciding lump of clay that constitutes it and suppose, as Lewis does, that they are identical. If the expressions 'statue' and 'lump of clay' evoke different counterpart relations even relative to the same context, then one and the same world can represent differently concerning one and the same individual via multiple counterpart relations. For it will be true of the lump of clay that it can survive squashing since it has 'lump of clay'-counterparts that survive squashing, and yet false of the statue since it has no 'statue'-counterparts that survive squashing, even though the two are identical, and even if we assumed that nothing has more than one counterpart in any world. Since Lewis's preferred way of maintaining that coinciding things are identical is by invoking multiple counterpart relations, this is yet another way that CT makes the break from established theory that is independent of P5.<sup>14</sup>

The cheap substitute seems worthy of the name. It provides the counterpart theorist with most of the benefits of genuine haecceitism without incurring any *new* costs for CT since the break from

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<sup>12</sup>Lewis talks about the possibility that he be Fred, whereas I talked about the possibility that he *actually* be Fred. Why have I put an extra word in his mouth? The reason is that the possibility that Lewis be Fred can be got in a world where Lewis and Fred have the same counterpart, and this needn't be the actual world. So if the envisioned possibility really requires waiving P5, it must be because the possibility in question is that Lewis be actual-Fred, and that is all I mean by saying that Lewis actually be Fred. The topic of actuality will become relevant later on.

<sup>13</sup>As far as I know, Allen Hazen is to be credited for coming up with the cheap substitute; see (Hazen, 1979, p. 331, fn. 17).

<sup>14</sup>See (Lewis, 1971) for details.

established theory (i.e. distinguishing possibilities from possible worlds) was already made by allowing the counterpart relation to be non-functional. However, as I now wish to argue, the cheap substitute is a misnomer since it—i.e. qualitative CT—is committed to genuine haecceitism after all.

## 5 Worlds and possibilities

What is possible, according to CT, depends on a contextually determined counterpart relation that tells us what exists, and consequently what is true *de re*, according to a world. If a possibility is supposed to tell us all by itself what is true according to it, then worlds *by themselves* cannot *in general* be possibilities. For a single world may give rise to incompatible possibilities; e.g., according to one world I inhabit one epoch and according to the very same world—but a different counterpart relation—I inhabit a different epoch. On this, Lewis says:

I think it best, in general, to say that representation *de re* is done not by worlds, but by the appropriate individual (or joint) possibilities that are available within the various worlds. Still it remains true, for the most part, that one world will provide at most one accessible possibility for a given individual (or sequence). The exceptions come only if we get multiple counterparts within a world, either because we have an uncommonly repetitious world or because we use an uncommonly lax counterpart relation. Therefore, for the sake of familiarity, I shall mostly revert to speaking of representation *de re* by worlds, or of what is the case about an individual according to a world. (Lewis, 1986, p. 235)

This view, that possibilities can be identified with worlds aside from in exceptional cases, is echoed by Bradford Skow who gives the example that “(on a very permissive counterpart relation, where all it takes to be my counterpart is to be human), my brother is a counterpart of me at the actual world” (Skow, 2007, p. 105), and continues:

It sounds odd to say ‘ “[Skow] lives in Los Angeles” is true according to the actual world, even though I do not live in Los Angeles’. It may sound less odd if one bears in mind that according to Lewis’ theory, the truth-value of a non-qualitative sentence depends on the world of evaluation and the contextually determined counterpart relation. We are rarely in contexts in which the counterpart relation is as permissive as [one where all it takes to be one’s counterpart is to be human]. (Skow, 2007, p. 105)

However, both Lewis and Skow underestimate just how prevalent these alleged exceptional cases are. For consider two actual, fundamental particles that are intrinsically identical and in close proximity, hence extrinsically very similar as well. Each counts as the other’s counterpart even relative to a very restrictive counterpart relation. Or consider one of two identical twins, or two cars of the same make that came off the same assembly line yesterday, or any two things sufficiently similar to qualify as counterparts even under a fairly strict counterpart relation. The world need not be uncommonly repetitious nor the counterpart relation uncommonly lax nor the context unusual in order that an individual be said to have multiple counterparts within a world. Because of this it is likely more misleading than helpful to regard differences between *de re* possibilities as differences between worlds. This does not mean that worlds do not have an important role to play in the counterpart theorist’s story about possibility—it is just that they do not play the traditional or “established” role.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>Even though Jeffrey Russell’s view is much different from my own on these matters, see (Russell, 2015) for related discussion concerning the cheap substitute for haecceitism and the role possibilities and possible worlds are supposed to play.

Though Skow is right that it sounds odd to say that such and such is true according to the actual world even though it's actually not the case that such and such, we can explain away the oddity. An utterance of a sentence  $\phi$  may sound odd if the truth of  $\phi$  depends on something that is not made explicit. It sounds odd, for example, to say in the same breath that I'm going left even though I'm going right, if I fail to mention that my going left is relative to *your* orientation and my going right is relative to *my* orientation—for our orientations may differ and the truth of the sentence depends on our orientations. In contrast, it sounds perfectly fine to say that ‘“Skow lives in Los Angeles” is true *relative to one of his counterparts* and that “Skow lives in Los Angeles” is false *relative to another of his counterparts*’, since different counterparts of his can represent differently concerning him and the truth of those sentences depends on a chosen counterpart. The “sounds odd” objection need not be taken seriously by anyone who advocates a contextualist account of modality, nor should they feel compelled to answer it by falsely claiming that the exceptional cases arise mostly under an uncommonly lax counterpart relation or an uncommonly repetitious world.

Haecceitism is intended to be a thesis about *possibilities* and what they represent *de re*. Since Lewis formulates haecceitism as a thesis about what *worlds* represent *de re*, and since worlds alone can't do all the representational work needed of them, haecceitism for the counterpart theorist must be formulated as a thesis about *possibilities* and what they represent *de re*.<sup>16</sup> Let a *CT-possibility* (just *possibility* for short) be a function  $c$  from world-individual pairs to individuals telling us which possibilities are represented as existing at a world.<sup>17</sup> Since  $c$  is a function, nothing will have more than one representer per possibility, thereby avoiding the worry that a possibility represent differently or inconsistently concerning an individual. Haecceitism for CT then becomes:

**Haecceitism:** Two *possibilities* may differ in what they represent *de re* concerning an individual without differing qualitatively.

Indeed, this way of formulating the doctrine is friendly to theories of modality that make no reference at all to worlds, so it is an improvement over the original in at least two ways.<sup>18</sup>

We can now see why haecceitism follows from qualitative CT. For suppose ours is a world of one-way eternal recurrence and that I inhabit the first epoch. Let  $c$  be the possibility that assigns, for each world and each individual, that individual to itself (i.e. for all  $w$  and  $x$ ,  $c(w, x) = x$ ). Let  $c'$  be just like  $c$  except that I swap identities with my second-epoch counterpart (i.e.  $c(@, me) = \text{second-epoch-me}$  and  $c(@, \text{second-epoch-me}) = me$ ). Then these possibilities are qualitatively indiscernible even though they differ in what they represent concerning me: one represents that I inhabit the first epoch, and the other represents of me that I inhabit the second. It follows that *CT, qualitative or not, is committed to genuine haecceitism*. What makes this especially noteworthy is that Lewis argues that it is only by going qualitative that CT can *avoid* a commitment to genuine haecceitism.

In arguing that CT is committed to haecceitism, it is not essential to make the break from established theory; even a counterpart theorist who maintains the identification of worlds with possibilities is committed to haecceitism. For the possibility that Lewis be one of two identical twins and the possibility that he be the other—which we are assuming are qualitatively distinct *de re* possibilities

<sup>16</sup>To be clear, a world alone does represent *de re* concerning certain individuals, viz., the individuals that are part of the world. A world alone, however, does not represent *de re* concerning other-worldly individuals, and that is why I say that worlds alone can't do all the representational work needed of them.

<sup>17</sup>If  $c(w, x) = y$ , then  $y$  is  $x$ 's counterpart at  $w$ . Counterpart functions will be defined from a given counterpart relation. They will also be partial, since everything needn't be represented at a given world. They are similar to what Sider calls in (Sider, 2006) a thinning of a counterpart relation, which results by making a counterpart relation functional. The value of  $c(w, x)$ , when it has one, is an inhabitant of  $w$ , and it is not required that when  $x$  is an inhabitant of  $w$ , that  $c(w, x) = x$ , so e.g. we may have  $c(@, \text{Lewis}) = \text{Fred}$ , for @ the actual world. It will not suffice to take individuals themselves to be possibilities because we also need the information as to which individuals represent or are represented by which others.

<sup>18</sup>I will propose a further improvement in §6.

concerning Lewis—can be got from one and the same world. If worlds are possibilities (determined by a context), then we have a difference between possibilities that fails to be a difference between worlds. Maintaining the identification would therefore require a substantial departure from established theory (since now possibilities can represent differently concerning one and the same) without avoiding a commitment to haecceitism.

Both qualitative and non-qualitative CT's commitment to haecceitism raises the following question: What is really at stake for a counterpart theorist such as Lewis as regards the haecceitism/anti-haecceitism debate? Since haecceitism is a denial of a supervenience claim, they might be worried that a commitment to haecceitism comes at the cost of having to deny *Humean supervenience*, a thesis that figures centrally in Lewis's metaphysics:

**HS:** Any contingent truth whatever (for a world like ours) supervenes on, or is made true by, the pattern of instantiation of fundamental properties and relations by particular things.<sup>19</sup>

If truth here is taken to be sensitive to context but also things like a chosen counterpart relation in the case of modal truth, then "parameters" relative to which truth is sensitive need to be made explicit in a statement of Humean supervenience in order to avoid trivial counterexamples: *given a context c*, any contingent truth whatever supervenes on the distribution of fundamental properties. Given qualitative CT, truths concerning an individual are sensitive not just to a context but also to a chosen counterpart of the individual. Truth at one world relative to one context *and one counterpart function* can fail at a qualitatively indiscernible other world relative to the same context *but different counterpart function*. This should not constitute a counterexample to HS in the intended sense, for there is a shift in the counterpart function relative to which the truth of modal sentences is sensitive. (Otherwise we could provide a counterexample to the law of identity, that if *p* is true then *p* is true.) In the example given above of a haecceitistic difference between qualitatively indiscernible possibilities involving a world of eternal recurrence, there was a difference in truth because there was a difference in the counterpart function, and so that example does not constitute a counterexample to HS. Indeed, that is because the truth of HS is independent of the truth of haecceitism.

The Humean might worry that the truth of haecceitism requires rejecting Qualitative CT according to which:

**QCT:** There are no irreducibly non-qualitative determinants of counterparthood.

But as we have seen, there is no such implication from haecceitism to the falsity of QCT—the two are simply independent of each other.

A final potential worry for the Humean concerns truthmaking as supervenience. In (Lewis, 2001), Lewis rejects the claim that every truth has a truthmaker in favor of the weaker claim that truth supervenes on what there is and how things are.<sup>20</sup> That is:

**(TM=)** For any proposition *P* and any worlds *w* and *v*, if *P* is true in *w* but not in *v*, then either something exists in one of the worlds but not in the other, or else some *n*-tuple of things stands in some fundamental relation in one of the worlds but not in the other.

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<sup>19</sup>As a referee points out, the restriction to contingent truths is unnecessary insofar as HS is understood as a supervenience claim. However, Lewis often moves back and forth between stating HS as a truthmaking claim and as a supervenience claim (see e.g. (Lewis, 1994)). As a truthmaking claim the restriction to contingent truths is apt (ignoring the fact that Lewis himself takes truthmaking to be about supervenience).

<sup>20</sup>Lewis's retreat here is due to there being no obvious Humean-friendly truthmakers for predications (e.g. 'Fido is brown') or negative existentials (e.g. 'There are no unicorns'). However, Lewis later argues that such truths can be found Humean-friendly truthmakers, on which see (Lewis, 2003) and the postscript with Gideon Rosen that follows.

This supervenience claim, like anti-haecceitism on Lewis’s formulation, seems to be undermined by the existence of indiscernible worlds of eternal recurrence and P5, because (TM=) seems to entail anti-haecceitism. If no two indiscernible worlds can differ in what they make true, then no two such worlds can differ in what *de re* modal propositions about an individual they make true. By contraposition, haecceitism entails the negation of (TM=), so if CT is committed to haecceitism, it seems that truthmaking supervenience must go. Moreover, if CT is committed to haecceitism irrespective of the existence of indiscernible worlds or P5, as I’ve argued, it would seem that the counterpart theorist must reject truthmaking supervenience, even after having replaced ‘worlds’ for ‘possibilities’ in (TM=). For a possibility can make true that I inhabit a certain epoch (assuming ours is a world of eternal recurrence) while an indiscernible possibility (got from the same world) makes it false that I do. And yet there is no difference between what exists, or what fundamental relations are instantiated by what, according to these possibilities.

However, just as with Humean Supervenience, (TM=) needs to be read as taking into account the features relative to which a truth might be sensitive.<sup>21</sup> Once it is read this way, the haecceitism that results from qualitative counterpart theory does not rule out truthmaking supervenience. Consider again the example involving a world of eternal recurrence—there is a difference in what is true at the two possibilities precisely because there is a difference in counterpart functions.<sup>22</sup> But, if we are to remain neutral on the existence of indiscernible worlds, (TM=) must be restricted to qualitative propositions, and the proposition that a certain individual might have inhabited a certain epoch is non-qualitative.<sup>23</sup> Restricted to qualitative propositions, the truth of haecceitism is no threat to truthmaking supervenience.

For Lewis, nothing significant (such as Humean supervenience) hinges on whether haecceitism is true. And while CT may be committed to some form of haecceitism, the commitment is harmless. Mysterious non-qualitative determinants of counterparthood and the haecceitism they give rise to should be rejected, but not in part because they are non-qualitative. *Mysterious* determinants generally, qualitative or not, should be rejected independently of whether they give rise to haecceitism.

## 6 Haecceitism reformulated

Recall that Lewis’s original formulation of haecceitism is hostage to the existence of indiscernible worlds which Lewis claims he has good reason to remain neutral on. The status of haecceitism is thus left hanging in the air. We can avoid this problem by reformulating haecceitism in a way that I think is more general and faithful to the idea intuitively understood. Say that:

**Haecceitism\*:** Two worlds may differ in what they represent *de re* concerning the intrinsic nature of an individual without that individual differing qualitatively.

The truth of the doctrine thus reformulated is not only in the spirit of the original, but it is also no longer hostage to the existence of indiscernible worlds, only to the existence of indiscernible parts of worlds which we get for free from the principle of recombination. Second, the Identity of Indiscernibles (II)—that if two things are *qualitatively* indiscernible, they are identical—rules out

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<sup>21</sup>Making this explicit:

(TM=) For any proposition P, any worlds *w* and *v*, any context *f* and counterpart function *c*, if P is true in *w* relative to *f* and *c*, but not in *v* relative to *f* and *c*, then either something exists in (i.e. according to) one of the worlds but not in the other, or else some *n*-tuple of things stands in some fundamental relation in one of the worlds but not in the other.

<sup>22</sup>However, assuming P5 and the existence of indiscernible worlds, (TM=) is ruled out.

<sup>23</sup>See (Lewis, 2001, p. 606).

haecceitism given a realist conception of a possible world, but it does not rule out haecceitism\*. For Lewis, II and anti-haecceitism should be independent theses, since one states a sufficient condition for identity and the other a sufficient condition for sameness of representation *de re*, and there is no obvious logical connection between the two. Third, the reformulation is well-suited to an endorser of P5. In the example of eternal recurrence, we have a haecceitistic difference in the presence of P5, but since the property of inhabiting a certain epoch is an *extrinsic* property, we do not get a haecceitistic\* difference—the intrinsic nature of the inhabitants is left unchanged from epoch to epoch. Upon further reflection, one can see that, given a counterpart-theoretic conception of “truth according to a world”, there is no way for indiscernible worlds to exhibit a haecceitistic\* difference, and therefore haecceitism\* would not follow even if either P5 is true or there exist indiscernible worlds (e.g. of eternal recurrence).

However, the main point that speaks in favor of the reformulation is the fact that there are intuitive cases of haecceitistic differences between worlds that differ qualitatively. Consider a world exactly like our own except for a lone fundamental particle off in causal isolation from the rest. If that world represents of me that my intrinsic nature is different from what it actually is, which is unaffected by the causally isolated particle—then intuitively we have a case of a haecceitistic difference between our world and the near-duplicate. For we have a case of two worlds with duplicate parts differing in what they represent *de re* concerning those duplicate parts. Yet what is relevant to whether I have a certain intrinsic property are the duplicate *parts* of these worlds and not the irrelevant remainder. Compared to the earlier formulation of haecceitism, haecceitism\* is both more general and more faithful to the doctrine intuitively conceived.

Given the argued distinction between worlds and possibilities in the context of CT, obviously Haecceitism\* is still not good enough. The final formulation we ought to settle on is as follows:

**Haecceitism\*:** Two *possibilities* (e.g. a world plus a functional counterpart relation) may differ in what they represent *de re* concerning the intrinsic nature of an individual without that individual differing qualitatively.

Even if a counterpart theorist had some independent grounds for rejecting haecceitism generally, though I cannot see what those could be, they may find comfort in the fact that CT has no commitment to haecceitism\*, which is the version they ought to care about.<sup>24</sup>

## 7 Final remarks

CT, with or without P5, is a consistent theory, e.g. a consistent first-order theory as Lewis originally presents it. Delia Graff Fara, however, argues that the cheap substitute, i.e. CT without P5, is inconsistent when the language and theory are extended to accommodate an ‘actually’ operator. While it may seem that I have been arguing against CT, I have not. I have argued that under a natural formulation of the doctrine, CT is committed to haecceitism (but that this is inconsequential), and that under a more natural formulation (i.e. haecceitism\*), there is no such commitment. I take CT to be a candidate theory of *de re* modality that cannot be undermined as hastily as some have suggested. For this reason I think it is worth taking a moment to defending CT against these criticisms. However, before I go on, it is important to note that Fara’s argument holds good for any theory of modality that permits for the kind of haecceitistic possibilities for which the cheap substitute permits (e.g. Lewis’s actually being Fred), and so in this sense it is not an objection to the cheap substitute *per se*, but rather an objection to a very broad class of haecceitisms.

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<sup>24</sup>HS and QCT are also independent from haecceitism\*.

Suppose ours is a world of one-way eternal recurrence. Then, letting ‘ACT’ be our ‘actually’ operator, Fara argues as follows:

[i]f every interval and region of the actual world that’s just like the interval and region that I’m in contains a person who’s a counterpart of me—in the sense that’s relevant for determining what’s possible for me—then since this counterpart actually lives in the 18th epoch, actually living in the 18th epoch is a possibility for me. So the following is true:

(3) ACT Fara lives in the 17th epoch  $\wedge$   $\Diamond$ ACT Fara lives in the 18th epoch.

Assuming that what’s possibly actual is actual (which one could conceivably refuse to do) we have the truth of what I take to be an obvious falsehood:

(4) ACT Fara lives in the 17th epoch  $\wedge$  ACT Fara lives in the 18th epoch.

If the actuality of a conjunction were equivalent, on this view, to the conjoined actuality of its conjuncts, as it is normally considered to be, we would have the actual truth of two conjoined claims that are incompatible with one another [...]

(5) ACT (Fara lives in the 17th epoch  $\wedge$  Fara lives in the 18th epoch). (Fara, 2009, p. 292)

What I find problematic is the inference warranting the move from (3) to (4), viz.

$$\text{POSS-ACT} \quad \frac{\Diamond \text{ACT} \phi}{\text{ACT} \phi}$$

The inference is valid on a standard (one- or two-dimensional) semantics ACT, but it fails in any theory of modality that allows haecceitistic possibilities of the sort Lewis finds compelling. What justifies the truth of (3) is the assignment of truth conditions to statements of the form  $\Diamond \text{ACT} \phi(a)$  according to which such a sentence is true at a world  $w$  just in case there is an actual counterpart  $b$  of  $a$  such that  $\phi(b)$  is actually true.<sup>25</sup> But these truth conditions require the rejection of POSS-ACT which turns out invalid. This means that the truth of (3) requires rejecting the inference that warrants the move from (3) to (4), and so it follows that Fara’s argument is invalid if its premises are true.

In response to the denial of POSS-ACT, Fara says that it constitutes “a move of serious desperation since [POSS-ACT] is partially constitutive of the meaning of the actuality operator as most would understand it (Fara, 2009, 293)”. First, we may grant that the “most” claim is true but irrelevant since CT is a “non-standard” theory of modality that deviates from what most believe concerning what is constitutive of the meaning of modal vocabulary. For instance, perhaps most believe in the necessity of identities, and yet identities are contingent according to CT. The goal of CT (according to Lewis) is to assign a semantics to modal vocabulary that preserves as much pre-theoretic intuition as possible. Is POSS-ACT part of that pre-theoretic intuition and does maintaining it allow us, all things considered, to preserve as much pre-theoretic intuition as possible concerning modality? I doubt POSS-ACT is intuitively sacred for two reasons. The first is that, assuming that certain haecceitistic possibilities are genuine (let alone compelling) entail that POSS-ACT is invalid,

<sup>25</sup>Note that I am using closed singular terms even though Lewis’s original formulation of CT makes no use of them. We could eliminate singular terms in the usual way via definite descriptions, or else Lewis’s translation scheme can easily be adapted to accommodate them.

so we either reject POSS-ACT or reject the intuitive plausibility of certain haecceitistic possibilities.<sup>26</sup> The second is that it is perfectly fine to utter sentences such as “I could have actually won that game!” after having actually lost it, so the idea that pre-theoretic intuition supports the validity of POSS-ACT is on loose footing. Second, POSS-ACT is still warranted in cases where an individual has at most one counterpart per world—a very common case—so it can still be appealed to in a vast majority of instances, and it is arguably for this reason that there is any pre-theoretic intuition backing the rule *in a restricted form that does not validate the above argument*. Third and finally, whether POSS-ACT is constitutive of the meaning of ‘actually’ is a claim only inferentialists would be willing to accept, and not one the counterpart theorist need accept. For her, meanings may be conferred on expressions in some other way, say truth conditionally, and the truth conditions for modal vocabulary the counterpart theorist accepts need not entail the validity of POSS-ACT.

Rather than deny the rule, Fara suggests that a way out for the counterpart theorist is to deny premise (3). We might instead say that the possibility represented does not involve actuality: it is merely the possibility that Fara lives in the 18th epoch.<sup>27</sup> But if we deny that the possibilities granted by the cheap substitute are possibilities concerning what’s actually true, as they intuitively are and as Lewis suggests of them, then we can do without the cheap substitute altogether since they can be got by allowing that two worldmates share a counterpart. If Lewis and Fred share a counterpart in a world much like ours, that world represents Lewis as being Fred. But this does not represent Lewis’s intuition: “I thought not just that I might have lived Fred’s life, but that I might have been Fred living Fred’s life”. So the content of the intuition is supposed to be that Lewis could have been *our very own* Fred, a content that essentially involves actuality. Premise (3) can’t be denied if Lewis’s intuition is correct, i.e. if the possibility he envisions is genuine.<sup>28</sup>

As remarked earlier, Fara’s argument can be taken as an objection to certain haecceitisms. It shows that if  $ACT\phi$  is true and it is a haecceitistic possibility that  $ACT\neg\phi$ , i.e.  $\diamond ACT\neg\phi$  is true, then a contradiction follows as long as ACT satisfies certain properties. Since it is part of haecceitism that such possibilities are genuine, the haecceitist will have to deny that ACT satisfies the properties that lead to trouble, the most obvious of which is POSS-ACT. One might now wonder whether this move is effective since whether or not ACT satisfies the required properties seems irrelevant: for we can simply *define* a connective  $\Delta$  using the resources of CT that satisfies (i) (an analog of) POSS-ACT, (ii) from  $\Delta\phi \wedge \Delta\psi$  infer  $\Delta(\phi \wedge \psi)$ , and (iii)  $\neg\Delta(\phi \wedge \neg\phi)$ . We could then rerun an analog of Fara’s argument from  $\Delta\phi \wedge \diamond\Delta\neg\phi$  to a contradiction.<sup>29</sup> The problem is that even if we grant that the definability in CT of an operator  $\Delta$  satisfying such properties, it does not follow that  $\Delta$  corresponds to a natural language expression  $\delta$  such that there is a *compellingly true instance* of a natural language sentence of the form  $\delta A \wedge \diamond\delta\neg A$  that would warrant us in thinking there are true instances of its translation into CT from which a contradiction would be derivable. In other words, the mere definability of  $\Delta$  is problematic only if we have reason to think that there are true instances of  $\Delta\phi \wedge \diamond\Delta\neg\phi$ , and we only have reason to think there are if we can provide examples of

<sup>26</sup>Besides the Fred example, other examples of haecceitistic possibilities that Lewis wants to accommodate are (i) Kripke’s dice example (p. 226), (ii) the twin example (p. 231), (iii) the eternal recurrence example (p. 232), and (iv) the symmetric world example (p. 233). All page references are to (Lewis, 1986). I think the dice, eternal recurrence, and symmetric world examples are fairly compelling, but that the twin and Fred examples are not.

<sup>27</sup>She says that the qualitative counterpart theorist “should say that since we are not considering the 18th epoch as an actual possibility, but rather as an alternative possibility, we should deny that the actions and states of my counterpart there are actual actions or states [...] since they are not actual, they are not possibly actual actions or states of mine” (Fara, 2009, p. 296).

<sup>28</sup>Hazen (Hazen, 1979) also thinks the possibility represented does not involve actuality since the counterpart function doesn’t map Lewis to himself. But that is a quite different reason for denying the involvement of actuality than the one Fara gives.

<sup>29</sup>Thanks to a referee for raising this objection.

true instances of a natural language counterpart. But this is precisely what the haecceitist will deny.

If the counterpart theorist has to deny POSS-ACT, how are they to understand ‘actually’, e.g. what semantics should they endow it with? This is a question for which there is likely no entirely satisfactory answer when the language is restricted to a typical first-order language with satisfaction spelled out as usual.<sup>30</sup> However, Lewis argues for an indexical account, i.e. that the best way to make sense of actuality in the context of modal realism is to treat it as an indexical since there is no objectively privileged, actual world. The most natural semantics for an indexical actuality operator is a two-dimensional one according to which what constitutes the actual world from the perspective of the world of evaluation can be kept track of when running through the truth conditional recursion. Since CT doesn’t have primitive modal operators and satisfaction is not relativized to worlds (in the ordinary sense), one way to two-dimensionalize CT is to relativize satisfaction to *pairs* of assignments to the individual variables. I defer the interested reader to (Rigoni and Thomason, 2014) for details where a convincing case is made against the usual objections to adding actuality to CT on purely logical grounds.<sup>31</sup>

Lewis, I think, would have a different response to these alleged problem concerning ‘actually’. Regarding the existence of a single, adequate translation scheme from ordinary modal discourse into the language of counterpart theory, he says:

[w]hat is the correct counterpart-theoretic interpretation of the modal formulas of the standard language of quantified modal logic?—Who cares? We can make them mean whatever we like. We are their master. We needn’t be faithful to the meanings we learned at mother’s knee—because we didn’t. If this language of boxes and diamonds proves to be a clumsy instrument for talking about matters of essence and potentiality, let it go hang. Use the resources of modal realism *directly* to say what it would mean for Humphrey to be essentially human, or to exist contingently. (Lewis, 1986, pp. 12–13)

What Lewis is that there need not be one translation schemes to rule them all. For example, the two following sentences are problematic for certain schemes:

1. there might have been something that doesn’t actually exist;
2. it might have been that everyone who is in fact rich was poor.

But they are nonetheless translatable (though perhaps not by a single, natural scheme), respectively, as:

3. there is something not part of (in) the actual world;
4. there is a world containing poor counterparts of every actual rich person.

However, the lack of a single scheme for translating both does not rule out a reasonable translation of both.<sup>32</sup> The root of the problem in finding a universal scheme comes partly from translating sentences somehow making reference to non-actual individuals in the scope of an actuality operator. Suppose Ted and Fred are actual, identical twins whose mother could have borne triples. Then

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<sup>30</sup>On some of the problems, see (Hazen, 1979) and (Fara and Williamson, 2005).

<sup>31</sup>Some other recent strategies for finessing actuality into counterpart theory may be found in (Meyer, 2013) and (Bacon, 2014). Note, however, that Andrew Bacon’s semantics for actuality is incompatible with the cheap substitute since it requires that actual things have only themselves as actual counterparts (relative to an actual possibility), and Ulrich Meyer’s strategy validates POSS-ACT, making instances of (3) false.

<sup>32</sup>(Russell, 2013) and (Fara and Williamson, 2005) give some reasons for wanting a systematic translation scheme. I do not find these reasons particularly compelling and side with Lewis and (Hunter and Seager, 1981) in favor of more relaxed constraints on translation.

they have a possible brother. (Indeed, they have infinitely many of them.) If Ted and Fred are both counterparts of any such brother, how are we to translate e.g. ‘Ted and Fred could have had a brother that is actually more similar to Fred than is Ted’? In order to evaluate the sentences, we first need to say which counterpart of the possible brother is his chosen representer. In the present case it is easy because it could only be Fred for the sentence to be true, since only Fred is more similar to himself than is Ted. It may not be easy in general, but a choice has to be made if the sentence is to have any truth-value at all. Moreover, it is important to note that the problem is independent of the truth of P5—again, it concerns whether anything can have multiple counterparts within a world, and not whether a thing can have distinct worldmate counterparts.

To conclude, let me briefly summarize the main points of the paper. First, I argued that CT with P5 is committed to haecceitism (on Lewis’s definition) if there are indiscernible worlds (e.g. of eternal recurrence). Second, I argued that Lewis’s attack on non-qualitative (determinants of) counterpart relations is unconvincing, and therefore the possibility of haecceitism is left open. Third, I argued that, since possibilities cannot in general be possible worlds according to CT, haecceitism needs to be reformulated as a thesis about possibilities, not worlds. Upon such reformulation, qualitative CT (i.e. CT without P5 or what Lewis calls the ‘cheap substitute’) is committed to genuine haecceitism even if there are no indiscernible worlds. Fourth, I argued that CT’s commitment to haecceitism is in any case harmless since it does not undermine other supervenience theses that are central to Lewis’s metaphysics, such as Humean supervenience. Fifth, I took issue with Lewis’s formulation of haecceitism and proposed an improvement to which both qualitative and non-qualitative CT are no longer committed. Finally, I defended counterpart theory from the objection that the theory is inconsistent in the presence of an ‘actually’ operator.

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