

PHIL 332: Philosophy of Language  
Class 9: Direct Reference

1. Kripke argued that names are rigid designators and concluded that names are not synonymous with definite descriptions (either one description or a cluster of descriptions).
2. But this is too hasty: some definite descriptions are rigid designators ('The positive square root of four', 'The actual president of the U.S.').

Btw: Is there a non-rigid reading of 'The actual president of the U.S.'?

3. In any case, this has lent support to the idea that names *directly* refer – what they contribute to the proposition expressed by a sentence is a particular (rather than, say, an identifying property of a particular). What 'George Bush' contributes to the proposition expressed by 'George Bush is the president' is George Bush (the man) (rather than, say, the property of being George Bush). So what gets marched from world to world is George Bush (not a property). This is the Millian view.
4. So there are two distinctions for designators: rigid vs. non-rigid; directly referring vs. not directly referring:

	Directly referring	Not directly referring
Rigid		
Non-rigid		

*Kripke on necessary but a posteriori truths*

5. Kripke argued that there are such things:

It is necessary that: Hesperus is Phosphorus

It is *a posteriori* that: Hesperus is Phosphorus.

Therefore, there is an *x* which is necessary but *a posteriori*.

But is this a valid argument?