# Some of your examples for Mill's categories

- **Singular name**: "Felix" (Claire), "The Enterprise" (Mike)
- General name: "water" (John), "monkey" (Calvin)
- **Collective name**: "the cast" (of a play) (Dylan), "the Storytellers Guild" (Zach), "U. S. Navy" (Thadeus)
- Concrete name: "Lake Ontario" (Maura), "Kary" (Kary)
- **Connotative name**: "Piano Man" (Jacqueline), "New York" (Dan)
- Non-Connotative name: "Jamie Oliver" (Suzanne)

# Some questions raised by your examples

• Is this a singular name?

-"MacIntosh" [apple]

• Is this a connotative name?

-"New York"

### Elements of our toolkit

- **Definite description**: a description true of only one object, which therefore acts like a name; typically begins with "the" (e.g., *The President of the United States*).
- Analytic statement: a statement that is true because of the nature of its parts (e.g., *Bachelors are unmarried males*).
- **Synthetic statement**: a statement that is not analytic (e.g., *Cats cannot taste sugar*).
- *A priori* statement: a statement the truth value of which can be known without checking the world (without checking empirical facts) (e.g., 2+2=4).

### Elements of our toolkit

- *A posteriori* statement: a statement the truth value of which can be known only after checking the world (e.g., *Tom is in France*).
- Use/Mention distinction:
  - To *use* a word is to make use of its meaning in a normal way. For example, "Tom" is **used** in "Tom is tall."
  - To *mention* a word is to refer to the word itself, or some feature of the word. For example, "Tom" is **mentioned** in the sentence "Tom' is a proper name." Mentions should be indicated with quotes.

### Reference. Our challenge so far.

- Consider several examples of reference
  - Particular real concrete objects: Obama
  - Particular unreal objects: Voldemort
  - Abstract objects: seven

#### Hobbes and Locke



Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679)



John Locke (1632-1704)

### Our challenge so far: Hobbes, Locke

- On the naive interpretation of Hobbes's and Locke's view, language only express our ideas
  - "Obama" expresses my idea of Obama
  - "Voldemort" expresses my idea of Voldemort
  - "7" expresses my idea of 7
- This makes easy work of non-existent referents.
- Problems include: using this theory it is difficulty to make sense of the idea that the referent can be other than what my idea fixes (e.g., suppose my idea of Obama is wrong).

# Mill



#### John Stuart Mill (1806-1873)

## Our challenge so far: Mill

- On the naive interpretation of Mill's view, referential concepts signify only their referents
  - "Obama" signifies Obama
  - "7" signifies 7
  - "Voldemort" signifies...?
- This coheres with the view that I could have false beliefs about the referent of my terms.
- Problems include: it is difficult to see how this theory might be used to make sense of reference to abstract or non-existent objects.





#### Gottlob Frege (1848-1925)

# Frege's puzzle as a *reductio ad absurdum*

- 1. <u>Naïve-Millian Claim</u>: the meaning of a term is wholly determined by the referent of the term ("referent" just means the thing referred to). [Note: this is our assumption for reductio.]
- 2. If the meaning of a term is wholly determined by the referent of the term, then if two terms have the same referent, those two terms have the same meaning.
- 3. By 1 and 2 we get: if two terms have the same referent, then those two terms have the same meaning.
- 4. Suppose **a** = **b**
- 5. Because **a** = **b**, "**a**" and "**b**" have the same referent. (That is, they refer to the same thing: "**a**" refers to what "**b**" refers to, and "**b**" refers to what "**a**" refers to.)
- 6. As an instance of 3, we get: if "**a**" and "**b**" have the same referent, then "**a**" and "**b**" have the same meaning.
- 7. CONCLUSION: By 5 and 6, we get: "a" and "b" have the same meaning.
- 8. CONTRADICTION: But there is a difference between the meaning of "**a**=**a**" and "**a**=**b**". Namely, **a**=**a** is obvious (and *a priori* and analytic), whereas **a**=**b** is not obvious (and is *a posteriori* and is synthetic). The only possible source of this difference is in some difference between the meaning of "**a**" and "**b**." (We mean for "**a**" and "=" to have the same meaning in each occurrence.)

**PUZZLE**: what is the source of this difference in line 8?

**Frege's solution:** is to deny premise 1. Meaning is not wholly determined by the referent of a term. Meaning is primarily sense (and secondarily the image); reference is not meaning; in fact, the sense (but not the image) determines the reference.

# Frege's sense, reference, & image

- **Reference** is not part of meaning, but sense determines the referent.
- Sense is the meaning of the utterance that can make a difference in the truth value of a sentence that contains that utterance. Think of this as: sense is the part of meaning that should be shared in our language community, and is relevant to proper use of the utterance.
- **Image** is the meaning of the utterance that cannot make a difference in the truth value of a sentence that contains that utterance. Think of this as: image is the part of meaning that need not be shared in our language community, and is not relevant to proper use of the term.