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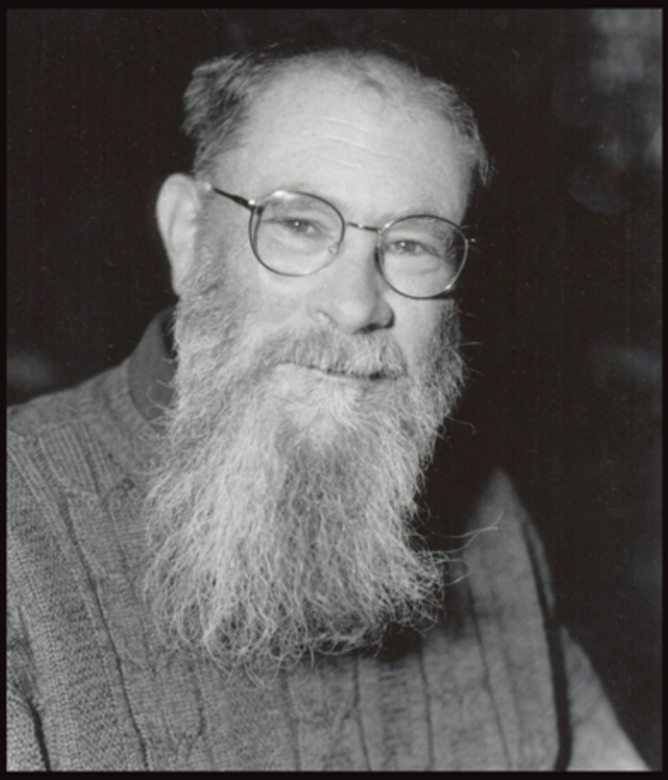

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A Companion to David Lewis

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This edition first published 2015
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John Wiley & Sons Ltd, The Atrium, Southern Gate, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 8SQ, UK

Editorial Offices
350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148-5020, USA
9600 Garsington Road, Oxford, OX4 2DQ, UK
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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Cataloging-in-Publication Data has been applied for.

C 9781118388181

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Cover image: Princeton University, Office of Communications, photo: R. Mathews

Set in 9.5/11.5 pt PhotinaMTStd by Toppan Best-set Premedia Limited

1 2015

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Part I

Biography and New Work

1

Intellectual Biography of David Lewis (1941–2001)

Early Influences

STEPHANIE R. LEWIS

This chapter is not a cradle-to-grave intellectual biography of David Lewis. In particular, it does not try to be comprehensive about the origins of his views or of how he came to hold them. Its purpose is to exhibit elements of the origins of the David Lewis we knew, philosopher and human being, and whose works we know. It describes important influences on David as a child, as an adolescent, and as a young man.

Let me begin with the last, and most important, of the forces that shaped the adult David, and made him the philosopher that he was. Not the only influence: nothing would have made David into the philosopher he was if he didn't have the wherewithal to begin with.

David, and usually I as well, made many visits to Australia: in 1971, in 1976, and nearly every year (except 2000, the year of David's kidney transplant) from 1979 right through 2001. He gave talks, went to talks, conversed with many people, and whenever he was in the right place at the right time he attended the Australasian Association of Philosophy conference. We toured around and enjoyed the urban amenities of Melbourne and, to a lesser extent, Sydney. And, starting in 1980, we went to the footy (Figure 1.1). David, who in general had no interest whatever in sport, somehow became a one-eyed supporter of the Essendon Football Club, in the Victorian (subsequently, the Australian) Football League. He was buried with his Essendon membership card in his pocket.

In July of 2002, nearly a year after David's death, I visited Australia by myself, and attended the Australasian Association of Philosophy conference. At the conference dinner, someone rose and asked us all to take a moment to remember David. After a minute or so, they shoved the microphone at me and asked me to say something. My only preparation for this was three glasses of wine. The first words that came out of my mouth were "Australia made David." I must have said more, but I have no recollection at all of what it might have been.

1.1 Childhood

David was born into an academic household in Oberlin, Ohio, on September 28, 1941. He was the eldest of three children. His father, John D. Lewis, was professor of government at Oberlin College,

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Figure 1.1 Going home from the MCG after a loss to Collingwood, 1984. © Stephanie Lewis 2013.

where he taught from 1936 until his retirement in 1972. John was one of the great Oberlin teachers of his time, an Oberlin oligarch. As student and faculty member, he was at Oberlin for 41 years. John hadn't much standing as a scholar or researcher, especially in the later part of his career; his mark was on his generations of students, including Cecilia Kenyon, Kenneth N. Waltz, Sheldon Wolin, and W. Carey McWilliams Jr. Many others in other careers expressed their gratitude for his intellectual influence on them.

David's mother, Ewart Kellogg Lewis, was the scholar, by inclination, anyway. Unlike her husband, she came from an academic family. She was a graduate of the University of Wisconsin, also Phi Beta Kappa, having fled Wellesley College, and she held the PhD from the University of Wisconsin. She published *Medieval Political Ideas* (1954), a collection of critical translations and introductory essays of medieval philosophers and political theorists. She published no other scholarly works that I can find. Her reputation in medieval political theory survives.

She had no formal teaching career to speak of. Oberlin had, or was thought to have, a nepotism rule, so, other than casual employment in the history department, a post at Oberlin College was denied her. Neither she nor her husband was inclined to challenge this and, in any case, her employment at Oberlin ended after a squabble over the appointment of another faculty spouse. She did have an instructorship at Western Reserve University in Cleveland for three years.

She was an academic to the core, even though running the household fell to her. She taught her children to read early, and strongly encouraged David's native bookishness. When David was nine or ten years old he had an attack of polio, and, unrelated to this, a bone cyst in his thigh was discovered. He had a transplant of bone chips to cure the cyst, and as a consequence spent several weeks in, or mostly in, bed. Ewart taught him Latin. (He also took Latin in high school.) She also taught him to type properly.

David, born of two Phi Beta Kappa academics, was the eldest of three siblings. Being the eldest, and a little ungovernable, and being recognized from an early age as someone with intellectual curiosity and motivation, he was allowed to follow his own inclinations about his studies and activities.

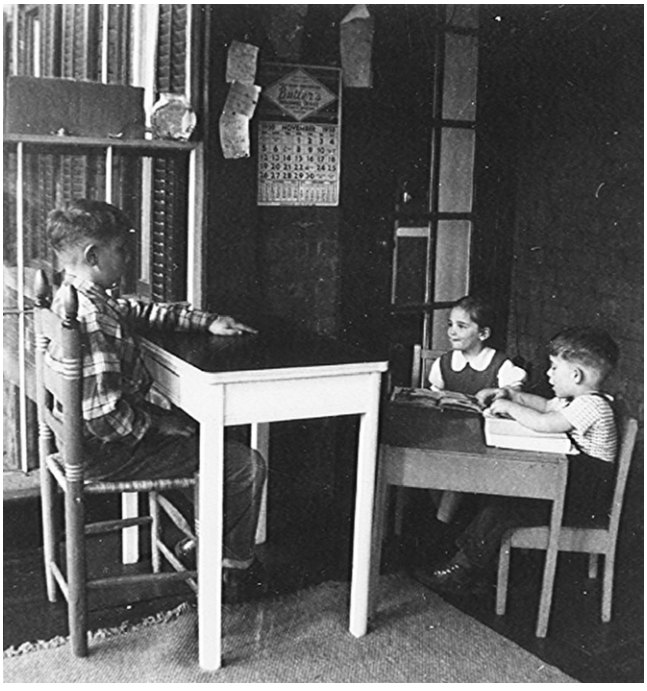

Figure 1.2 Photo by Ewart Lewis, November 1950.

The portion of this chapter dealing with David's childhood and early adolescence draws partly on Lewis family myth and folklore, but primarily on an autobiography he wrote, at the age of 14, in his next-to-last year of high school. It doesn't show much introspection: it has a lot of facts and family history in it. But it does describe his interests at various times. He, like most smart kids, read a lot and was interested in science. The autobiography has next to nothing in it about school friends, and most of the stories of family interactions are about his father. He was a solitary boy, planning and doing projects by himself, and reading. From what he says about various science projects his attention span appeared, even as a small child, to be unbounded. He wasn't unsocial but, if the autobiography is accurate, most of his interactions were with adults. There is only one mention of a friend of his own age.

It isn't as if David didn't care for his siblings, nor they for him. There is a photo of David from 1950, when he was nine years old, sitting in his father's study at their house, teaching school to his brother Donald, then five years old, and his sister Ellen, then three. They are listening raptly, their books open before them. The posture of David explaining something to an attentive audience will strike anybody who knew him as familiar (Figure 1.2).

For all practical purposes, David barely went to high school. Between the fall of 1954 and June of 1957, his high school years, he attended several courses at Oberlin, General Chemistry and Organic Chemistry among them, and took the exams and did the lab work. He had a chemistry lab in the basement of the Lewis house, where he did chemistry experiments and glassblowing. (And no, he never did nearly blow up the house.) One summer he worked on a project in a college lab, supervised by Professor Renfrow, in the Oberlin chemistry department. David Sanford remembers him from Oberlin chemistry classes as smarter and better prepared than any of the other students.[1]

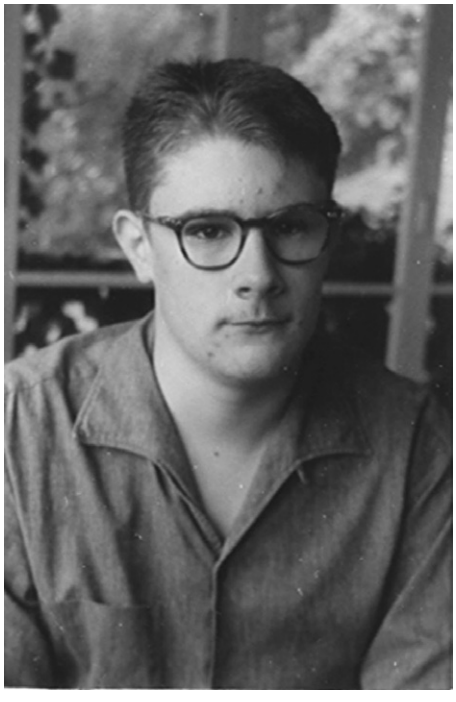

Figure 1.3 David Lewis at age 14. Photo by Ewart Lewis.

David also showed early signs of the highmindedness that characterized him for his entire life. In a draft of his essay to accompany his application to Swarthmore College, written in the spring of 1957, he says:[2]

> Last spring [of 1956], when a high school teacher was fired without reasons given, I was one of five students who drew up and circulated a petition asking the [Oberlin] Board of Education to give reasons. This petition, signed by about 60% of the High School students, was followed by a series of petitions and protests by teachers and citizens which finally resulted in a thorough investigation of the school situation by the Board of Education, and the replacement of the Superintendent of Schools by a new man who is initiating several much-needed reforms, I got very much interested in the whole situation and have been attending School board meetings regularly since then.

In the course of high school, his interests evolved and he continued to grow into the David we knew. Here is the last section of that autobiography: he was 14 when he wrote it, in 1955 [Figure 1.3], and there is no evidence whatever of ghostwriting (Ewart did type it) by either his mother or his father. David is uncharacteristically pompous, but the voice is his own.

> LOOKING AHEAD
>
> This, then, is the story up to now. But it is still incomplete. After all, one's first fourteen years are not the greater part of life; it is necessary to say something about the future. Moreover, this has been a record

primarily of events: I have not yet said much about what I think of it all. And these are important; for an event is almost meaningless, as I see it, in comparison with an idea.

To take first the matter of concrete plans for the future, I must begin by saying that I am not sure of any of it. I expect to finish high school in the next year, taking, perhaps, some courses at Oberlin College also. After that, I intend to enter some college; I do not know where. I would like to go to a serious college, preferably a small one, where I can devote my time to work without being made to seem abnormal by doing so. I hope to get a complete liberal education, not just a technical one. It is for this reason that I am doing so much college work now; the programs for one majoring in a technical field in college are all too often so time-consuming that I would not be able to work on anything else. I expect to concentrate on technical studies in graduate school, but in college I want some freedom in arranging my schedule. I have been starting recently to consider the choice of a college, but this has been very difficult. The only place that seems to meet my requirements is Oberlin, and my parents and I agree that I should go away from home for college.

I am not sure what I want to study. Until very recently I expected to concentrate in chemistry, but I am losing some of my interest in it now. I do not know whether I am actually becoming tired of it simply because I have been concentrating on it so heavily for the last three years, or whether it is really not my proper field. Of course, it may also be that I am simply reacting to the very dull lectures which I hear at my chemistry class at the college.

I have many other things besides chemistry which I am interested in. I particularly like mathematics. Its logic, in particular, appeals to me. I do not like the mechanical processes where one puts in numbers and "turns the crank" to find a solution, nor do I like the problems of applied mathematics. But the basic concepts, the logic, the reaching of conclusions from reasoning alone, these are for me. I am also interested in some of the ideas of philosophy, metaphysics especially, although I have never yet made a detailed study of them. I have done some thinking of my own along these lines, and, of course, my results turn out to have been around for centuries.

I am interested, though not quite so much, in several other subjects. For instance, during my freshman year in high school I became very much interested in Latin and in the history of the Romans. I also am interested in other sciences, with the exception of biology, which leaves me quite bored. Probably the reason for this is that biology seems to me to be just a jumble of dull information, whereas the other sciences are logical structures.

After college I do not know just what I want to do. If I specialize in science, I will be able to get all sorts of industrial jobs. But this does not appeal to me. It is all a matter of intensely practical, routine work. My interest is not here so much as it is in the theory. Perhaps the best thing would be to enter the field of college teaching. Here I could work on any project I pleased. I would also be with people of my own sort. If I decide to work in some other field, I can say nothing of what I would be doing.

And now for the ideas I have been able to gather. My philosophy is, more than anything else, philosophy in the literal sense, love of knowledge; but not just knowledge; of understanding the realities of the universe, the reasons for everything. For I feel that there must be a cause for everything, that the past determines the future, that there must be certain natural laws, or perhaps only one, such that it would be possible to deduce all the features of the universe from it alone. This is a scientist's way of looking at the universe; I do not deny that there may be other ways which can reveal truths unknowable from the viewpoint of pure reason. Religion is such a way, so perhaps is art. My feeling about religion is that I cannot accept the elaborate system of details which an organized religion tends to build up, that it is in conflict with all reason. I do not find such a simple solution, though, to be the question of the existence of some kind of a God. My attitude is that it is impossible to prove or disprove the existence of God by logic. Indeed, not only impossible, but very foolish, as though I were to try to prove mathematically that my eyes are blue [they were]. The existence of God and the domain of logic are, I feel, absolutely separate. These are my views; I would not be so dogmatic as to say that there is any reason whatever to consider them correct.

I can see no other meaning in life except the gaining of knowledge; but this is rather meaningless, a rationalization of the fact that I have devoted myself so much to the gaining of knowledge, to the over-exclusion of other aspects of life. I can see that this is not desirable and I am trying to do something

about it, although it is a slow and rather difficult business. Nevertheless, I feel that I am making some progress.

I feel that the world is good, although it is sometimes hard to see. But on the whole, I think it is good. As for my feelings on the problems of the world, I am rather idealistic. I think this is right, but it puts me somewhat at a disadvantage in practical affairs.

* * *

These are the events and the ideas of my life until now; it remains for the reader to judge them.

The End

David finished his senior year of high school but did not get a diploma: a civics requirement or something had not been met. So he was not a high school graduate, and thus was barred from serving in the Ohio National Guard (not that he wanted to). He did get a Merit Scholarship. Shortly before he turned 16, in September of 1957, he began his freshman year at Swarthmore College.

1.2 Swarthmore: The First Two Years

David had been solitary, though apparently not lonely, as a child. At Swarthmore he made friends, pretty much instantaneously. Several of these friendships endured for the rest of his life. Among his contemporaries were many future philosophers: among them, Allan Gibbard, Gil Harman and Peter Unger, and the linguist Barbara Hall, later Partee. He quickly became a part of the Swarthmore folkie scene.

He started out with the intention of majoring in chemistry, but took philosophy classes as well: in his sophomore year, he took Intro to Philosophy and Symbolic Logic. Most of his grades were As, but he did get some Bs in science courses.

Between his sophomore and junior years, the year he turned 18, the family spent a year at Oxford University. This was the year 1959–60. John had a research fellowship; though no publications followed upon it. He drove his new Jaguar sedan every day from their house in Wheatley to St Catherine's Society, which was not yet a college. He wore tweeds and a "Toad of Toad Hall" cloth cap. Ewart didn't have any college appointment. She read and conversed widely, and had a big part in the family excursions to various places in England and France, but her role was at home.

1.3 Oxford

David took a break from chemistry and physics. He did philosophy. He was treated by his father's college, St Catherine's Society (as it then was), as an undergraduate student, and assigned to the college philosophy tutor, John Simopoulos, who took one look at him and handed him off to Iris Murdoch. She was then a philosophy tutor at St Anne's College. He wrote weekly papers for her and discussed them in the one-on-one tutorials which were than a part of an Oxford undergraduate's study. He also attended lectures by, among others, Grice, Strawson, Ryle, and J.L. Austin. Despite repeated exposure to the ordinary-language culture of Oxford at the time, David never caught the disease.

Murdoch wrote letters of recommendation for David. Here is what she said about him (she sent him this letter also):

ST ANNE'S COLLEGE
OXFORD
Telephone 57417

June 15 1960

Mr David Lewis has worked with me on moral philosophy for the best part of three terms during his stay in Oxford. About half of this time was spent on studying traditional philosophers (Hume, Kant, also Mill, Moore and others) and the other half on looking at contemporary theories, especially in relation to freedom, and in discussing versions of Mr Lewis' own ideas on the latter subject. There is no doubt that Mr Lewis is a very gifted young man indeed and has a true talent for philosophy. Were he to remain in that subject (which unfortunately appears to be unlikely) I should advise him to forget about his own theories for a while and spend time grappling with difficult and unfamiliar ideas in the great philosophers of the past. This however is to say no more than that Mr Lewis is young and (naturally) still in need of education. His own ideas in fact are both interesting and original. His work has been excellent, certainly "alpha" throughout.

Iris Murdoch
Fellow and Tutor

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And here is a remark she made in a letter to him, about graduate school letters of reference she had been doing for him (reprinted by kind permission of the Estate of Iris Murdoch):

St Anne's College
Oxford
Nov 23 1961

Dear David,
Thanks for your letter [there is no copy of this letter in David's files]. I've sent off the two forms. (How is your emotional maturity nowadays? I found it hard to think of a mark for that.) I will do the other two testimonials very soon. I think I could commend Black & Malcolm for my (indirect) knowledge of them. Mrs Foot lately has had a very lively & profitable sojourn at Cornell. Anyway, best of wishes. I see you don't list Yale, rightly, I'm sure. Bulldog, bulldog etc.

Yours,
Iris

(Reprinted by kind permission of Iris Murdoch.)

1.4 Swarthmore: Second Two Years

David returned to Swarthmore as a philosophy major. (Swarthmore wouldn't let him do philosophy as a related minor along with a science major.) He did take advanced calculus, and two more physics courses, and he attended a course in linguistics at Penn with Henry Hiz. But it was otherwise all philosophy. He either took or sat in on most of the courses offered by the small philosophy department at Swarthmore. Jerry Shaffer was among David's favorite teachers. David continued to work in moral philosophy: a research project, supervised by Monroe Beardsley, resulted in *Can Ethics be Reasonable?*, a 40-page essay, typed, single-spaced, with practically no margins. (David kept a copy, which I have.) The typewriter is the one he used for the rest of his life.

In the essay he says that "personality is the sum of actual and potential behavior…" most of which patterns of behavior are "ideal forms of life." Ethical thought consists in "compositing,

presenting, elaborating, and relating these ideal forms of life."[3] To this view he adds: "To this model must be added social morality, a law-like system of regulating overt acts so as to reconcile conflicting interests of different people."[4] He concludes the essay thus:

> To summarise: "good," "right," "ought," "should," "duty," "obligation," "fortunate," "harm," "benefit," "desirable," "wicked," "immoral," "choiceworthy," (if there is any such word) etc. get their meaning among some or all of the following components:
>
> 1. Expression of decision; "internal motivation."
> 2. A small range of purely descriptive meanings, logically independent of attitude or conduct.
> 3. In the case of "good" and perhaps "right" a large range of attributive descriptive meaning, at least sometimes with dependence on attitude and conduct on pain of irony or inappropriateness, if not of falsehood.
> 4. To go proxy for reasons within a context of purpose. Perhaps with the implication on pain of irony or inappropriateness that the purpose is itself supported by empathically understood ideals.
> 5. To go proxy for reasons, empathically understood ideals, which for some reason there is no need to detail. Some of these words are limited to going proxy for only certain classes of ideals. If these words have a purely ethical sense, this is it.[5]

He acknowledges the strong influence of several of Murdoch's published works in philosophy on the essay.

He graduated from Swarthmore in 1962, with high honors in philosophy and election to Phi Beta Kappa.

1.5 The Hudson Institute

Between 1962 and 1975, David was a part-time member of staff at the Hudson Institute, a policy think tank then concerned with issues in strategy and deterrence and nuclear weapons policy. He worked on research assignments, often with Herman Kahn, then Hudson's director, and with Max Singer. Hudson now has the reputation of being a conservative organization; then it was more concerned with the technical aspects of nuclear weapons, disarmament policy issues, and Kahn's interest in what Kahn called "futurology." David developed an interest in game theory as a result of the Hudson work.

1.6 Graduate School: Australia I, Jack Smart

David arrived at Harvard in 1962, bringing with him his native mind–body identity theory, space–time four-dimensionalism, his Humeanism about causation, his Rylean behaviorism, his immunity to ordinary-language philosophy, and his disdain for political correctness. In the fall of 1963 he attended a seminar given by J.J.C. Smart, then visiting Harvard from Adelaide, on "Philosophical Problems of Space and Time." This was the beginning of a friendship that lasted nearly 40 years, until David's death in 2001 (Figure 1.4). They conversed about philosophy and exchanged letters on philosophy.

Jack invited David to give the Gavin David Young lectures at Adelaide University in August of 1971.

At Harvard, David worked with W.V. Quine and with Hilary Putnam, going to MIT for Putnam's seminars before Putnam moved to Harvard. He also went to linguistics seminars at MIT. He admired

Figure 1.4 David Lewis and Jack Smart. Belcunda, South Australia, August 1971. © Stephanie Lewis.

Quine's philosophical style and prose style as well; David learned to write, and speak, clearly and concisely about even the most technical matters in philosophy. He used to quote C.G. Hempel with approval: "it adds neither to the rigor of the argument nor the clarity of the exposition to say that a man *M* crossed the street *S*."

David's thesis, *Conventions of Language*, grew out of his interest in language, encouraged by Quine, and also out of David's own continuing interest in game theory. Metaphysics was not yet at the center of his interests. The game theory aspects of his theory of convention owed a lot to his Hudson Institute work and to conversations with Thomas Schelling. Schelling's prose style, in *The Strategy of Conflict* (1960), also served as a model for David's writing.

1.7 UCLA

David and I went to UCLA in 1966, he as an assistant professor and me as a graduate student in philosophy. He got interested in formal semantics, and had many discussions with Richard Montague and with Barbara Hall Partee. David went to Montague's seminars on formal semantics. He and Hans Kamp had a lot of discussion on the subject, and to a lesser extent David conversed with David Kaplan as well. And all the while he wrote and he wrote and he wrote.

1.8 Australia II: David Armstrong

In 1968 David Armstrong was visiting at Stanford. He and David Lewis met and talked. This began a friendship and a philosophical interchange, carried on in letters and conversations, for the rest of David's life.

1.9 Australia III: The First Visit

When we arrived in Sydney in July of 1971, we stayed for several days with David Armstrong and his first wife, Madeleine. This was the beginning of the philosophical conversations between the two Davids.

In August of 1971 David delivered the Gavin David Young lectures at Adelaide University. The topic was time travel. This was the first of, if I have counted right, 26 visits. This was for two months, and gave David the chance to go around to most of the philosophy departments at Australian universities – we missed Perth – and give talks, go to talks, and get to know people. And he wrote and he wrote and he wrote.

The effect on David cannot be overstated. He found many friends, and many, many opportunities to discuss matters of common interest. And he enjoyed himself, not least because he didn't have any teaching or departmental responsibilities. Like the rest of his Australia trips, it amounted to study leave.

1.10 Princeton

David arrived at Princeton in the fall of 1971, where he taught for the rest of his life. This essay looks at David's early life, and thus doesn't say much of anything about his Princeton career. It is worth mentioning that he had over 30 PhD students, either entirely or partly under his supervision, many of whom now ornament the profession.

1.11 Australia IV: 1976

David made his second visit to Australia in July and August of 1976. David and Madeleine Armstrong invited us to spend a weekend with them at Glenogil, the house of their friends Pat and Rosemary Ryan, near Avenel, Victoria. The two Davids walked, and talked, for a large part of the daylight hours of two days. This visit firmly established the friendship between the two Davids (Figure 1.5). They never agreed about much: DKL was by then a modal realist, DMA had no use at all for more than one possible world. They disagreed fundamentally about universals, and about properties. But they never stopped talking about philosophy. The Lewis–Armstrong correspondence is by far the longest, and richest, and most detailed of all of David Lewis's correspondences.

As a result of the Australia experience, which continued until 2001, three months before he died, David became a lot less solitary, both socially and intellectually. He learned how to have (or, better, became accustomed to having) sustained philosophical discussions: on walks, in seminars, at people's houses, at parties, in the department tea room, and in the pub. This didn't result in a lot of agreement, but it gave all parties a chance to articulate and refine their positions.

And he wrote letters, from his early college time until three days before he died. He never used email, so there are no ephemera. He kept the letters he received, and he nearly always kept copies of what he wrote. The archive of his correspondence includes many thousands of philosophical letters, and many threads of philosophical discussion. These letters, many of them, also portray friendships.

David was, from his earliest childhood, capable of sustained attention to what interested him, and as he grew up his writing style developed into the lucid and witty prose we know. What Australia, and the Australians, did for him was to take him out of himself and make him into a member of a community (Figure 1.6).

Figure 1.5 The Two Davids, Glenogil Station, Victoria. August 1976. © Stephanie Lewis.

Figure 1.6 North Queensland, 1990. © Stephanie Lewis.

Acknowledgments

Thanks are due to many people for reminiscences, discussion and comments, especially to John Cooper, Allan Gibbard, Wendy Goble, Alan Hájek, David's brother Don Lewis, his sister Ellen Lewis, Barbara Hall Partee, David Sanford, and to Jonathan Schaffer. David's Swarthmore College transcript, along with copies of parts of his college applications, exist, and provided me with insight into David's character and personality at a time before I knew him.

Notes

1 Pers. comm. 2012.
2 This draft, along with his Swarthmore College transcript, was filed away in his "Swarthmore" folder. David never threw away a piece of paper in his life if he could help it. Well, hardly ever.
3 Summary of § 2.1, p.1.
4 Summary of §3.1, p.1.
5 Conclusion of the essay, §3.5, p. 38.

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2

Counterparts of States of Affairs[1]

DAVID LEWIS

Counterpart theory affords an especially flexible form of essentialism. By considering the very same thing under different, equally legitimate counterpart relations, we can endow it with different essences and different potentialities. By endowing ordinary things with peculiar essences, we could provide truthmakers for intrinsic predications (Lewis, 2003). By endowing the entire world with peculiar essences, we could provide truthmakers for negative existential propositions (Rosen and Lewis, 2003). Thus we avoid the need for states of affairs or nontransferable tropes as truthmakers. And a good thing too, I used to think, because these alleged entities are involved in *prima facie* mysterious necessary connections between distinct existences.

But the same technique for endowing things with tailor-made essences by suitable choice of a counterpart relation can be applied also to states of affairs themselves or to tropes. When we do, we render the necessary connections unmysterious. So I've come around to thinking that a theory of states of affairs or tropes, assisted by flexible counterpart theory, is after all another entirely satisfactory way to provide truthmakers.

States of affairs are somehow constructed from particular things and the properties they instantiate. A familiar argument says that this construction must be neither mereological nor set-theoretical: else the state of affairs will exist if the thing and the property do, never mind whether the thing instantiates the property, so the state of affairs is not a truthmaker for the proposition that the thing instantiates the property. If so, the need for some third novel sort of construction is a further drawback of a theory of states of affairs. However, that familiar argument rests on a thesis of mereological or set-theoretical essentialism. If essences can be tailor-made to suit our purposes, we need not be saddled with *any* unwelcome sort of essentialism.

The thesis of mereological essentialism says that it is essential to something that it has exactly the parts that it actually has; and conversely that it is essential to the parts that they compose exactly the mereological sum that they actually do. So if a train, say the 15:40 from Paddington yesterday, consists of two carriages, DMBS1234 and DTS6789, then we have a puzzle. The sum DMBS1234 + DTS6789 seems to be necessarily composed of DMBS1234 and DTS6789; yet the train

A Companion to David Lewis, First Edition. Edited by Barry Loewer and Jonathan Schaffer.
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could very easily have been composed of different carriages, since carriages are interchangeable and are routinely taken out of service for repairs; and yet the train *is* the sum! Counterpart theory to the rescue. There's one legitimate counterpart relation that validates mereological essentialism: it obeys the rule that the counterpart of a sum is the sum of the counterparts of the parts; so for instance the counterpart of DMBS1234 + DTS6789 is the sum of the counterparts of the carriages DMBS1234 and DTS6789, never mind whether those counterpart carriages are coupled together into a train. And there's another equally legitimate counterpart relation on which the counterpart of yesterday's 15:40 from Paddington is yesterday's 15:40 from (the counterpart of) Paddington, never mind what carriages it consists of. The train *is* the sum. Yet if we call it a sum, that tends to evoke the first of these counterpart relations, while if we call it a train, that tends to evoke the second. We could put it this way: this one thing qua sum has one essence, the same thing qua train has another. Qua sum it essentially consists of just these carriages, qua train not.

Much the same can be said of a mereologically constructed state of affairs: a thing-plus-property sum such that the thing instantiates the property. It is the state of affairs *Fa* of *a*'s having *F*; it is the sum $a + F$. Calling this one thing a sum evokes one counterpart relation, one that validates mereological essentialism. Calling the same thing a state of affairs evokes another counterpart relation, one that doesn't validate mereological essentialism, but does obey the rule that any counterpart of a state of affairs must be a state of affairs. (Unlike the train-counterpart relation, it does validate one direction of mereological essentialism. If *Fa* is mereologically composed of *F* and *a*, any state-of-affairs counterpart of *Fa* must be mereologically composed of *F* – or perhaps a counterpart of *F* – and a counterpart of *a*.) Here in this world we have one thing which is *Fa* and $a + F$. Off in some other world we have a counterpart a' of *a*, and we again have property *F* (or maybe we have a counterpart of *F*); but a' doesn't instantiate *F*, so the sum $a' + F$ is not a state of affairs. Our thisworldly state of affairs/sum has $a' + F$ for a sum-counterpart, but not for a state-of-affairs-counterpart. Qua sum, it is essentially the sum of *a* and *F*, but not essentially a state of affairs, and therefore unfit to serve as a truthmaker for the proposition that *a* has *F*. Qua state of affairs, this same entity *is* essentially a state of affairs, and therefore a truthmaker for the proposition that *a* has *F*.

If we prefer to construct states of affairs set-theoretically, say as thing–property ordered pairs such that the thing instantiates the property, exactly the same treatment applies. We have one legitimate counterpart relation that validates both directions of set-theoretical essentialism: any counterpart of the pair of *a* and *F* is a pair of a counterpart of *a* and a counterpart of *F*, and conversely, never mind whether the thing instantiates the property. The pair qua pair is essentially the pair of *a* and *F*, but not essentially a state of affairs, and therefore unfit to serve as a truthmaker. We have another legitimate counterpart relation which validates only one direction of set-theoretical essentialism, but under which any counterpart of a state of affairs must be a state of affairs. The state-of-affairs-counterpart of *Fa* must be a pair-counterpart of the pair of *a* and *F*, but a pair-counterpart of the pair is a state-of-affairs-counterpart of *Fa* only if it is a state of affairs – that is, only if its first term instantiates its second. The state of affairs qua state of affairs is essentially a state of affairs, and so is a truthmaker for the proposition that *a* has *F*. The very same thing qua pair is not.

Suppose there really is some other kind of construction, neither mereological nor set-theoretical – symbolize it by *. We could say that a state of affairs *Fa* is a *-structure ($a * F$) such that *a* instantiates *F*. It's plausible that, despite our new kind of construction, the situation is the same again. Qua *-structure, ($a * F$) is essentially *-constructed from *a* and *F*, but not essentially a state of affairs (unless for some reason *-construction only works when the first term instantiates the second). Qua state of affairs, *Fa* is essentially a state of affairs, and (if it has essentially the *-constituents *a* and *F*) it is a suitable truthmaker for the proposition that *a* has *F*. And yet ($a * F$) is the very same thing as *Fa*.