Recent work in event semantics sheds new light on the *by* locution, and one analysis can be shown to imply a vindication of the Anscombe thesis, according to which the *by* locution is about one event under two descriptions. The key element in this analysis is that the two descriptions do not correspond one-to-one to the two predicates on either side of *by*; rather, one corresponds to the merge of the two individual predicates. The central arguments against the thesis, while relevant and strong given the assumptions behind them, can now be seen to rely on a fallacious assumption.

The Anscombe thesis (aka the Anscombe-Davidson or the Davidson-Anscombe thesis) has it that if you signal by whistling, there is one event, act, or action which is both a signalling and a whistling. In Anscombe’s words (1957: 46), there is one action with two descriptions; in Davidson’s (1963: 686), you do one thing of which two descriptions are given. In the formulation of Wilson and Shpall (2012),

**The Davidson/Anscombe thesis**

(1) If a person F-s by G-ing, then her act of F-ing = her act of G-ing.

The large literature on the thesis reflects that it has had considerable appeal but also that there are rather strong reasons for rejecting it. I want to argue, however, that in the light of recent work in event semantics, it is possible to distinguish two versions of the thesis, the traditional version and a novel one, and that central counterarguments only apply to the former. I will also argue that the novel version of the thesis is preferable on independent grounds.

My aim is thus to vindicate the Anscombe(-Davidson) thesis, if not in the form of (1), which states an identity between an F act and a G act. Identity remains essential, but in the version I will be defending, it is to hold between an F-by-G-ing act and a G act, so that the counterpart to (1) would be (2):

(2) If a person Fs by G-ing, then her act of [F-by-G-ing]-ing = her act of G-ing.

The unifying notion is that one event satisfies two different descriptions. But while the two descriptions have traditionally been taken to be the predicate F in the matrix clause and the predicate G in the *by* clause, I will argue that the two relevant event descriptions in the sentence are the predicates F-by-G-ing and G. In fact, I will argue that F is not an event description at all, so that the traditional conception of the thesis rests on a fallacious assumption.

(3) is a fairly precise formulation of what I will be referring to as the A(nscombe-) D(avidson) thesis as it has traditionally been conceived:

(3) **AD thesis classic version**

A sentence $x \phi$-s by $\psi$-ing is true only if there is one event which satisfies both $\psi$ and $\phi$.

By minimal contrast, the alternative conception I propose is (4):

(4) **AD thesis modern version**

A sentence $x \phi$-s by $\psi$-ing is true only if there is one event which satisfies both $\psi$ and $\phi$ by $\psi$-ing.
While maintaining the intuition behind the original thesis, the move from (3) to (4) impregnates it against central counterarguments. Building on Danto (1965), Goldman (1970), Bennett (1994) and Sæbø (2016), I will first motivate the move from (3) to (4), providing evidence that $\phi$ is a higher-level act type in the sense of Löbner (2018), more specifically, that it is not an act description but an operator over act descriptions, and arguing that by $\psi$ is a device for saturating the argument slot of such operators. Then, I will show how this move enables us to steer clear of the key reasons for rejecting the AD thesis, countering, in turn, the argument from asymmetry (Goldman 1971), the argument from time (Davis 1970), the argument from agency, and an argument from sum events (Schnieder 2009).