RORTY'S CRITIQUE OF

THE PRIVACY OBJECTION TO THE IDENTITY THEORY

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The issue concerning the exact relation between the mind and the body can be traced back at least as far as Plato. Traditionally, there have been two salient questions raised. What sort of thing is the mind? Are our minds the same as our bodies (or brains), or are they different in nature? Contemporary philosophers have tended to recast the second question in the following terms: Are mental expressions wholly translatable into a neurophysiological or dispositional vocabulary? Formerly, to maintain that the mind and the body are somehow one and the same was to advocate "the identity theory." Today the advocates of the identity theory maintain that (in some sense) mental expressions are wholly translatable into neurophysiological or dispositional terms. The most recent defenders of the identity theory have argued in particular that the suitable translation concerns not the meaning of mental expressions, but simply their factual reference. Richard Rorty is a modern representative of this point of view.

According to the "disappearance view," as he calls it, what we ordinarily refer to by "sensations" are nothing but brain processes, and that as a result of continued empirical progress--either "some day, 'sensation,' 'pain,' 'mental image,' and the like will drop out of our vocabulary,"[1] or "at no greater cost than inconvenient linguistic reform, we could drop such terms" (pp. 44-45). Rorty thinks a disappearance view which embraces the former is "almost certainly wrong" (p. 44). A view of the latter sort he believes to be "entirely justified" (p. 45).

On either view, it is maintained that statements like "Demons are nothing but hallucinations" and "Sensations are nothing but brain processes" are on an equal footing, both in terms of being true and in terms of the grounds we have for accepting them as true. With regard to the latter, both claims are such that scientific evidence may give us sufficient reason for believing them and, hence, for supposing that (at

least, in principle) we could replace demon-talk with hallucination-talk and sensation-talk with brain process-talk. Beyond this, however, the two disappearance views part ways. The first view maintains that this program will be carried out in practice, while the second view maintains, to the contrary, that such a verbal revolution would be too "monstrously inconvenient" (Rorty, p. 41) to be realized.

Rorty is inclined to think that there is only one significant obstacle facing those who would advocate the second form of the disappearance view: Since our knowledge of our sensations involves a certain sort of (privileged) privacy, it could never be that we had reason enough, on empirical grounds, for believing that sensations are identical with brain processes. Rorty believes that if this objection to the identity theory can be overcome, then the plausibility of the second version of the identity theory is not very hard to show. Thus,, he says, ". . . I am inclined to say that if the problem about 'privacy' is overcome, then the Identity Theorist has made out his case" (Rorty, p. 49).

I wish to examine Rorty's argument against the "privacy problem" and argue that he has not attacked it soundly. Consequently, if Rorty is right (and I think he is) that this difficulty is a serious obstacle to the plausibility of the identity theory, it would appear that the identity theory is flawed in a critical respect.

Before examining Rorty's critique in detail, some preliminary remarks are in order. First, he restricts himself to a consideration of the identity of brain processes with sensations for two (quite legitimate) reasons: (1) because a consideration of a full blown mind-body identity theory would require far more complexity and time than are necessary for his purposes, (2) because the issue of the identity of sensations with brain processes seems to be the form of the mind-body dispute most discussed in the recent literature. Second, though Rorty formulates the identity theory in terms of brain processes,[2] I would prefer to characterize this theory in terms of the relation between sensations and physiological states or events (hereafter using "states" somewhat technically to cover both occurrences and static features). I have one major reason for preferring this way of characterizing the identity theory. By stating it in this more liberal fashion, we allow the identity theorist more ground to make good his essential view and, thus, make more interesting both the identity theory and any objection to the theory.

According to the privacy objection to the identity theory, each of us bears a special relationship to, at least, some of our mental states, e.g., pain, and this fact is inexplicable on the view that mental states are nothing but physiological states. The general idea here is the following. We are related to some of our sensations in such a way that necessarily if we believe that we are having sensation S, then we are having sensation S (or necessarily if we are having sensation S, then we realize that we are having sensation S). That is, this relationship between what sensations we believe we have and our sensations sometimes constitutes incorrigible knowledge (or, on the other hand, what we might call " first person omniscience"). For example, our sincere report that we are in pain constitutes the best possible evidence that we (or anyone else) can have that we are in pain. But if the identity theory were correct, this sould not be the case. If all our sensations are nothing but physiological states, then it should be possible in principle for someone else, say, a scientist to identify those physiological states which are our sensations and to determine by direct observation when we are having sensation S, S_1, S_2, etc. In other words, if the identity theory were correct, then our sensations would all be essentially public, and our sincere report that we are in pain would not necessarily be the best evidence that we are in pain. Rorty cites Kurt Baier as an advocate of the privacy view.[3]

Rorty criticizes this sort of objection by considering a slightly different sort of case. We are to consider a time when . . .

> suitable similarities are in fact found to occur--the same similarities in all subjects--until one day (long after all empirical generalizations about sensations qua sensations have been subsumed under physiological laws, and long after direct manipulation of the brain has become the exclusive method of relieving pain) somebody (call him Jones) thinks he has no pain, but the encephalograph says that the brain process correlated with pain did occur. (Let us imagine that Jones himself is observing the gadget and that the problem about whether he might have made a mistake is a problem for Jones; this eliminates the possibility of lying.) (Rorty, p. 51)

What Rorty argues is that instead of concluding here that the encephalograph misleadingly indicates that he is in pain, it is more likely that Jones (or others)

would first conclude that he did ". . . not know what pain is--i.e., that he is not using the word 'pain' in the way in which his fellows use it" (Rorty, p. 51). The problem then raised for the privacy objection is that we must be able to distinguish the case where a person infallibly reports that he has a certain sensation S from the case where a person incorrectly (or correctly) utters a report R, but does not use his words as others do.

> We now see that the claim that "such a mistake is inconceivable" is an ellipsis for the claim that a mistake, made by one who knows what pain is, is inconceivable, for only this expanded form will entail that when Jones and the encephalograph disagree, Jones is always right. But when formulated in this way, our infallibility about our pains can be seen to be empty. Being infallible about something would be useful only if we could draw the usual distinction between misnaming and misjudging, and, having ascertained that we were not misnaming, know that we were not misjudging. But where there are no criteria for misjudging (or to put it more accurately, where in crucial cases the criteria for misjudging turn out to be the same as the criteria for misnaming), then to say that we are infallible is to pay ourselves an empty compliment. (Rorty, pp. 53-54)

I think we can consider the following to be a central argument in Rorty's critique of the privacy objection:

A. In order for anyone to know that a person P gives an infallible introspective report that P is in pain, we must be able to distinguish between P not meaning by "pain" what we mean by "pain" and P using "pain" as we do, but mistakenly judging that P is in pain.

B. We are unable to distinguish the above two kinds of cases (". . . the familiar difficulty about the vocabulary used in making introspective reports. . ." (Rorty, pp. 51-52).

Therefore:

C. No one can know that a person P gives infallible introspective reports that P is in pain.

The reason for the necessary condition proviso embodied in A. is that otherwise it will always be possible that the evidence we have that people make such infallible reports is merely indicative that they do not know how to use "pain" (or, at least, that they do not use "pain" as we do). Naturally, this case of a person reporting that he is in pain simply illustrates Rorty's more general point. This more general point could be formulated in a broader, more complex argument in which one would speak of any sensation which a person might be supposed infallibly to report.

The thrust of Rorty's argument against the privacy objection is that it is, at best inconclusive.[4] I shall argue that in so far as this argument is embodied in argument A. & B. ∦ C., it is unsound. Naturally, my argument against Rorty's view will, if plausible, simultaneously tend to show that Rorty's attack on the privacy objection is, at least, inconclusive. I shall rest quite content if I can make plausible this latter thesis.

Before directly examining A. & B. ∦ C., I would like to consider Rorty's example of the case in which a person hooked-up to an encephalograph reports that he is not in pain, yet the machine indicates that he is in pain. Rorty argues that such a person would first begin to suspect not that the encephalograph's readings were misleading, but that he was not using "pain" as it was conventionally used by his community. Although the essential soundness or unsoundness of Rorty's position does not depend on how we view this case, I would like to suggest that Rorty's perspective here is by no means obviously correct. Some people might first conclude what he says they would in these circumstances, but I think many reasonable people would draw a very different conclusion. We tend to be very covetous of our ability to know when we are in such mental states as pain or anxiety, and we would generally think it queer (if we did not simply resent it) for others to insist that we were in pain when we did not think we were.[5] Rather than making the inference Rorty suggests, I think it likely that the chap in his example would think that others did not know what they were talking about, that he was the victim of some silly or sinister joke, or that he had gone berserk.

In order for this case of Rorty's to be at all plausible, I think we must imagine that in this nomologically advanced culture, the conventions for the use of "pain" are such that the following sort of

entailments obtain:

E. Necessarily, if encephalograph readings indicate that a person P is in pain and there is no mechanical failure or human error in reading the encephalograph, then P is in pain.

E_1. Necessarily, if a person P exhibits certain physiological states, then P is in pain.

In other words, we need to suppose that in this linguistic community, there are certain public criteria which are sufficient to make true a sentence like "Elmo is in pain." We need to imagine that in this community the concept of pain is wholly public in nature. But it is very difficult to imagine such a society, and in order to do so, I think we must suppose that they do not understand what we understand by "pain." Certainly, E. and E_1. are not entailments which we currently subscribe to (nor ones which have been normally advocated in human history). While pain is for us not essentially private in the epistemic sense that no one other than ourselves can ever know when we are (or are not) in pain, neither are the criteria for being in pain entirely public in nature. Perhaps the best evidence of this is that one may correctly use "pain" in "I am in pain" where one bases this on nothing derived from one's five senses. Thus, one begins to feel a toothache and is prepared to report (if appropriate) that one is in pain, even though one has not been to a dentist and has not observed the cavity in one's throbbing tooth.

Let me now turn to Rorty's argument, A. & B. ⊭ C. I wish to concede premise A. If we have no reasonable basis for distinguishing misnaming from misjudging, it is hard to see how we could know that another person's introspective report is true. Indeed, if we cannot distinguish between misnaming and misjudging in general, it is hard to see how we could know that anyone's report--introspective or not--is true. What about premise B.? Rorty argues that in the case of introspective reports, we are unable to tell whether the other (i) is using his vocabulary as we do and is reporting accurately, or (ii) is using his vocabulary differently than we do. He thinks that this is a special difficulty with introspective vocabulary. But is this true? I think not.

Is there some special problem of distinguishing between misnaming and misjudging in the case of introspective reports? How we answer this depends in large part on how demanding (or how sceptical) we are willing

to be. Consider the following as a possible criterion for discerning in a particular instance whether another person misnames rather than misjudges when he gives an introspective report:

C* It is logically inconceivable that he uses his sensation-words differently than I (we).

Clearly, this criterion will not do. We will always be able to imagine in a particular case that others use their sensation-words in a manner different from our own (e.g., that in this case, the other is being purposely misleading). However, it should also be clear that this criterion, if appropriately generalized, would present an equally difficult problem for non-introspective reports. When others say in particular circumstances that the sky is very blue today, the hammer is on the table, the leaves are turning yellow, etc., it will always be conceivable that they are using their observation terms in a deviant fashion. Consequently, if we want to be able to tell whether others are using their words--introspective or not--as we do, C* is a criterion which will not allow us to do so.

Granting that it is not by use of C* that Rorty finds a special problem for introspective reports, wherein lies this special difficulty? The answer to this seems, for Rorty, to lie in how we are able to verify that another's introspective reports are accurate. Apparently, the rub is that unless we have public criteria for the proper use of introspective vocabulary, we have no way of telling--especially in the case of allegedly infallible introspective reports--whether others are misnaming or misjudging. At least, we have no independent means of verifying whether the other uses his sensation-words as we do and makes a true report, or whether he simply uses his words differently than we do.

If this is Rorty's suggestion, then I think he is mistaken. After all, we can use public criteria to test whether or not the person is sincere in his introspective report that he is in pain. Thus, for example, we can use the usual public criteria for ascertaining whether the person is generally honest and sane, as well as the public criteria which indicate whether he has any reason to deceive us about the case at hand. Does he keep his promises, and does he report matters that are confirmed by others who are in a position to know? Does he behave bizarrely, and does he have a record of mental illness? Is he given to jest, and does he have any reason to jest

in these circumstances? All of these questions can be answered by appeal to public criteria, criteria which would give us a reasonable basis for discerning the other fellow's sincerity in a particular case.

By "reasonable criteria" I do not mean that such public criteria are infallible indicators of a person's sincerity. They are not. Still, a criterion may serve as an independent means of verification without being an infallible criterion. A scale serves as a reasonable and independent means of ascertaining a person's weight, even though we realize that a scale can be defective and unreliable in a particular case.

Let me trace this general point through a problematic sort of case. Suppose a young girl reports to her mother that she has a headache and does not feel well enough to attend school. Suppose, furthermore, that the girl has occasionally lied about such things in the past. What public and independent criteria can her mother use to assess her daughter's sincerity? I think the following questions include many of the criteria which are relevant here. Has the girl shown a desire to avoid some event scheduled at school that day, or has she shown interest in seeing some TV show that day? Does she occasionally or persistently wince, groan, or cry out? Does she behave lethargically? Is she prepared to eat or drink her usual favorites? Does she stand up under her mother's "cross examination?" If the answers to these questions (in order) are no, yes, yes, no, yes--we have probably and independent confirmation of the girl's sincerity. If the answers (in order) are yes, no , no, yes, no--we have probably and independent disconfirmation of the girl's sincerity.

But suppose the mother discovers a mixed answer to these questions and, in order to be on the safe side, takes her daughter to the family doctor. Suppose the girl persists in her avowal of pain, groans occasionally, yet the doctor's examination reveals no physical basis for her discomfort. Does the mother have conclusive disconfirmation that her daughter is sincere or that she is in pain? No. Does the mother have probable disconfirmation? I would say no. Even if we restrict ourselves to the technical results of the medical examination (which we should not), there is the genuine possibility that more extensive medical tests are required. At this point, the mother may be perplexed, but not necessarily overly suspicious that her daughter is insincere in her report of pain.

Suppose that the girl persists in avowing her pain, acting lethargic, occasionally groaning, and is subjected to further intensive medical examination. At this point, other criteria of her sincerity come into play, e.g., her inability to play with her friends, her inability to eat her normal delights. Finally, suppose that after the most extensive and intensive testing known to medicine, she persists in her headache-avowal, yet the tests uncover no physical basis for her discomfort. What do the public criteria now indicate with regard to her sincerity or her state of pain? Do the medical tests show, by themselves, that she is insincere or that she is not in pain? I think we could not easily maintain this. Again, the physical basis for the pain might simply be undetectable by present medical techniques. Overall, I think a conscientious person would be perplexed, but certainly allow that the girl was probably sincere in her pain reports. After all, she is sacrificing a great deal of what is important to little girls if we suppose that she is faking her condition. On the other side of the coin, would we have conclusive and public proof that she was sincere and in pain? I think not. It would still be conceivable that the whole affair was a grand hoax (perhaps to get attention) or even that these were the first symptoms of the little girl's mental breakdown. In any case, I think the above indicates, first, that there are public criteria for assessing the sincerity of a person's mental-reports and, second, what is the nature of such criteria--i.e., a complex set of criteria which serve as bases for probabilistic confirmations or disconfirmations of a person's sincerity.

We may also use public criteria to determine whether the other person uses "pain as we would. For example, if he sees another person being burned, is he inclined to judge that the other is in pain? Similarly, if he sees someone bump her leg on the sharp corner of a piece of furniture, is he inclined to affirm that she is in pain? Thus, we may have good evidence that the other uses "pain" as we do. Finally, we have another independent means at our disposal for determining that the other uses "pain" as we do, i.e., our own first person experience of ourselves. We know on this basis whether we are prepared to judge that we are (or are not) in pain when our only evidence is what we feel (or do not feel). Similarly, we know whether we would be prepared to allow that such judgments as ours can be mistaken. For these reasons I think Rorty is simply mistaken in suggesting that we have no independent means of verifying whether or not a person makes a truly infallible introspective report that he is (or is not) in pain--as opposed to his simply using "pain" differently than we do. It thus

appears that premise B. is false and that Rorty's argument against the privacy objection is defective.

If what I have argued up to this point is correct, if Rorty has overlooked these rather obvious counter-examples to premise B., how am I to account for the fact that Rorty is clearly convinced that we have no basis for drawing the distinction between misnaming and misjudging in the case of introspective reports? In order to understand this, let us take a look at the sort of case Rorty uses to illustrate his point.

> To see that there is no genuine contrast in this case, suppose that Jones was not burned prior to the time he hitches on the encephalograph, but now he is. When he is, the encephalograph says that the brain-process constantly correlated with pain reports occurs in Jones' brain. However, although he exhibits pain-behavior, Jones thinks that he does not feel pain. (But now as in the past, he both exhibits pain-behavior and thinks he feels pain when he is frozen, stuck struck, racked, etc.) Now is it that he does not know that pain covers what you feel when you are stuck, struck, etc.? Or is it that he really does not feel pain when he is burned? (Rorty, p. 52)

We are to imagine a case where a person exhibits all the criteria for our correctly saying that he is in pain except one, i.e., he does not think that he is in pain. Here the indeterminacy question is supposed to arise.

I think we must grant that whenever a person uses an expression in a very unexpected way, we are left up in the air as to whether he knows how that expression is normally used. Still, considered solely in this light, the sceptical question raised here is no peculiar problem for introspective reports. The same point would hold for any report whatsoever.[6] Consequently, this alone cannot be the reason that Rorty thinks we have peculiar problems in distinguishing misnaming from misjudging in the case of introspective reports. Let us again turn to Rorty's own remarks to help clarify this.

> The dilemma is that either a report about one's sensations which violates a certain public criterion is a sufficient condition for saying that the reporter does not know how to use 'pain' in the correct way, or there is no such criterion. If there is,

> the fact that one cannot be mistaken about pains does not entail that sincere reports cannot be over-ridden. If there is not, then there is no way . . . to eliminate the possibility that Jones may not know what pain is. (Rorty, p. 53)

I think we are now in a better position to understand why Rorty believes there is this special problem with introspective reports. It is not a problem with them per se, but only when we suppose that there is no public criterion for determining whether they are correct or incorrect. When we make this supposition, Rorty argues that we have no way of discerning whether the reporter is using his words as we do and is correct, or is not using his words as we do. The crux of Rorty's position can now, I think, be precisely formulated, and we should be able to see why it is misdirected.

Rorty urges that if we suppose there is no public criterion which constitutes a "sufficient condition for saying that the reporter does not know how to use 'pain,'" then we have no way of telling whether a person who says (sincerely) "I am not in pain" is using his words differently than we would. If, on the other hand, there is such a sufficient condition, then "the fact that one cannot be mistaken about pains does not entail that sincere reports cannot be over-ridden." Let us consider the first horn of this alleged dilemma. It seems to me, so long as we are careful to interpret "sufficient condition for saying . . ." appropriately, what Rorty urges here is correct. Consider a person who sincerely said "Bing burned, stuck, struck, etc. is seldom a good indication that a person is in pain." Similarly consider a person who sincerely said things like "Pain is not a sensation," "Pain is greater than 4," "That oak tree has my pain," "That rock is in pain." Such utterances would provide us very good evidence that the person did not use "pain" as we normally do. They would be very like the case given by Rorty of a person who sincerely says that blue is not a color. The problem here is that Rorty thinks that the latter case is genuinely analogous to the case where a person denies that he is in pain when public criteria like encephalograph reading indicate that the person is in pain. Rorty does not argue for the plausibility of this analogy, but takes it for granted that the comparison will be intuitive to the reader. This comparison is not intuitive to me, and I would argue that the clear-cut public criteria we have for saying that another does not know how to use "pain" (like those I mention above) are not particularly supportive of the identity theory.

Let us now consider the second horn of this alleged dilemma. I want to focus on the notion of a public criterion which is a "sufficient condition for saying that the reporter does not know how to use 'pain' in the correct way." First, as I have already argued, such a "sufficient" condition may well take the form of a probabilistic criterion. Even in cases where a person uses words in what seems a clearly bizarre way, there are factors, e.g., the person's sincerity, which mitigate against our holding that the person does not, beyond the shadow of any reasonable doubt, know how to use those words. Second, this sort of sufficient condition may be interpreted in such a way that we can reasonably over-ride another's sincere report that he is in pain, yet this would not show that the person can be mistaken about such reports. Our criteria for saying that another person is in such-and-such a mental state are not simply criteria for making it true that the person is in that mental state. Many of our criteria for saying that such-and-such is the case (and I think this is true in the case of many mental phenomena) are simply criteria for it being meaningful or reasonable to judge that such-and-such is the case. In short, knowing how to apply a word is not always the same as knowing the possible circumstances in which that word is, as a matter of fact, true of something. Thus, I may say, "There is a storm coming on," based upon the clouds I see on the horizon. I am hardly to be convicted of not knowing how to use "storm" simply because no storm occurs. Black clouds on the appropriate horizon, thunder in the distance, rapid changes in temperature, and so on, are perfectly good, albeit inconclusive, cues for my saying that there will be a storm in my immediate area. Similarly, a person who hallucinates that there are rats in his bed and says, "Get these rats out of my bed!" does not show that he does not know how to use "rat." Even though there are no rats in his bed, his vivid experience makes it reasonable for him to say what he does.

Assuming that our linguistic conventions for the correct use of terms are not always conventions for a term's being true of the thing in question, let us return to the second horn of this alleged dilemma. Given human interests and needs, there are various factors to be weighed in cases where another person reports that he is in pain. To simplify what is a very complex context here, let me simply note the following factors. On the one hand, there is the question of how likely it is that the other is really in pain. Here both present and past public evidence needs to be considered. On the other hand, there is the question--no matter how likely it is that he is not in pain--of the relative effects upon him, as against those on others, whether he is in pain or we act as if he were. Suppose

he is in severe pain, but that we do not believe him and act as if he is not. Normally, this would mean that we are treating him inhumanely. But, suppose that he is not in severe pain and that by acting as if he were in pain, we would have to neglect several people who both reported that they were in severe pain and were supported by all our public evidence. In such a case, we may well imagine that the public evidence (that the one fellow is not in pain) would over-ride his sincere reports that he is in pain. Viewed in this light, the reader should be able to imagine other sorts of cases where public evidence would over-ride a person's sincere reports that he was in pain, yet this does not imply that the person was not in pain.

The moral to this discussion is simple. Neither alternative of Rorty's alleged dilemma represents a problem for the privacy objection. In the senses of "public criteria which constitute a sufficient condition . . ." which I have specified, the advocate of the privacy objection can grant that there are (and need to be) such public criteria, yet deny that this sheds doubt on our knowing infallibily that we are in pain. We can do this if we grant that our concept of pain is not wholly public in nature and if we grant the plausibility of the following sorts of assumptions:

1. Our public criteria for discerning whether another is in pain are reliable, albeit probabilistic, criteria.

2. Our criteria for correctly using a term are not always criteria for that term's being true of the thing to which it is applied (but are frequently criteria for it being reasonable to say that the term applies to the thing in question).

3. A person's reporting that he is not in pain when all other public evidence indicate that he is in pain is not like a person's saying that blue is not a color.

4. That we have criteria which can allow us to over-ride a person's sincere report that he is (or is not) in pain does not imply that the person's pain-report is fallible.

Rorty's line of argument ignores such assumptions and seems to belie a sort of neo-verificationism. His argument would appear to presuppose that unless there

are, in crucial cases, clear-cut/definitive criteria for empirically determining the truth or falsity of a sentence, that sentence cannot assert a synthetic proposition.[7] Needless to say, I do not think that such verificationism is tenable, but this is not the place to treat that issue in the depth which it deserves. I rest content if I have shown that the grounds for Rorty's attack upon the privacy objection are--if not clearly unsound--at least controversial in nature.

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NOTES

[1]Richard Rorty, "Mind-Body Identity, Privacy, and Categories," Philosophy of Mind, ed. Stuart Hampshire (Harper & Row: New York, N.Y., 1966), p. 44.

[2]Thus he says, ". . . the Identity Theory (by which I mean . . . that empirical inquiry will discover that sensations (not thoughts) are identical with certain brain-processes) . . ." Ibid. pp. 30-31.

[3]"However good the evidence may be, such a physiological theory can never be used to show to the sufferer that he was mistaken in thinking he had a pain, for such a mistake is inconceivable" (Baier, as quoted by Rorty, p. 50).

[4]I say "at best" since given that Rorty appeals to Wittgensteinian points about the proper use of language --e.g., ". . . that sensation-reports must conform to public criteria or else be disallowed . . ."--he may well be arguing something stronger. He may be arguing that the privacy objection is misguided in principle, since it presupposes that there are non-public criteria for the sensible use of sensation-words--a presupposition which is essentially confused.

[5]My remark here might strike the reader as more of a psychological or sociological comment than one which is normatively relevant to Rorty's main argument. Nevertheless, Rorty's case of the "future" fellow hooked up to an encephalograph is also couched in (predictively) descriptive rather then normative terms. I am simply responding in kind by questioning the correctness of his factual claim. The more normative aspects of Rorty's argument are taken up later in this paper.

[6]Rorty seems to realize this when he gives the case of a person who uses 'blue' in all the usual ways, save that he refuses to grant that blue is a color.

[7]For confirmation of my view that Rorty presupposes a kind of verificationism, as well as for an interesting analysis of Rorty's over-all philosophical perspective, see Douglas Ehring's article "Transcendental Arguments: Verificationism or Parasitism?," Auslegung, Vol. IV, No. 1 (Nov. 1976).