CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHridge

CRITERIA, NECESSITY, AND CONCEPTUAL CHANGE:

A graduate project submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Philosophy

by

John Leonard Schroeder

January, 1973
The graduate project of John Leonard Schroeder is approved.

Associate Professor Daniel Sedey

Professor John Turk Saunders,
Committee Chairman

California State University, Northridge
January, 1973
ABSTRACT

CRITERIA, NECESSITY, AND CONCEPTUAL CHANGE

by

John Leonard Schroeder

Master of Arts in Philosophy

January, 1973

This paper is a defense of Wittgenstein's notion of criteria, as developed by P. F. Strawson in his work *Individuals*. The Wittgensteinian approach is a direct challenge to empiricist canons of evidence, for it brings out the non-inductive evidence implicit in language that justifies our use of descriptive terms. Strawson displays the behavioral criteria that warrant the ascription of psychological states to others by describing the logical functioning of mental language. This view sees skeptical challenges as self-defeating, since such challenges tacitly accept, but covertly reject, the conceptual matrix in which they are framed.
Section I seeks to clarify the concept of criteria by making a distinction between normic and analytic criteria. I argue that the physical criteria for psychological states are properly conceived of as normic rather than analytic. The conflation of these two types of criteria, together with empiricist principles about evidence, has engendered several recent attacks on Strawson's position.

Section II considers arguments which seek to show that Strawson's position depends upon some principle of verifiability which renders some general synthetic statements necessary. I argue that the concept of normic criteria obviates the need for a verifiability principle, and that the criteriological position is in no way dependent on the necessary truth of any general synthetic propositions.

Section III deals with several objections to Strawson's strategy which seek to show that the position is committed to absurd consequences. These objections, I argue, fail either because they are internally incoherent or because they commit the fallacy of ignoratio elenchi.

Section IV examines an argument to the effect that on the criteriological position linguistic evo-
olution is impossible. I maintain that Strawson's view is compatible with both conceptual change and scientific investigation, since the notion of normic criteria does not involve according necessary status to any synthetic propositions. A brief examination of the mechanisms of conceptual evolution concludes the paper.
"So you are saying that human agreement decides what is true and false?"—It is what human beings say that is true and false; and they agree in the language they use. That is not agreement in opinions but in form of life.

—Philosophical Investigations #241

In the Philosophical Investigations, Wittgenstein laid the foundations for what is now sometimes called the criteriological position. The central notion to which defenders of the criteriological view subscribe is that there is a sort of evidence, or ground, that is implicit in our language, and which may be employed to parry skeptical attacks. Such evidence is held to be non-inductive since it rests on the meanings of terms alone, rather than on empirical correlations. Following somewhat in Wittgenstein's footsteps, P. F. Strawson has initiated a program which he calls "descriptive metaphysics."\(^1\) Strawson views skeptical questions as self-defeating, since such questions are couched in a conceptual structure that is covertly repudiated. Strawson describes the logical functioning of certain clusters of concepts in the language to bring out the logically adequate criteria for making descriptive
statements. With regard to the other-minds issue, Strawson brings out the behavioral criteria that warrant the ascription of psychological states to others. I shall here consider several attacks on the strategy Strawson has applied to the philosophical problem of other minds. All of these criticisms, I believe, stem from a fundamental misunderstanding of the criteriological position. I shall endeavor in this paper to defend Strawson's position from these attacks and to expose the misunderstanding that engenders them.

I

Criteria and Symptoms

Let us first give a brief sketch of the criteriological position, which will be fleshed out in more detail as we consider criticisms of it. The basic distinction that the criteriological view rests on is one between two kinds of evidence. In the Blue Book, Wittgenstein introduced two technical terms to demarcate the boundaries of the distinction between these kinds of evidence:

To the question "How do you know that so-and-so is the case?", we sometimes answer by giving 'criteria' and sometimes by giving 'symptoms'. . . I call "symptom" a phenomenon of which experience has taught us that it coincided, in some way or other, with the phenomenon which is our defining criterion.
The difference between criteria and symptoms may be illustrated in this way: Consider, for example, what sorts of evidence we might obtain that would warrant an assertion that another person has a fever. Suppose that medical science discovers that there are correlations between fever and, say, an increase in the production of certain blood cells, or, perhaps, a variation in brain-wave patterns. In virtue of these correlations, a physician might be justified in saying that someone has a fever on the basis of a blood chemistry analysis or an electroencephalograph recording. This sort of evidence is symptomatic, for it derives essentially from our discovery of the existence of empirical correlations.

Criterial evidence, on the other hand, is based solely on the meanings of descriptive terms. For example, the meaning of 'fever' is such that if one sees that a person is behaving in certain ways, (e.g., sweating profusely, calling out for water, having sudden chills, etc.), then on this basis alone (there being no evidence to the contrary) one is justified in saying that the person has a fever. Criterial evidence is *prima facie*, or initial, evidence, for it may be weakened or strengthened by additional considerations. We may observe that someone is behaving in a way that is
criterial for his having a fever, but if we learn that he is practicing for a stage play, we may then have some evidence to the contrary that might well warrant our denial that the person has a fever. To check this out, we might feel the person's forehead and be prompted to say 'He's burning up' or 'He's cool as a cucumber'. Thus body temperature is a criterion for fever. The invention of the thermometer has so greatly enhanced our precision in determining body temperature that, by now, thermometer readings above 99.6°F are criterial for fever.

One might be inclined to say that according to the distinction between criteria and symptoms, a thermometer reading would seem to be a symptom rather than a criterion for fever. The answer to this is that there is a fluctuation in criteria and symptoms, which varies with scientific knowledge and our forms of life. As Wittgenstein pointed out, "what to-day counts as an observed concomitant of a phenomenon will to-morrow be used to define it." This fluctuation between criteria and symptoms will be discussed in the later portions of this paper, but the important point in all of this is that criterial evidence counts for the application of a descriptive term entirely in virtue of the meaning of the term, and not in virtue of our
having discovered empirical correlations.

Symptomatic evidence, it is plain to see, is not conclusive. While it may be that an analysis of someone's blood chemistry provides a ground for saying that he has a fever, it remains logically possible that the person does not have a fever. Criterial evidence shares this characteristic with symptomatic evidence. For example, even though one's body temperature is 105°F, it is quite possible that one does not have a fever. It is entirely possible that someone might consistently have a body temperature of 105°F and behave like those who have "normal" body temperatures with no apparent ill effects. This, however, would have to be the exception rather than the rule, or our use of the term 'fever' would change. Thus, the occurrence of a criterion does not logically entail the existence of that for which it is criterial.

We shall differentiate between normic and analytic criteria. Any statement which affirms the occurrence of phenomena that are analytically criterial for the application of a descriptive term logically entails a statement which affirms the existence of that for which the phenomena are criterial. For example, the statement 'J. S. is a male parent' logically implies the statement 'J. S. is a father'. As to normic criteria, suppose
A's are normically criterial for B's. Then, 'S knows that A occurs and S has no reason to doubt the occurrence of B' entails 'S has reason to accept the existence of B'. Note that it is the latter statement that is implied by the former, not the following: 'B occurs'. For example, 'S knows that this human-like body is emitting screams and has just been penetrated by a knife, and S has no reason to doubt that this is the body of a person in pain' entails 'S has reason to think that this is the body of a person in pain'. Thus distinguished, "The physical criteria for psychological states are always normic and never analytic."^5

One of the main problem areas in the other-minds issue that the defender of the criteriological position seeks to clarify is the nature of the relationship between behavior (someone holding his jaw, groaning, rocking back and forth, etc.) and a psychological state (toothache).^6 According to the notion of criteria, as developed in this paper, the relationship is not to be characterized by reference to analytic criteria. If it were to be characterized in this way, the criteriologist would be committed to a naive behavioristic position for which it seems there is little defense. Since it remains logically possible that a person is behaving in a way that is criterial for the attribution
of a psychological state to him and yet not be in that psychological state, the notion of analytic criteria will not do. But neither is the relationship to be explained with reference to a connection between inductive evidence and psychological states. For the criteriologist wants to insist on a conceptual necessity that attaches to criterial evidence but not to mere signs (symptoms). The conceptual necessity that attaches to criterial evidence derives from word meanings alone and does not rest on empirical correlations.

This aspect of criteria has been aptly characterized by David Pears as "conditional necessity." The idea is that given the meaning of the term 'toothache', for example, the behavior that is criterial for that state necessarily counts as at least prima facie evidence for the state. The criteriologist argues that criterial evidence warrants the attribution of psychological predicates to other persons, in the absence of any evidence to the contrary. Although no statement describing behavior logically entails a statement affirming a psychological state, the lack of deductive certainty about these matters need not worry us: the logical possibility of error is not, by itself, a reason to the contrary.

It is at this point that the notion of criteria
has been most susceptible to misunderstanding. Critics of the criteriological position have unwittingly tended to assimilate analytic and normic criteria, thinking that some synthetic statement such as 'In most cases, pain behavior is accompanied by pain' must, on the criteriological view, be accorded necessary status. This tendency has been strengthened by some defenders of the criteriological view in their attempts to clarify the difficult notion of criteria. On my understanding of the criteriological position, however, synthetic statements asserting correlations between behavior and psychological states are not to be accorded necessary status, though one may have justification for asserting them to be synthetically true.

II

Criteria and Necessity

A typical example of the confusion I am trying to characterize appears in Barry Stroud's article "Transcendental Arguments." Stroud charges that the position taken by Strawson regarding skepticism about other minds presupposes some version of the verification principle. According to Stroud, the version of the verification principle that Strawson's argument rests on is that

... my possession of 'logically adequate criteria' for the other-ascription of a particular
psychological state implies that it is possible for me to know certain conditions to be fulfilled, the fulfillment of which logically implies that some particular person other than myself is in that state or that he is not. 9

"Without this principle," Stroud maintains, "Strawson's argument would have no force; but with this principle, the skeptic is directly and conclusively refuted, and there is no need to go through an indirect or transcendental argument to expose his mistakes." 10 Stroud himself impugns the viability of such a principle, but he apparently holds that if Strawson's argument is thought of as having any force at all against the skeptic, such a principle must either be a suppressed premise of that argument or an explanation of the notion of criteria.

Now I will not bother considering the viability of the principle with which Stroud would saddle Strawson, for I believe that Strawson's argument in no way depends on it. The criteriologist does not hold that criterial evidence must be conclusive evidence. As Aune and Saunders say, this seems to be a correct interpretation of Strawson's

... talk about "logically adequate criteria" as opposed to mere "signs": "logically adequate" does not mean "conclusive" but indicates that the evidential value of criterial evidence derives from the logical (conceptual) structure of the language and not from one's knowledge of empirical correlations: criteria are viewed as logically adequate evidence in contrast to empirically
adequate evidence, that is, as criteria in contrast to symptoms. 11

It seems that Stroud's criticism of Strawson derives from the tendency to assimilate analytic and normic criteria. Stroud apparently sees that Strawson's notion of criteria is not analytic in the sense we have explained, and he concludes that Strawson's argument must rely on a verification principle. But as I have argued, the relevant notion of criteria as normic rather than analytic obviates the need for such a principle. It seems clear that Stroud's principle of verification is not to be considered an acceptable explanation of Strawson's notion of criteria.

But neither is such a principle a suppressed premise of Strawson's argument. For, on the criteriological position, criterial evidence necessarily provides us with a warrant, not a guarantee, for asserting the existence of that for which it is criterial. The criteriologist holds that belief that others have consciousness is justified (not guaranteed), given that they behave in ways that are criterial for such an attribution and that there is no reason to suppose that such a belief is false. Arguments that the attribution of psychological states to others could be justified only if the logical possibility of error is excluded can get off the ground only if some arbitrary
and stipulative use of 'justification' is invoked.

Stroud goes on to argue against Strawson in a conventionalist vein. He argues that even if one grants that the notions of criterial evidence and conditional necessity adequately characterize the logic of our use of descriptive terms, there is no necessity that we speak a language at all:

But even if such conditionals are true, it is still open to the conventionalist to claim that no 'theoretical' justification has been given for our acceptance of the propositions the skeptic doubts or denies, since we could simply give up our ways of thinking and speaking (of which they are the necessary conditions) and adopt others (of which they are not.)\textsuperscript{12}

This objection may be taken in two ways. One way would be to understand the conventionalist as pointing out that we could give up that part of our language which involves ascriptions of psychological properties. This is true, of course, and we could commit suicide too. But this is no way to refute an argument. What is interesting, however, is the suggestion that we might give up our present conceptual system for ascribing psychological properties, with its attendant conditional necessities, and replace it with another conceptual system for ascribing psychological properties that does not contain these conditional necessities which underlie our repudiation of skepticism. Such a
suggestion sounds interesting, but the problem is that a change in the criteria will often involve a change in the meanings of terms. Stroud just assumes that we can talk in radically new ways and still be on the same subject. Adoption of a new conceptual system may amount to adoption of a new topic of discourse, but if so, this conventionalist line will not serve to undermine the criteriologist's critique of skepticism. As I see it, the burden of proof lies with the conventionalist to explain the conceptual scheme with which he would replace our ordinary scheme and to demonstrate that we would still be talking about the same subject.

Another tack has been taken by Hilary Putnam in "Brains and Behavior." Putnam's criticism of the criteriological position stems from the fact that it is not necessary that we learn the language we speak. While this seems paradoxical, sense can be given to such a position by arguing for the logical possibility of human beings being born fully acculturated, i.e., able to speak the adult language, having opinions on political issues, etc.

Putnam identifies the criteriological position with a species of logical behaviorism. Quite correctly he does not identify it with the thesis that 'pain' just means 'pain-behavior', etc.; i.e., the thesis that
talk of mental events is translatable into talk about overt behavior. Putnam holds that

... the original extreme thesis of logical behaviorism has been ... weakened to something like this: That there exist entailments between mind-statements and behavior-statements; entailments that are not, perhaps, analytic in the way in which 'All bachelors are unmarried' is analytic, but that nevertheless follow (in some sense) from the meanings of mind words. I shall call these analytic entailments.14

What Putnam wants to do is show that there is a possible world in which there is no correlation between pains and pain-behavior. He does this by engaging in a science-fiction account of worlds in which pains are related to responses (and to causes) in quite a different way than they are in our world. This, he thinks, will show the fallaciousness of the criteriological position. Putnam undertakes to conceive of a world in which all involuntary pain behavior is suppressed and, furthermore, there are not even pain reports.

I will call this world the 'X-world'. In the X-world we have to deal with super-super-spartans. These have been super-spartans for so long that they have begun to suppress even talk of pain. Of course, each individual X-worlder may have his private way of thinking about pain. He may even have the word 'pain' (as before, I assume that these beings are born fully acculturated). He may think to himself: 'This pain is intolerable. If it goes on one minute longer I shall scream. Oh No! I mustn't do that! That would disgrace my whole family. ...' But X-worlders do not even admit to having pains. They pretend not to even know either the word or the phenomenon to which it refers. In short, if pains are 'logical constructs of our behav-
ior", then our X-worlders behave so as not to have pains -- Only, of course they do have pains, and they know perfectly well that they have pains.\textsuperscript{15}

From this Putnam concludes that if the X-world fantasy is not in some way self-contradictory, logical behaviorism is a mistake, and the thesis about the existence of "analytic entailments" is false. Putnam argues that

Pains are responsible for certain kinds of behavior -- but only in the context of our beliefs, desires, ideological attitudes, and so forth. From the statement 'X has a pain' by itself no behavioral statement follows -- not even a behavioral statement with a 'normally' or a 'probably' in it.\textsuperscript{16}

Putnam sees his argument as counting against the thesis that (A) 'Necessarily, in most cases, pains are accompanied by pain-behavior', for in the X-world pains are never accompanied by pain-behavior. I think that Putnam is correct. If we accept the notion that humans might be born having mastery of a natural language, it seems Putnam's fantasy can be made out. While it is not made clear just what full-acculturation involves, I think that a criteriologist may grant the conceivability of such a world as Putnam imagines without giving up his position. Although the conceivability of an X-world does not count against the converse thesis (B) 'Necessarily, in most cases, pain-behavior is accompanied by pain', it is not incumbent upon the criteriologist to subscribe to either (A) or (B). If the
criteria for applying psychological predicates are conceived of as normic, what follows from this is not some such synthetic thesis that is somehow necessary, but rather that one may use non-inductive evidence to justify the application of psychological predicates. This justification may be so good as to warrant our assertion of general synthetic theses about the relationship between pains and pain behavior. But the fact remains that while criteriological evidence may support such synthetic claims, and although such evidence is not based on empirical correlations, the synthetic claim retains contingent status rather than being accorded necessary status.

The important issue in all of this seems to be the question as to why it is thought that the criteriological view requires some such synthetic propositions to be somehow necessary. The answer to this question may serve at least to clarify how the criteriological position is not to be interpreted. The tendency to conflate normic and analytic criteria is, I believe, based on the empiricist dogma that the only means for supporting a synthetic proposition not itself testified to by senses, memory, or introspection is through some form of inductive inference.

Since criterial evidence for a statement is dif-
ferent from evidence that essentially involves empirical correlations, it might be thought that the criteriological position must embrace the only alternative to inductive reasoning and accept the idea that behavior-statements entail mind-statements. This may explain why Stroud thought that Strawson's argument would have no force against the skeptic unless it presupposed some principle of verification that would make it possible for us to know the truth of some behavioral statements that entail the truth of some other-minds statements. This confusion over analytic and normic criteria may also explain why Putnam thought that his argument to the effect that pain statements do not logically imply pain-behavior statements was an argument against the criteriological position.

But the fact that arguments like those tendered by Putnam and Stroud are thought to bear against the criteriological position reveals a fundamental misunderstanding of the notion of criteria: a misunderstanding which is apparently based on an empiricist dogma. The criteriological position is a direct challenge to the Humean principle about the sources of a posteriori knowledge. The criteriologist argues that there is non-inductive empirical evidence which may justify a belief in the truth of some synthetic prop-
positions whose subject-matter transcends the realm of present sense and memory impressions.

The criteriological position is compatible with Putnam's X-world since what the X-world example shows is that the statement 'Most pains are accompanied by pain-behavior' is contingent. The criteriological position likewise affirms the contingency of such propositions while maintaining that criterial evidence may warrant the affirmation of the truth of such propositions.

III
Criteria and Translation

The tendency to assimilate analytic and normic criteria has produced an added dimension to the controversy over criteria. Some philosophers have sought to reduce the criteriological position to absurdity by deriving ridiculous consequences from it. A principal argument of this sort is to the effect that on the principles of his own position a criteriologist would be justified in believing in miracles, demons, and ghosts. Another argument has it that it follows from the criteriological position that conceptual change in language is impossible. Such consequences are just empirically false and any philosophical position that
embraces premises which entail them is not credible. It is my contention that if the criteriological position is taken as these critics picture it, they are surely right that the position is just an amalgam of bad linguistics and bad scientific method. However, I shall argue that the criteriological position can be interpreted in a way that is compatible with both scientific investigation and linguistic evolution.

One objection of the above sort has been developed by consideration of a case in which the predicate 'possessed by a demon' seems to commit us, on the criteriological view, to the existence of demons. This sort of criticism has been raised by Passmore and Rorty, but the clearest statement of it is found in Lycan's article "Noninductive Evidence: Recent Work on Wittgenstein's 'Criteria'."

Suppose that there is a tribe of natives which contains a very small percentage of epileptics. The normal natives, always having observed the odd but characteristic behavior of these aberrants, talk about them in terms of demon- possession. The predicate "possessed by a demon" is conventionally ascribed on the basis of the aberrant behavior, and the children of the tribe learn to use the predicate by having such behavior pointed out to them in ostensive definition. The connection with the behavior is the only meaning-rule they have for the expression "demon- possession." Etc., etc. Now, the objection goes, on the criteriological view we are forced to say that the epileptic behavior is the criterion of demon- possession. But, of course, the natives observations are laden with a false theory; we, who are not members of a primitive tribe, presum-
ably know quite well that there are no demons, and that the natives' cases of "demon-possession" are nothing but cases of (organically caused) epilepsy. Modus tollens, the criteriological view must contain an inadequacy. 20

This account faces a number of problems with respect to the question: How is the native language to be translated into English? We, who are not members of that "primitive" tribe, have the problem of providing an accurate translation of a term like 'guavagoy', which we notice the natives utter on those occasions when some member of the tribe has an epileptic fit. 21 If the only clue we have is observed behavior, how are we to discern, as the case is given, whether 'guavagoy' means 'possessed by a demon' or 'disease caused by the presence of white strangers' or 'epilepsy caused by demons' or even 'epilepsy'? 22

Lycan goes on to suggest that the case does not show that what the natives mean by 'demon-possession' is anything different from what we mean by 'epilepsy'. It seems that a difference in meaning could not be demonstrated due to Quine's principle of the indeterminacy of translation. Just as in Quine's example regarding 'Rabbit' and 'Gavagai', an English speaker might respond to 'Epilepsy?' in the same way under all stimulus conditions as a native might respond (in his language) to 'Guavagoy?'. If there were a difference
in meaning between the two terms, it would remain undetectable. The point is that from the information given in the case, we could not conclude that "the natives' observations are laden with a false theory."

If "the connection with the behavior is the only meaning rule they have" for the application of 'guavagoy', we could not discern any "theory-laden" uses whatsoever.

Let us press the point a bit harder by pointing out that this objection runs into the following dilemma: Whatever translation we accept for 'guavagoy', the case is either trivial or meaningless. 'Guavagoy' means the same as 'epilepsy' or it does not. If 'guavagoy' just means 'epilepsy', then for one to conclude that the criteriologist is forced to say that "epileptic behavior is the criterion of 'demon-possession'" is to say only that "epileptic behavior is the criterion of 'epilepsy'" which is surely trivial. That is, on this horn of the dilemma, the criteriologist accepts that epileptic behavior is criterial for the application of 'guavagoy', which is hardly an absurd consequence. If, on the other hand, 'guavagoy' means something other than 'epilepsy', then we do not know what it means. We do not know what it means because the connection with behavior is claimed to be the only meaning rule we have for the application of the term. The case is
therefore confused, since it purports to show that a native term is "laden with a false theory" but at the same time cuts off any way of knowing that the natives are committed to any theory at all.

There is another confusion in the case Lycan presents which is similar to one in an objection developed by John Passmore. Passmore presents an argument which could be used to support the claim that the criteriologists, as well as the natives, are committed to the existence of demons. By making an analogy with the paradigm case argument, Passmore argues that a child might learn the meaning of 'miracle' by reference to actual cases: when someone has a narrow escape from an accident, the child will be taught to describe it by the term 'miracle' and will at the same time learn that miracles involve supernatural intervention. "Similarly," he argues, "a person could learn the use of the phrase 'possessed by the devil' in a purely ostensive fashion. When he sees somebody behaving in a strange fashion he is told: that man is possessed by the devil."  

Someone could learn to use the predicate 'demon-possession' in just the way Passmore indicates, but that way is not a case of "purely ostensive" teaching. He learns to apply the predicate with reference to
actual cases of behavior, and "at the same time" he learns that 'demon-possession' involves demoniacal intervention. The point is that he does not learn the use of 'demon' ostensively. If we could learn the meaning of 'demon' in a purely ostensive fashion (as we learn the meaning of 'ball' or 'apple') there would be no scientific doubt that demons exist; just as there is no doubt about the existence of balls or apples.

Both the case Lycan presents and the case Passmore presents exhibit a similar confusion; the connection with observed behavior is thought of as the only meaning rule for the application of a descriptive term, while at the same time the descriptive term is used in a way that implies extra-behavioral characteristics. If, in the Lycan case, the connection with behavior is the only meaning rule the natives have for use of 'demon-possession', then that native expression just means 'epilepsy'. However if the native expression means something other than 'epilepsy', its application must be governed by some other meaning rule. Similarly, in Passmore's case, if the child learns to use the term 'miracle' purely ostensively, he learns to use the term in describing a narrow escape, or an unlikely recovery from an illness, etc. Passmore indicates that the child learns "at the same time" that miracles involve
supernatural intervention. But the term 'miracle' can only be used in this way if there is some other meaning rule that is learned at the same time, which further governs the use of the term. But this shows that the term is not learned "purely ostensively." These considerations go to show, I think, that neither case demonstrates that the criteriologist is committed to the existence of demons.

In spite of the foregoing, one might want to expand the demon-possession cases by arguing that the natives might display kinds of demon-belief-behavior other than their (putative) practice of attributing demon-possession to epileptics. If we suppose that they "scorn medicines and therapy and pay large sums of money to professional exorcists, etc.," it makes sense to say that the natives believe in the existence of demons. Thus it appears, from our point of view, that the natives are systematically deluded about the causes of "demon-possession" behavior. This does not show, however, that the natives are systematically deceived about the epileptics' fits; they are only ignorant of the causes of those epileptic fits.

In the natives' language, as well as in ours, certain kinds of behavior warrant the attribution of psychological states to others, but it does not follow from
this that the criteriologist is committed to one causal explanation or another of the psychological state, though he may well have a belief about this.

This point holds for our language as well, for although we are committed, on the criteriological view, to a particular belief about the causes of pain-behavior, the criteriologist holds only that behavior criterial for pain is a warrant for the application of the predicate; he is not committed to a belief that the pain was caused by, say, loud noises, electrical stimulation of the brain, antecedent psychogenic conditions, or intangible malevolent beings.

In view of the considerations developed above, it seems that the demon-possession case does not bear against the criteriological view. The absurd consequences that the criteriological position is supposed to be committed to in the case Lycan presents, are (1) epileptic behavior is, in the natives' language, the criterion of demon-possession, and (2) "necessarily, most instances of epileptic behavior are accompanied by actual cases of demon-possession." As for the first consequence, it does not seem absurd to say that epileptic behavior is the criterion (in the natives' language) for demon-possession. This is especially apparent if the best translation we can get for
'demon-possessioin' is 'epilepsy'. Even if we construe 'demon-possessioin' to mean 'epilepsy caused by demons', I think the criteriologist can sensibly hold out for epileptic behavior being the criterion for 'demon-possessioin' without being committed to a belief in demons. I will argue for this view in the following section.

As for the second "absurd" consequence, we can see that there is no conceptual absurdity involved in holding (2), for such a conclusion is merely contrary to current scientific knowledge. We need to lay bare the synthetic proposition the case is supposed to impugn. If the demon-possessioin case is supposed to show by analogy the falsity of such synthetic statements as 'Necessarily, most instances of epileptic behavior are accompanied by epilepsy', I think it misses the point. While scientific investigation may modify our view about the causes of psychological states, it cannot come between the psychological state and the behavior that is criterial for such a state. As I have argued, the criteriological position should not be construed as depending on the necessary truth of such synthetic statements. Thus, beyond the deficiencies in the area of translation and of meaning rules, the demon-possessioin case exhibits the tendency to assimilate analytic and normic criteria. The criteriological view, as I
see it, is compatible with the falsity of statements expressing such correlations, and arguments which seek to show the falsity or absurdity of such statements are species of *ignoratio elenchii* if they are presumed to attack the criteriological position.

IV

Criteria and Conceptual Change

There is another possible objection to the criteriological position, closely connected to the "demon-possession" objection. Something like it appears in Putnam, Rorty, and also in Aune's recent article "The Paradox of Empiricism." It appears that these writers see the criteriological view as inadequate to explain conceptual evolution. Aune has attacked Strawson's position quite directly in just this area, so a close examination of his argument may provide a good basis for elucidating the objection as well as the answer to it.

Aune argues for the conclusion that the "tough standards of proof commonly ascribed to empiricists are not so tough after all." These standards are identified with Hume's principles: *No a priori knowledge of matters of fact and existence is possible,* and any acceptable knowledge of such matters must have
a secure basis in observation, memory, or experimental inference. But as it turns out, on Hume's principles, observation, memory, and experimental inference are all unreliable. With regard to the problem of other minds, the skeptic seems to have an even more secure foothold since memory is here out of the question and since there seems to be no possibility of observing a constant conjunction between behavior and unobservable psychological states. Thus, the possibility of obtaining any acceptable knowledge of the mental states of other persons seems remote. This paradox is doubtless what drove Russell to the conclusion that skepticism is logically impeccable but totally unacceptable.

Thus far, I entirely agree with Aune. What Aune has done is to expose the empiricist dogma on the basis of which attacks on the criteriological position are founded. What I object to is his lumping Strawson's position with those that assume Hume's principles. Aune holds that Strawson's position faces the traditional Humean problems. Thus Aune argues:

Other empiricists, mostly of a more recent vintage, arguing that public reality is what is strictly observed, have had to struggle with skeptical doubts concerning other minds and imperceptible entities such as hydrogen molecules. Their difficulty is of course analogous to the old one: since no constant conjunctions between what is publically observable and what is not could be established by observation and memory, no basis for an inductive inference is allowed.
On Hume's principles, there is a logical gap between observational attitude and object. Aune sees Strawson's argument as an attempt to bridge the gap rather than as a rejection of the problem. But Strawson rejects the idea that there is a gap at all.

One is inclined to argue that feelings can be felt but not observed, and behaviour can be observed but not felt, and that therefore there must be room here to drive in a logical wedge. But the concept of depression spans the place where one wants to drive it in. We might say: in order for there to be such a concept as that of X's depression, the depression which X has, the concept must cover both what is felt, but not observed, by X, and what may be observed, but not felt, by others than X (for all values of X). But it is perhaps better to say: X's depression is something, one and the same thing, which is felt, but not observed, by X, and observed, but not felt, by others than X. (Of course, what can be observed can also be faked or disguised.) To refuse to accept this is to refuse to accept the structure of the language in which we talk about depression.

Aune repudiates the idea that Strawson's argument is successful against the skeptic. Aune's view about this is similar to the demon-possession objection, but with one important difference.

My position here is best brought out by analogy. Consider the word "lunatic". As this word was originally used, it carried the implication that a form of mental disorder, lunacy, was brought about by the influence of the moon. Given this original usage, one could not consistently say that a man's lunacy has nothing to do with lunar influence. To put the point in Strawson's terms, the original concept of lunacy does not allow one to drive in a logical wedge between a certain form
of mental disorder and the influence of the moon, because the concept "spans the place" where one wants to drive it in. To use the word "lunacy" in its original sense, we must accept a certain general assumption: and if we refuse to accept this assumption, we thereby refuse to accept the "structure of the language" in which people used to talk about lunacy.33

As with the preceding cases we have considered, Aune too blurs the distinction between analytic and normic criteria, thinking that the criteriological position depends on the truth of some "general assumption" about the connection between behavior and psychological states. Aune intends to impugn the acceptability of such statements as 'Necessarily, most cases of lunatic behavior are accompanied by lunar influence', and, by analogy, such statements as 'Necessarily, most cases of pain-behavior are accompanied by pains'. Aune argues that the latter statement is not "strictly acceptable." I have argued, however, that such an attack is an ignoratio, since the criteriological position in no way depends on the truth of such statements.

The difference between the lunacy objection and the demon-possession objection is that there is no translation problem with the lunacy objection. Given this advantage, it might be thought that the demon-possession objection could be given a new twist.
If we must accept the structure of the language that contained the original concept of lunacy, we cannot drive in a logical wedge between a form of mental disorder and lunar influence. From this it follows that the concept of lunacy must stay the same, unaffected by empirical investigation. The conclusion to be reached here is that the skeptic need not accept the structure of the language in which we talk about depression and Strawson's strategy cannot escape Humean problems.

I want to argue that the criteriological position is compatible with conceptual change. As I see it, Strawson is correct in insisting that there is no logical gap between psychological states and behavior that is criterial for such states. Although there is no gap here, Stroud, Putnam, and Aune have sensed correctly that there is a gap somewhere. The gap is between criteria and symptoms; and the wedge is an empirical one.

Let us see how this works with the lunacy case. The original usage of 'lunacy' was such that 'lunacy' meant: a form of mental disorder caused by the influence of the moon. The causal chain runs from lunar influence to a psychological state to behavior criterial for that state. But the concept of lunacy has
changed because scientific opinion has seriously challenged the idea of lunar influence over human psychology. The causal chain might today be said to run from hormone imbalance (or something of that sort) to psychological state to behavior criterial for that state. But look at what has changed and what has remained the same. Our knowledge of empirical correlations or symptoms of psychological states may certainly change as we get new information. But such empirical data that we obtain on lunar influence theories and human physiology has no bearing on the link between the psychological state and behavior that is criterial for it. Thus, in general, when a psychological concept changes it is the empirical content rather than the criteriological content that changes. This remains a bit vague, however. Let us look at a few more cases.

There is currently a controversy raging over the concept of schizophrenia. Some psychologists have said schizophrenia is caused by childhood experiences, while others have objected to this, pointing at a physiological basis. Still others have thought it wrong to call schizophrenia a disease at all. Yet throughout this controversy, both manic behavior and psychological states that manifest visual and auditory hal-
lucinations, anguish, and confusion have gone unquestioned. If psychologists come to general agreement about the causes of schizophrenia, this likely will become, in time, part of the concept. However, we can make no a priori assumptions as to which way the argument will go. But not only do concepts evolve, they may even revert back to their original meaning. This may well happen even in the case of 'lunacy'. Symptoms may thus vary with our knowledge of empirical correlations while criteria do not.

In spite of all I have said, it remains true that the relationship between psychological states and criteria can evolve. But such relationships do not change with merely finding out about the causes of psychological states. As I see it, there are three ways such a change may occur. First, our criteriological evidence for the application of psychological predicates to others would probably change if human behavior were to change radically, for then the phenomena would "gravitate to a new paradigm." For example, if humans stopped having headaches, it is likely that after a time no behavior would warrant the application of 'headache'. In that case, the use of 'headache' might become limited to jokes or some (new) metaphorical use.
A second way such a change could be wrought would be by convention. We might all agree (if we could) to use psychological predicates, for that matter any predicate, in ways that differ from our current usage. Prima facie, the criteriologist is not uncongenial to such a move. Rorty has advocated such a view, saying that much of human language could be changed to suit the purposes of science at no greater cost than practicality.\(^{35}\) The tougher minded empiricists, like Skinner, have been quite dogmatic about this.\(^{36}\) It is true that language can be manipulated to suit the interests of science -- but also for political and economic interests. It may be that in some Orwellian nightmare come true the human race will evolve into some fractured society of "super-super-spartans." This thought reminds us of the third way: dictatorial edict. The manipulability of language is, however, an asset as well as a potential danger, for on it our literature, poetry, and even our philosophy depends.

V

Conclusion

If we conceive of the physical criteria for psychological states as normic rather than analytic criteria, it seems that the criteriological view avoids the
objections considered in this paper. On the criteriological view, we need not accept the empiricist dogma that demands a verifiability principle to bridge the "gap" between psychological states and behavior. The criteriological view, and Strawson's defense of it, argues that no such gap exists, and thus there is no problem that is in need of solution. On this view of the analysis of the technical term 'criteria', we should not think that the criteriological position requires some analytic entailment that renders some general synthetic statements necessary. The view of non-inductive evidence I have argued for remains compatible with both linguistic evolution and scientific investigation.

****
FOOTNOTES


6 I am using 'behavior' in a neutral sense to refer to the condition of a body and its environment.


11 Saunders, p. 3. See also Bruce Aune, "Feelings, Moods, and Introspection," *Mind*, LXXII (April, 1963), 202-205.
12 Stroud, p. 252.


14 Ibid., p. 3.

15 Ibid., p. 11.

16 Ibid.

17 Ibid., p. 19


21 I use the term 'guavagoy' here to emphasize that we do not have the right to employ the predicate 'demon-possession'.


23 Passmore, p. 114.

24 Ibid.

25 Lycan, p. 117.

26 Ibid.


30. Ibid., p. 138.

31. Ibid.

32. Strawson, p. 105.


34. Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations, #385.

35. Rorty, passim.