

CONTRAST AND CONSTITUTION

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The pluralist about material constitution maintains that a lump of clay is not identical with the statue it constitutes. Although pluralism strikes many as extravagant by requiring distinct things to coincide, it can be defended with a simple argument. The monist is less well off. Typically, she has to argue indirectly for her view by finding problems with the pluralist's extravagance. This paper offers a direct argument for monism that illustrates how monism about material constitution is rooted in commonsense as reflected in linguistic practice. In particular, I argue that everyday judgements that are contrastive like 'The statue is beautiful for a lump of clay' entail the identity of the statue and the clay.

Keywords: material constitution, monism, gradable adjectives, *for*-phrase, property inheritance, constitution as identity.

I. THE PUZZLE

We have a lump of clay and a statue sculpted from the lump. How many things are in the vicinity of the clay? The pluralist sees kaleidoscopically and counts at least two things. There is the clay and the statue constituted by it. The monist sees and counts but one thing. Since constitution is identity in disguise, there is just the clay, talked about as if it were legion.

The pluralist's take on the puzzle of material constitution is more extravagant. It appears to most that there are only enough material parts to build one thing, but the pluralist insists that the available material is enough to build many. The statue and clay are then numerically distinct despite sharing all their material parts and occupying the same locations. The monist gets by with a more austere picture of what there is. When there is only one set of parts, there can only be one thing. No coinciding things are hiding in plain sight.

Extravagance aside, the pluralist has a remarkably simple argument at her disposal. Let your imagination rip and then carefully work through what's been imagined with Leibniz's Law. Imagine that the statue is beautiful, but

the clay is rather ordinary in appearance. The conclusion that there are many things should arrive without much effort. Once more, but now with premises:

- (A1) The statue is beautiful.
- (A2) The lump of clay is not beautiful.
- (A3) The statue is not identical to the lump. (A1), (A2) and Leibniz's Law

Fine (2003) calls this argument the *MASTER ARGUMENT*. Over the years, similar arguments have been presented. Leibniz's Law is sometimes front and centre as opposed to lingering in the background. Still other times, it is the modal and temporal differences between the statue and the lump of clay that are the pluralist's basis for insisting on non-identity (e.g., Baker 1997). The argument remains the same in each case.¹ A difference in properties among the things makes for the difference of the things.

What about the monist? Typically, the monist makes her case by raising trouble for pluralism. Given the choice between pluralism and monism, the better take on material constitution is monism. Although not a monist himself, Sosa (1987: 178–9) worries of the 'explosion of reality' brought about by pluralism. The monist is quick to note that her reality is explosion-free. Another example of an indirect motivation for monism is the *THE GROUNDING PROBLEM*. Monists insist that the pluralist provides an explanation of what grounds the difference in properties between the things. Given that the things share parts and location, it is not obvious what explains how the statue is beautiful, while the lump of clay is not. As Zimmerman (1995: 87) asks, 'Should not two physical objects constructed in precisely the same way out of qualitatively identical parts have the same capacities for survival under similar conditions?'

While such problems with pluralism push us away from thinking there are many things, they do not exclusively direct us to thinking there is one thing. Arguments for monism built upon these and other problems start with premises about the failings of pluralism as opposed to independent considerations about how monism best captures our commonsense picture of the world. An interesting exception may be Almotahari (2014, *forthcoming*). He argues that the *not* figuring in (A2) is metalinguistic negation as opposed to truth-functional negation. Upon inspection, the *MASTER ARGUMENT* therefore entails monism as opposed to pluralism. But I do not think this consideration about *not* furnish the monist with a positive argument. Although I share the judgement that the

¹ Mileage may vary on whether all versions of the argument are equally as strong. A referee suggests that modal and temporal differences facilitate a stronger argument for non-identity than Fine's (2003) because the corresponding intuitions are more robust. Even so, I am convinced by Fine (2003) that his version is more compelling because it is less susceptible to the monist's rejoinder that the argument does not show that there is a plurality of objects but merely that one object can be described with different descriptions. As a result, my interest in this paper is developing an argument for monism that is direct and straightforward like Fine's (2003) *MASTER ARGUMENT* for pluralism.

negation in (A₂) is metalinguistic, I take this judgement to quell the force of the MASTER ARGUMENT. So the argument is removed as an obstacle to monism, but the monist still needs a direct argument rooted in independent considerations for the conclusion that there is but one thing.

This paper will advance and defend a direct argument for monism. Like the MASTER ARGUMENT, this argument begins with a commonsense judgement and delivers its conclusion with the help of a simple bridge principle. In Section II, the argument is detailed. After that, the remainder of the paper is dedicated to answering objections. In Section III, three objections are considered that claim that the new argument exploits ambiguity. In Section IV, two putative counterexamples to the new principle are entertained and dispatched. In Section V, I consider the reply that the conclusion of my argument is actually compatible with pluralism because of how constituted things inherit properties from constituting things. The conclusion comes in Section VI.

II. THE COMPARISON ARGUMENT

Suppose we have found ourselves in an art gallery. Upon encountering a statue, you pass the following judgement.

- (1) The statue is beautiful for a lump of clay.

This judgement is surely acceptable.² You will see that neither syntax nor semantics conspire against the meaningfulness of (1). Importantly, this judgement also presents itself as true. Often times, the aesthetic properties of material things like statues bewitch us such that we forget that they are constituted from ordinary things like clay. Commonsense judgements such as (1) serve as reminders of the everydayness of the things which constitute.

On its own, the truth of sentences like (1) entails nothing about material constitution. We are only half of the way to an argument for monism.³ What we need next is a principle with which to assess (1). To see such a principle, note that judgements like (1) take this form: x is F for a G . A necessary feature of these *for*-phrases is that they require x to be identical with a G .⁴ Similar

² Occasionally, pluralists find (1) awkward. This may be a classic case of theoretical commitments obscuring linguistic judgement. If you are such a reader, I recommend the following exercises. Try substituting *beautiful* with *Romanesque*, *valuable*, *expensive*, *ugly*, *hard*, *soft* or other adjectives likely to be used in a gallery, replacing the definite with a complex demonstrative like *that statue*, topicalizing the *for*-phrase by moving it to the beginning of the sentence, or adding prosodic focus on *for* and *clay*. One or more of these changes have worked on every initially reluctant informant I have encountered.

³ We are also a few steps away from a rejoinder to the MASTER ARGUMENT. For example, King (2006) and Szabó (2003) both provide responses to the argument with a defence of monism that involves the semantics of prepositions like *for* and *as*.

⁴ I remain neutral on how to best formally implement this requirement in a compositional semantics. Kennedy (1997, 2007) suggests the *for*-phrase has a presupposition that restricts the

observations are made by Bylinina (2014 : ch. 4), Kennedy (2007: 12–3), Klein (1980: 13–4), and Wheeler (1972: 316). Let’s dub this FOR-IDENTITY.

FOR-IDENTITY

‘ x is F for a G ’ is true only if x is identical to a G .

The reason for the requirement is simple. A sentence bearing this form contrasts x ’s F -ness with other things of the same kind. When x is not a G and thus not a member of the class of G s, any contrastive comparison of x ’s F -ness to other G s is confused. Accordingly, violation of FOR-IDENTITY explains the unacceptability of the following:

- (2) # The statue is beautiful for a mammal;
- (3) # The statue is beautiful for an immaterial spirit,

where the thing referenced on the left-hand side is not the same kind of thing referenced on the right-hand side of the *for*-phrase. FOR-IDENTITY also explains why sentences such as

- (4) # The ghost is beautiful for an immaterial spirit, but the ghost is not an immaterial spirit.

crash as if they were contradictions. According to FOR-IDENTITY, (4) is a contradiction because the *for*-phrase identifies the ghost with an immaterial spirit, and then that very identification is denied.⁵

Together, FOR-IDENTITY and our commonsense judgement compel us to accept that there is only one thing in the vicinity of the clay. Like the role played by Leibniz’s Law in the MASTER ARGUMENT for pluralism, FOR-IDENTITY also acts as a bridge principle that unpacks the metaphysical significance of commonsense judgements. This new argument for monism I will call the COMPARISON ARGUMENT. The argument marches forward as follows. It begins by affirming the truth of (1) as a commonsense judgement:

- (B1) ‘The statue is beautiful for a lump of clay’ is true.

With this judgement in hand, an instance of FOR-IDENTITY that corresponds to (1) is then taken:

- (B2) ‘The statue is beautiful for a lump of clay’ is true only if the statue is identical to a lump of clay.

domain of the gradable adjective’s measure function. Bylinina (2014: ch. 4) bakes the restriction in compositionally. Regardless, FOR-IDENTITY is part of the conventional meaning of *for*-phrases and not a pragmatic effect.

⁵ Examples like (4) also illustrate how FOR-IDENTITY cannot be a conversational implicature. Conversational implicatures are cancellable. (4) shows that the identity requirement is not cancellable.

And that's all we need to see that the statue and the clay are identical. The monist's conclusion is swiftly delivered:

(B₃) The statue is identical to a lump of clay.

In short, commonsense judgements like *The statue is beautiful for a lump of clay* are true and their truth requires FOR-IDENTITY. Since abiding by FOR-IDENTITY happens only when the things referenced in a *for*-phrase are one and the same, there is only a lump of clay. The vicinity around the lump of clay is not brimming with anything else.

III. AMBIGUATION

The COMPARISON ARGUMENT allows the monist to finally have it both ways. They can have a direct argument for their view and a non-extravagant ontology. Invariably, the pluralist will not want the monist to have so much. I suspect she will accept (1) as a bit of commonsense, but try to take away FOR-IDENTITY. Not unlike a monist who denies an unqualified Leibniz's Law to avoid the conclusion of the MASTER ARGUMENT, the pluralist will insist that FOR-IDENTITY is in need of revision.

III.1 *The ambiguity of is*

The pluralist will likely begin her reply by reminding us that there is an *is* of constitution distinct from the *is* of identity. Following Wiggins (2001: 36–7), the meaning of this *is* is paraphrasable along the lines of *is constituted from*. The advantage accrued by positing ambiguity is that other judgements we might be inclined to make, like

(5) The statue is a lump of clay.

pose no problem because the *is* involved can be identified as the *is* of constitution. As such, (5) is equivalent to

(6) The statue is constituted from a lump of clay.

which is consistent with pluralism. After reminding us of this much, the pluralist might make a similar claim about the *is* in (1) and try to handle (1) like (5). But the *is* in (1) cannot be the *is* of constitution. Witness that the Wigginsian paraphrase fails. A substitution into (1) such as

(7) # The statue is constituted from beautiful for a lump of clay.

is unacceptable. The cause of this infelicity is that the *is* in (1) is behaving predicatively. As noted above, the logical form of sentences like (1) is not 'x is

G but ‘ x is F for a G ’. So the usual pluralist strategy for handling apparent judgements of identity does not work with contrastive judgements such as (1).

III.2 *The ambiguity of for*

The pluralist might revise their charge of ambiguity. Instead of *is* being ambiguous, it is *for* that is ambiguous. As a result, there can be *for*-phrases that are meaningful even when x is not identical to y because x is intimately related to y by being constituted by y . This attempt at falsifying FOR-IDENTITY also fails. Ambiguity is a feature of natural language that can be detected. A classic test owed to Zwicky and Sadock (1975) takes two sentences containing seemingly different uses of an expression, combines the sentences and checks for resulting confusion. For example,

- (8) The mafioso robbed the bank.
- (9) The river flooded the bank.

can be combined to form

- (10) # The river flooded and the mafioso robbed the bank,

which clearly indicates the ambiguity of a *bank* with its absurdity. Applying this same test to *for*-phrases produces no confusion. Taking a sentence such as

- (11) The David is beautiful for a statue.

to be a straightforward case of a *for*-phrase underwritten by identity, we can combine it with (1) to produce:

- (12) The statue and the David are beautiful for lumps of clay.

(12) might seem slightly unusual. But there are plenty of ways to get into a mood in which it is acceptable. We just have to imagine that there is some unnamed statue near the David that is also under discussion and worthy of the definite. Any weirdness is therefore not owed to ambiguity like (10).

The pluralist might revise this objection to FOR-IDENTITY. *For*-phrases are not merely ambiguous. They are polysemous and have distinct but subtly similar meanings. The pluralist is thereby in a position to claim that the ambiguity test just deployed is too coarse to correctly detect polysemy.

This refined objection also takes us nowhere. Note that what matters is not the ambiguity of the preposition *for*, but the ambiguity of a *for*-phrase exhibiting the contrastive form we have been considering. Like most prepositions, *for* is probably a little polysemous. But if it is not ambiguous in the right place at the right time, this polysemy is of no use to the pluralist. What the pluralist needs is a reason to believe that the contrastive *for*-phrase is ambiguous between a

meaning that is governed by FOR-IDENTITY and a meaning that is governed by the following constitution principle:

FOR-CONSTITUTION

' x is F for a G ' is true only if x is constituted by a G .

But there is no independent semantic evidence to motivate FOR-CONSTITUTION. Such evidence is had in abundance for FOR-IDENTITY. We accept it because it correctly predicts when contrastive uses of *for*-phrases are felicitous. Without comparable evidence, the pluralist is making up the semantics of natural language as she goes and we should be suspicious of such a manoeuvre.

The reason for suspicion is worth elaborating. Commonsense has always been treated as a source of defeasible evidence when it comes to the puzzle of material constitution. The MASTER ARGUMENT requires it to compel acceptance of (A1) and (A2). But to take commonsense seriously as a defeasible guide to what there is, we need to understand what commonsense commits us to when we judge sentences as true. If it is acceptable to posit undetectable and unmotivated ambiguities for troublesome sentences, commonsense judgements commit us to almost nothing. Such a manoeuvre can be used to dismiss any commonsense judgement relevant to any metaphysical puzzle whatsoever. For example, the monist can also make up the semantics as she goes too. The monist can dismiss the pluralist's MASTER ARGUMENT by insisting there are unnoticeable changes in meaning that render the argument invalid. So the problem is not merely that this manoeuvre requires an ad hoc semantics of natural language and thereby ignores the impressive developments made in linguistics made in the last 50 years or so. The manoeuvre is flawed because it renders commonsense largely irrelevant, which strips the puzzle of material constitution from many considerations that make it a puzzle in the first place.

III.3 *The ambiguity of being*

The dissenting pluralist has been trying to find ambiguity in a *for*-phrase, but there is not much lexical material left. As a final attempt, the pluralist might get creative and suggest that what is ambiguous in a *for*-phrase is a covert element.⁶ To motivate this claim, she might note that it can be felicitous to add *being* to the right of the *for*. For example,

(13) The statue is beautiful for being a lump of clay.

is still somewhat acceptable. As such, she could claim that this copula is covertly present in all *for*-phrases. Then, her argument against FOR-IDENTITY can rely on the ancient wisdom that *being* is said in many ways.

⁶ I am indebted to Dean Zimmerman for this objection.

This objection to FOR-IDENTITY is far bolder than the previous two. The other objections made only semantic claims by positing multiple meanings. This final objection takes a further step and advances a claim about the syntax of *for*-phrases having a covert copula located between the *for* and the noun phrase occurring on the right. For this objection to be taken seriously, the pluralist owes us a significant amount of linguistic evidence. First, she will need to provide evidence that the syntax of *for*-phrases has an inaudible and covert copula. Next, she will have to show that this copula displays lexical ambiguity between a *being* of constitution and a *being* of identity.

Neither variety of evidence is likely to be furnished by the pluralist. When it comes to covert copulas, none of the usual evidence is available. English is not taken to possess any covert copulas outside of a few unusual and idiosyncratic constructions. In those languages that are known to possess them, they typically appear only in sentences in the present tense. When the same sentence is expressed in a different tense, a copula then shows itself. That is the evidence that the copula was hiding all along. But an indicator of secrecy like this is not relevant to *for*-phrases since they cannot be tensed. The overt copula to the left can be tensed, as in

(14) The statue was beautiful for a lump of clay.

where the *is* in (1) becomes a *was* in (14). Adjectives conveying information about temporality can also modify the noun on the right of the *for*-phrase. For example,

(15) The lump of clay is beautiful for a former statue.

introduces information about what the lump once was. And yet, neither option for talking about a thing through time required a copula to suddenly appear to the right of the *for*. This is not a surprise given that prepositions take noun phrases as complements as opposed to verb phrases. The contrastive use of *for* in a *for*-phrase is no exception to its usual distribution.

Even if the pluralist could defend her covert operations, she will encounter significant difficulty when it comes to motivating the ambiguity of *being*. For starters, it is not at all clear how you test for the semantic ambiguity of a syntactically covert element. Those in hiding rarely make good test subjects. Then, there is independent reason to think that any apparent ambiguity is actually owed to a syntactic flexibility had by the copula. Partee (1986) takes such a line and models the flexibility in a categorial grammar. In such a logic, each expression is assigned a semantic type that determines how that expression composes with other expressions. Her proposal is that *be* is completely unambiguous but it possesses multiple semantic types that allow it to compose in more than one way. As such, regardless of the

particular details of type-shifting, the pluralist will need to show that variation among the uses of *be* is sourced in the copula's meaning and not its syntactic properties.

Putting this all together, there is little reason to reward the pluralist for her creativity. Nothing about the syntax of *for*-phrases points to a covert copula. Even if there were such evidence in hand, there is little reason to think that *being* will display the requisite ambiguity that is needed to cause trouble for the COMPARISON ARGUMENT.

IV. COUNTEREXAMPLES

We can dismiss the objection that the COMPARISON ARGUMENT exploits ambiguity. Let us turn to potential counterexamples to FOR-IDENTITY. If it is vulnerable to counterexamples, space might open up for an understanding of *for*-phrases in sentences like (1) that is compatible with pluralism about material constitution. In this section, two counterexamples will be considered.⁷ Each of them suffers from the same problem. Once we take a closer look, FOR-IDENTITY behaves as expected. It requires identity.

IV.1 Pretense and for-phrases

Sometimes we use *for*-phrases in ways that appear to be non-identifying. Suppose it is Halloween and a trick-or-treater has come to the front door dressed as a ghoulish statue. In mock fright, you exclaim:

(15) You are scary for a statue.

Or suppose you are having a life-size statue made in your likeness and you are sorting through the applications of artists vying for the honour of making it. Among these applicants is a small child. When reading their application, you share this observation:

(16) This one is young for a professional artist.

In both (15) and (16), identity fails. The trick-or-treater is not identical to a statue. The young applicant is not identical to a professional artist. Some might be tempted to conclude that FOR-IDENTITY fails.

Let's have our closer look. If neither (15) nor (16) entails the identity of the thing referenced on the left-hand side with the thing reference on the right-hand side, then either sentence should be consistent with a denial of identity. But these conjunctions crash exactly like (4).

⁷ Thanks are due to Robin Dembroff for presenting me with these cases.

(17) # You are not a statue, but you are scary for a statue.

(17) sounds like a contradiction. It should be perfectly acceptable if sentences like (15) and (16) were genuine counterexamples to FOR-IDENTITY. But it is not. They are not therefore counterexamples.

But why do (15) and (16) appear to be counterexamples? To begin to answer this question, we should make two further observations. Without extra information detailing the surrounding circumstance of each utterance, (15) and (16) both sound a little awkward. Try it for yourself. Forget the context given for each and imagine utterances of (15) and (16) where it is common ground between the conversational participants that identity does not obtain. Both are stilted in such a setting. And yet, both examples dramatically improve if a counterfactual modal like *would* appears before the copula.

(18) This one would be young for a professional artist.

(18) differs only from (16) by the presence of the auxiliary, but it is not awkward like (16) was awkward.

Here is an explanation. Sentences like (15) and (16) involve pretense. On Halloween, we willingly pretend that people are identical to the things their costumes resemble. When considering applicants for a job, we imagine them as if they occupied the role for which they applied. I remain neutral on how to exactly explain such pretense. Kennedy (2007: 12, fn. 10) suggests that there is an implicit *if*-clause in *for*-phrase sentences containing a *would*. Perhaps (15) and (16) are similarly subordinated.

(19) If you were a statue, you would be scary for a statue.

An off-the-shelf analysis of pretense like Lewis's (1978) could provide another explanation. According to Lewis, pretense occurs with an intensional operator 'In the fiction *f*...' that is either overt or covert at the front of a sentence. When present, the operator shifts the world of evaluation to counterfactual worlds where things are dramatically different.

Whatever way we explain the means by which (15) and (16) involve pretense, one is mistaken to see them as causing trouble for FOR-IDENTITY. As correctly predicted by the principle, (15) and (16) are infelicitous if assessed at the actual world where identity does not obtain and felicitous if assessed at non-actual worlds where identity does obtain. Far from causing trouble, these cases corroborate FOR-IDENTITY.

IV.2 Implicit subjects and for-phrases

There are some putative counterexamples to FOR-IDENTITY that do not involve pretense. Something else is going on. The following are representative of this other variety:

- (20) The admission price is low for an art museum.
 (21) The cost is cheap for a golden statue.

Identity does not obtain in (20) or (21). A price cannot be identical to an art museum and a cost cannot be identical to a golden statue.

Like before, we need to take a closer look. Assuming these *for*-phrases are contrastive, (20) contrasts the lowness of an admission price relative to a contrast class and (21) contrasts the cheapness of a cost within another contrast class. But what exactly is the contrast class in each sentence? We need to answer this question to interpret either. If we take the class to be merely what is stated on the right-hand side, neither sentence makes much sense. For example, admission prices cannot directly be compared to museums because they are completely different kinds of things.

Both sentences become readily interpretable after we recognize that the things on each side are importantly related. Art museums have admissions prices and golden statues have costs. So both (20) and (21) display a property on the left-hand side and the bearer of the property on the other side. A natural interpretation now surfaces. Noun phrases like *admission price* or *cost* are relational nouns whose meaning essentially involves other individuals (c.f. Barker 2012). We can then think of the right-hand side of each construction being implicitly about an admission price or cost just like the left-hand side, but a proper subset of prices or costs where that subset is determined by a class of things that have prices or costs. In other words, the meaning of (20) is that the admission price is low for an admission price had by an art museum.⁸ Adopting this interpretation allows us to resolve our question about the contrast class.

Fortunately for the monist, the presence of implicit subjects in *for*-phrases ensures that FOR-IDENTITY is not under threat. There is an implicit subject on the right-hand side, and this subject is the same kind of thing as the subject on the left-hand side. Identity obtains as expected.

There is much to recommend the presence of implicit subjects. Prepositional phrases are no stranger to having implicit arguments hiding in them. For instance, temporal prepositional phrases are widely taken to involve implicit arguments for times (c.f. Pratt and Frances 2001). It is not a stretch to think that contrastive prepositional phrases can involve implicit arguments for contrasts. There is also direct evidence for sentences like (20) and (21) containing implicit arguments. The usual evidence for implicit subjects is that sentences containing them license the addition of certain phrases that make the subjects explicit.

⁸ Alternatively, we might think of the left-hand side of each construction as implicitly concerning an art museum or golden statue. Where the implicit arguments surface does not matter for our purposes. What matters is that implicit arguments have to lurk in syntax somewhere in order to resolve the meaning of sentences like (20) and (21) that are contrastive because of the *for*-phrase.

For example, Roeper (1987) notes that passive constructions license *by*-phrases that their non-passive counterparts do not.

- (22) The ship was sunk.
- (23) The ship was sunk by David Lewis.
- (24) The ship sank.
- (25) # The ship sank by David Lewis.

This difference in felicity is what indicates the presence of implicit subjects. What's more, relational nouns almost always license extra phrases that bring the implicit arguments to the surface. For example, it is difficult to talk about bundles or stashes without knowing what it is that they are bundles or stashes of. As such, relational nouns like *bundle* and *stash* license prepositional *of*-phrases that make the objects of bundling or stashing explicit.

Turning back to (20) and (21), similar evidence is on hand. For both sentences, we can add a possessive phrase to the right-hand side that makes it explicit that the thing on the right-hand side has the property on the left-hand side. The possessive phrase makes explicit the otherwise unarticulated relation between what is on each side of the *for*-phrase.

- (26) The admission price is low for an art museum's *admission price*.
- (27) The cost is cheap for a golden statue's *cost*.

Tellingly, we cannot add similar possessive phrases to the right-hand side of any *for*-phrases that have two objects on each side as opposed to a property and an object. That is, we cannot add possessive phrases when there is not a relational noun involved. If we try to add this possessive phrase to the end of (1), we produce a sentence where syntax and semantics do conspire against its meaningfulness. (28) is infelicitous.

- (28) # The statue is beautiful for a lump of clay's statue.

Pluralists cannot therefore help themselves to implicit subjects to explain away (1). The independent semantic evidence for implicit subjects is the licensing of possessive phrases. But (1) doesn't license. There is then zero independent evidence that (1) involves implicit subjects. More than that, (28)'s infelicity provides evidence against (1) having an implicit subject like (20) or (21). So sentences like (20) and (21) are unique *for*-phrases. They are still contrastive like (1), but they license the addition of possessive phrases and that provides the evidence that they alone contain implicit subjects.

We can remain neutral on how implicit subjects are represented in the syntax and semantics of these deviant *for*-phrases. The representation of implicit subjects is a live controversy and our current purposes allow us to avoid it. Regardless of how the exact details shake out, *for*-phrases like (20) and (21) are only felicitous if we fill in what was left implicit. Once we do, it is again clear

that FOR-IDENTITY is not vulnerable. What is on the left-hand side is identical to what is on the other side.

V. INHERITANCE

The linguistic objections can be put to rest. But there is also a metaphysical rejoinder to reckon with.⁹ Pluralists have long maintained that a constituted thing inherits properties from its constituting thing (c.f. Baker 2000, Koslicki 2004). For example, the statue inherits its colour and shape from the lump of clay. Property inheritance poses a problem for the COMPARISON ARGUMENT if kind properties are inherited. Then, the lump of clay will have the kind property *being a lump of clay* and so will the statue. As a result, the COMPARISON ARGUMENT's conclusion is compatible with pluralism. An x can be a G , as required by FOR-IDENTITY, because it is constituted by something that is.

Note that many pluralists are already unwilling to posit the inheritance of kind properties. Coincidence provides a reason. Pluralists may be willing to countenance coincident objects of different kinds. However, coincident objects of the same kind may be too much of an affront to commonsense to be countenanced (c.f. Locke 1689/1975; Wiggins 1980). Pluralists may also think it essential to constitution that it obtains between objects of different kinds. For example, Koslicki (2004: 348) writes: 'Constitution, according to our ordinary conception, is an *asymmetric, transitive* relation that applies to objects of *different kinds* (emphasis in original)'. Of course, these pluralists might see the COMPARISON ARGUMENT as a reason to reconsider whether kind properties are among those that get inherited. But such pluralists had it right from the start. They are better off denying that kind properties trickle up.

I offer the pluralist two further reasons for denying the inheritability of kind properties. The first reason concerns the GROUNDING PROBLEM. A standard pluralist reply in full or in part is that kind properties are what ground differences.¹⁰ What explains that the statue is beautiful, well-made, or Romanesque while the lump of clay is not is that the things belong to different kinds. As Saenz (2015: 2206) observes,

We can meaningfully predicate of statues that they are well-made. But the meaningfulness of such predications is at best strained, and at worst non-existent, when applied to lumps. There is . . . a kind of oddity in saying that lumps are well-made that does not exist when we say that statues are well-made. So the relevant difference between [the statue] and [the lump of clay] in virtue of which one is, but the other is not, well-made is that one is, but the other is not, the kind of thing that can be well-made.

⁹ I am indebted to two anonymous referees for bringing this objection to my attention.

¹⁰ For example, see Wiggins (1980), Bennett (2004), deRosset (2011), and Saenz (2015).

But this reply is not available to the pluralist who lets kind properties be inherited. Suppose that inheritance is a two-way street (c.f. Baker 1999). Then, the statue will inherit the property *being a lump of clay* and the lump of clay will inherit *being a statue*. As a result, the kind differences grounding the other differences are erased. The GROUNDING PROBLEM returns.

Alternatively, suppose that property inheritance is asymmetric such that only constituted things inherit the kind properties of the constituting things. Then just the statue exemplifies *being a statue* and *being a lump of clay*. But treating inheritance as asymmetric does not rid the pluralist of trouble. If the pluralist still appeals to kind properties to ground distinguishing properties such as *being well-made*, then the pluralist is committed to the contradiction that the statue is the kind of thing that can be well-made and not the kind of thing that can be well-made. I recommend that the pluralist not trade traction on the GROUNDING PROBLEM for a contradiction.

The next reason pluralists should deny the inheritability of kind properties concerns how properties are had. Properties are had either intrinsically or extrinsically. As a gloss, intrinsically had properties are exemplified in virtue of how a thing is as opposed to how it is related to other things. Some properties can be had either way. Consider *being valuable*. A thing can have value because of how it is independently or because of how other things confer value upon it. Other properties can only be had one way. Notably, *being self-identical* is a property that can only be had intrinsically. How a property is had impacts whether it can be inherited through constitution. In particular, the following constraint should be adopted by pluralists.

EXTRINSIC INHERITANCE

If a property F is inheritable through constitution, F can be had extrinsically. Adopting this constraint has two upshots. First, it explains why properties like *being self-identical* cannot be inherited. Such properties are ineligible for inheritance because they are only had intrinsically. In this way, the constraint explains what Fine (1983), Baker (1999) and others have just stipulated about inheritance. Second, the constraint explains why inherited properties all appear to be had extrinsically. Dwell on *being valuable* again. A statue sculpted from priceless clay inherits value because of the lump of clay. It does not have value on its own. Instead, it has its value extrinsically.¹¹

¹¹ A full discussion of which properties can be inherited and whether they can be had extrinsically is beyond the scope of this paper. Still, it should be noted that what might seem like obvious counterexamples are not. For example, Koslicki (2004) suggests that properties like weight and shape are inheritable intrinsic properties. But each of these properties is plausibly either an extrinsic property or at least a property that can be had extrinsically by a thing. The extrinsicity of weight is defended by McKittrick (2003) and assumed by Weatherston and Marshall (2012), Bauer (2011) defends that mass is extrinsic, Skow (2007) and Davidson (2014) both defend that shape is an extrinsic property, and so forth.

The above constraint on inheritance makes trouble along with a principle about kind properties. Kind properties differ according to whether the kind is a phase or substantial kind. Phase kinds are such that a thing belongs to them only at particular worlds and times. Substance kinds are kinds to which a thing belongs as long as it exists. For example, *being a senator* is a phase kind property, whereas *being a person* is plausibly not. Using *kind_P* for phase kind and *kind_S* for substance kind, I submit this principle as true.

INTRINSIC KIND

Kind_S properties are only had intrinsically.¹²

This principle is motivated by pretheoretic reflection on the status of kind_S properties. Kind_S properties individuate things according to what they are. They are not properties like *being to the left of a door* that look outward from a thing to what is nearby. A thing has a kind_S property regardless of how other things are. So kind_S properties are as good a candidate as any for properties that are only had intrinsically by a thing. Though a thorough consideration of theories of intrinsicality is beyond the scope of this paper, I wager that no such theory will identify kind_S properties as being had extrinsically without misidentifying the status of other properties.

The second reason the pluralist should deny the inheritability of kind properties is now easy to state. *Being a lump of clay* is a kind_S property. Given INTRINSIC KIND, it follows that *being a lump of clay* is only had intrinsically by a thing. The statue cannot therefore exemplify it given how inheritance is limited by EX-TRINSIC INHERITANCE.

VI. CONCLUSION

The case for monism about material constitution has mostly consisted of a complicated negative case against pluralism. But the COMPARISON ARGUMENT allows the monist to change tack. She can now simply and directly argue that constitution is identity. All that's required is a dash of commonsense and a principle about *for*-phrases that independently earns its keep. The pluralist probably has more to say about the COMPARISON ARGUMENT and the principle behind it that unpacks the significance of commonsense judgements like (1). But we have canvassed enough objections. Fine's (2003: 230) conclusion about the MASTER ARGUMENT can be echoed:

¹² INTRINSIC KIND is restricted to artefact kinds like *being a lump of clay* or *being a statue*. I remain neutral on how to understand property-having. A natural proposal is that intrinsicality is a property of properties. INTRINSIC KIND is then tantamount to the claim that kind_S properties cannot be exemplified without exemplifying *being intrinsic*. Nevertheless, the principle's truth is unaffected by such details.

The argument should be allowed to stand; and we can therefore be spared from both the bad metaphysics that arises from not accepting its conclusion and the bad linguistics that arises from the need to see it as invalid.¹³

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¹³ I am grateful to Andy Egan, Dean Zimmerman, Jonathan Schaffer, Robin Dembroff, Reier Helle, Andrew Bailey, Jeffrey King, and two anonymous referees for feedback on this paper's ancestors. I am also indebted to audiences at Yale University, the Eastern APA and the metaphysics reading group at Rutgers University.

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