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CONSCIOUS AND UNCONSCIOUS MENTAL STATES

The University of Oklahoma

PH.D.

1979

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18 Bedford Row, London WC1R 4EJ, England

THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

GRADUATE COLLEGE

CONSCIOUS AND UNCONSCIOUS MENTAL STATES

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY

DIANNE DENNEHY BERRY

Norman, Oklahoma

1979

CONSCIOUS AND UNCONSCIOUS MENTAL STATES

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation was written under the supervision of my committee chairman, Professor F. Chris Swoyer, and the members of my committee: Professor John Biro, Professor Monte Cook, Professor J. Clayton Feaver, and Professor Kenneth Merrill. I thank them both for their suggestions on how to make the dissertation better and for their help throughout my career as a graduate student in philosophy. Also, I thank Susan Taylor for her excellent typing job.

## PREFACE

Many philosophers beat dead horses, because philosophical horses, like cats, have nine lives.

My horse in this dissertation is the traditional, the "Cartesian," concept of mind, which identifies mind with consciousness. You may say: No one any longer identifies mind with consciousness; the Freudian theory of mind, with its emphasis on unconscious mental states, released us from the spell of that identification. Nevertheless, it seems to me that we retain enough of our pre-Freudian way of thought to overrate the role and function of conscious mental states and to confuse thoroughly the distinction between conscious and unconscious mental states. We believe that consciousness and rational thought and introspection, intention and meaning and intelligence, lie on one side of the boundary, and that the unconscious, and irrationality and animal instincts, lie on the other. Not all of us believe all of this, but most of us often enough do--because this is what the popular imagination has done with its mixed heritage of Cartesian and Freudian theory. And a result of this heritage is that unless we are specifically considering conscious and unconscious mental

states, we may lapse into saying things about conscious and unconscious states that reflect our popular prejudices. Such lapses--because of the power of our uncritical and usual way of thought and expression--account for the phoenix-like nature of that old war-horse, the Cartesian, or traditional, theory of mind.

In this dissertation, I use "Cartesian or traditional theory of mind" to refer to a philosophico-religious vision of man and mind that--if it does not altogether deny unconscious mental states--gives to consciousness and reason the great role in man's mental life. Such a view renders much of our behavior oddly meaningless, as Freud clearly saw, and also it spawns a series of concepts and dilemmas that defy philosophical analysis or solution, for example: the logical impossibility of allowing us both introspective certainty and self-deception, the problem of knowledge of other minds, the uneasy relationship of intelligent animals and computers to men, the relationship of thoughts to words and speech, and so forth.

The traditional theory of mind, an appropriation by a layman mentality of an originally technical and philosophically rigorous theory, is not yet a dead horse. Nor is it a straw man. It is insidiously and tenaciously part of our way of thinking. Much of the reason for this is that a theory of mind involves us on several levels: We must be engaged with the philosophical, the psychological, and the everyday concepts of mind. As philosophers, we look for criteria for the

distinction between conscious and unconscious mental states; we look for the reasons for our saying in one case, "Unconsciously you envy him" and yet in another, "It's only that you think he's mediocre; it's not envy coloring your judgment--it's good taste." We study both our philosophical and our ordinary, everyday use of certain quasi-technical terms, like "introspection" and "awareness," to see if our use is ambiguous; and if it is, we analyze that ambiguity in order to make new and better distinctions between, and new uses of, the terms. We look to our knowledge of psychology for the reasons why this state is unconscious and that state is conscious; we look to psychology to inform us of the "forces" at work in our minds. A subject that engages us at these points--philosophical, psychological, and everyday--will have its share of supposedly dead horses littering the path. That this is so makes it a subject worthy of combat and worth combatting.



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## INTRODUCTION

My dissertation is a look at our use of certain psychological concepts. I analyze these concepts and suggest some restrictions of our usual use of the terms "awareness," "introspection," and "thought." I argue that these restrictions illuminate the relation of conscious to unconscious mental states in such a way as to give us a basis on which correctly to distinguish them. This basis involves speech and a kind of awareness, not thought or intelligence or rationality, and results in our relegating conscious mental states to a rather small, specialized role in our mental life.

Freud says that in order to explain human behavior, you must assume that unconscious states exist. Further, you must assume that they are mental. These states are distinguished from conscious states by our not being aware of them. This is the primary fact about unconscious states: we must assume them because people act as if such states are operating, yet they deny them because they are not aware of them. But we cannot assume that there are major differences between conscious and unconscious states other than awareness, for

the concept of unconscious mental states loses its explanatory value if unconscious mental states are not seen as (sometimes) purposeful, intelligent, appropriate, elaborate, intentional, that is, full-fledged mental states.

You can do a lot without explicitly recognizing that you are doing it. You can follow directions and you can "suddenly" solve problems, all without any explicit thought about what you are doing; you say in such cases that the thinking was unconscious. Much of human behavior conforms to this pattern; most of the time we are not, after all, consciously thinking about what we are doing. Yet if traditional philosophy were correct, we would be thinking explicitly and consciously of what we are doing most or all of the time.

Consistent with this reduction of the role of consciousness is a distinction between the kinds of awareness we exhibit of our activities and states. There is the awareness we show when we maneuver correctly in traffic, and there is the kind we show when we take explicit verbal note of a state, or avow or admit a state. The first kind is sufficient to account for the larger part of our behavior and is related to unconsciously controlled activity. The second kind of awareness is limited of course to language-users, and not coincidentally, only language-users are considered conscious beings, i.e., capable of having (conscious) mental states.

Traditional philosophy failed to fully recognize unconscious mental activity, because traditional philosophy of

mind took the fact of consciousness as its starting point. Traditional theories saw that only human beings can be explicitly aware of their mental activities and reasoned from there that such awareness constitutes the difference between human beings and other animals. And this is so. But I claim that such awareness is a linguistic phenomenon: only if you can talk can you have such awareness. Speech, not rational thought, is the primary fact of consciousness.

The old concepts of traditional philosophy of mind can be reinterpreted to conform to this rearrangement of priorities. Introspection and incorrigibility and rational thought can be viewed as linguistic; and viewing them this way provides support for the basically correct Freudian theory of conscious and unconscious mental states. Further, examination of such new phenomena as split-brain patients and language-using apes reinforces the model of mind--of conscious and unconscious mental states distinguished on the basis of speech--that I espouse.

## CONSCIOUS AND UNCONSCIOUS MENTAL STATES

### CHAPTER I

#### FREUD

##### Introduction

Traditional thought holds that the mind of a human being essentially is conscious, and further that consciousness essentially involves thinking and reasoning, and is intelligent and purposeful. This view holds that when we act, we do so in response to or in accord with our consciously claimed beliefs and desires and purposes. Further, this line of thought sees the unconscious as a result of the "animal side" of our nature, and while sometimes we believe that animals are "thinking" this or that, nevertheless the unconscious part of our mental life is not truly mental in the way that our "higher," conscious part is: Unconscious states are not intelligent, they are not purposeful, they do not involve reasoning. They are instinctual and physiological. We do not "mean" something when we behave in accordance with unconscious desires in the way we "mean" something when we behave in

accordance with our conscious desires. Unconscious states are not as "important" as conscious states to our mental life and behavior.

But Freud's theory of mind emphasizes the importance of unconscious states in our mental life. Freud wants to persuade us that our unconscious states must be as legitimately mental as our conscious states, that they must involve all the characteristics heretofore identified with consciousness alone. Freud claims that the main difference between conscious and unconscious states is that we are aware of the former and unaware of the latter. He claims that seeing the distinction in such terms makes better sense of human behavior than seeing the distinction in terms such as intelligence and meaningfulness. I agree with Freud here; the distinction that eventually I draw between conscious and unconscious states is rooted in Freud's.

#### The Need for Postulating Unconscious Mental States

As Freud saw it, his first task was to make the existence of meaningful unconscious mental states plausible--and he did so by arguing the stronger claim that such states are necessary.

Freud's argument goes like this: Because we are aware only of our conscious mental states, consciousness seems omnipresent, leaving little or no place for unconscious states. What we are aware of at any moment crowds out anything else; conscious states are ubiquitous. But this seeming ubiquity is

deceptive, for actually consciousness is riddled with gaps. The gaps are omissions of meaning, and become obvious when we search for explanations for behavior that we find inexplicable. Such behavior can be as trivial and as seemingly meaningless as slips of the tongue in a generally healthy person or as disruptive and puzzling as obsessive-compulsive rituals in a severely neurotic person. On Freud's theory, when we observe seemingly senseless behavior in someone, we can appeal to mental states that the person is not aware of and yet which motivate and explain his behavior.

The gap argument claims that, in order to make sense of actions that otherwise do not make good sense, it is necessary to suppose that we have states of which we are not aware; and these states must be mental, for they fill gaps in a mental continuum. Furthermore, only mental phenomena can give sense or meaning, a reason, for what seems to be senseless behavior. The gap argument shows that only phenomena that are unconscious and mental can account for the gaps in meaning in our behavior. A view, like the traditional theory of mind, that identifies mind with consciousness cannot account for those gaps. And while the traditional view seems more plausible because of the ubiquitous nature of conscious mental states, it cannot offer an explanation for much of our behavior; the traditional view renders many of our actions meaningless. Surely, says Freud, the more plausible theory is the one that assumes from the start that our behavior is

essentially meaningful, purposeful, of a whole.

An example of the necessity of assuming such unconscious states occurs when we look to our conscious beliefs and wants for the reason for an action, and our conscious beliefs and wants cannot give us a sufficient reason. For example, I quit my job and apply for another. I am a commercial artist and I want to be successful in my field: I want to make a certain amount of money at my job and I want to be well regarded by my peers. I believe that working for the best advertising agency in the state will help me to achieve those goals. My conscious wants and beliefs in this case would seem sufficient to account for my decision to change jobs. Yet I have held my present low-paying unchallenging job in a small agency for ten years, and for all that time I have wanted to be successful and have believed that working for a better agency would make me more successful. I was not prevented from changing jobs by the belief that I had no chance of being hired by a better agency than mine--in fact, I was approached only last year by one but turned down the offer. Through the years, I have always found some reason or other for not changing jobs. You now see that none of these reasons was really sufficient to warrant my staying with my unfulfilling job--just as my reasons for now changing jobs are not sufficient. For I cannot tell you why, suddenly, I am acting on the wants and beliefs that I have had all along and that were never before sufficient



to prompt me into action. The only reasons I can give you are that I think I will be more successful if I go to another agency. It occurs to you that my boss's son, with whom I worked, left the agency six months ago. (This has not occurred to me in connection with my leaving.) It further occurs to you that I was very attached to the young man, and that perhaps my real, unconscious reason for quitting is that I no longer have the emotional investment in the agency that evidently was sufficient to hold me there against my conscious wants and beliefs.

### The Differences Between Conscious and Unconscious

#### Mental States: How Unconscious States

#### Become Conscious

Freud uses the gap argument to support his rather modest claim that the mental has both conscious and unconscious processes. But he also uses it as an opening wedge in his drive to show what conscious and unconscious states are like and how they differ. Freud usually uses the gap argument to set the stage for his distinction between preconscious, or merely latently unconscious, mental states, and properly unconscious mental states.<sup>1</sup> He persuades us first that unless we accept unconscious mental states--i.e., mental states of which we are not aware--as full-fledged mental processes, we cannot account wholly for our behavior; and then he distinguishes between the two types of unconscious state. Preconscious (Pcs.) states differ from

conscious (Cs.) states only in that we are not aware of them, and we are quite willing to accept these, for in accepting them, we get such a large return and give up really very little of our everyday conceptions of mind. But now Freud wants us to accept the concept of properly unconscious (Ucs.) mental states, which have several characteristics that are at odds with the characteristics of Cs. and Pcs. mental states. These characteristics of Ucs. mental states are: exemption from mutual contradiction, primary process (mobility of cathexis), timelessness, and replacement of external by psychical reality.<sup>2</sup>

In the unconscious, mutually contradictory mental states are tolerated and exist side by side, in contrast to consciousness, where the contradictions we find somehow must be reconciled. Consciousness cannot tolerate the entertaining of contradictory ideas: When we hear someone proclaiming beliefs or wishes that are opposed or inconsistent, we think him a fool; yet, says Freud, we all have in our unconscious unreconcilable ideas. The "timelessness" of Ucs. mental states is their unyielding persistence through time in spite of the obvious changes that mark a person's mental development; without being aware of such states, we act upon ideas that are infantile and untouched by our maturing experiences in life. Ucs. mental states work in response to the principle of pleasure, not to the demands of an outer, consciously perceived reality.

Unconscious, "cathected" ideas are invested with psychical "energy," and uninhibitedly tend toward "discharge" in consciousness. But, given their character, many unconscious ideas are unacceptable to consciousness, so that the Pcs., which acts as a censor for consciousness, turns them back. The way that such ideas finally become conscious is by surrendering their cathexis, or energy, to acceptable--and associated--ideas which get past the censor.

Let me explain this in more detail. The following three questions are the same: "How do unconscious states become conscious?" "How is an unconscious state transformed into a conscious state?" "How do I become aware of an unconscious mental state?"

Freud likens consciousness to perception; he says that becoming aware of our unconscious states is like perceiving the external world through our sense organs.<sup>3</sup> An unconscious state cannot become conscious until it is perceived by consciousness; and it must "attract" perception, draw attention to itself. One way an unconscious state attracts perception is through the heightening of cathexis which causes a need for discharge (and which I described briefly above). This need for discharge is called the "pleasure principle" because an unconscious mental state that reaches a certain intensity of cathexis is uncomfortable.<sup>4</sup>

The second and more "sophisticated" method by which

a mental state can reach consciousness is found by looking at the functioning of the system Pcs. The system Pcs. is the psychical system that consists of latently unconscious mental states, i.e., those states that can pass easily in and out of consciousness. The reason for the facility with which a Pcs. mental state can become conscious is that Pcs. mental states, unlike Unc.-proper mental states, are linked to verbal memories, or "word-presentations." Word-presentations are left by the memories of former perceptions or states of consciousness. The Pcs. connects the mental state to a word-presentation (or word-idea, "Wortvorstellung"), a process that can bring the mental state to consciousness. Consciousness perceives the mental state (which, as a previously unconscious mental state, existed only as a thing-presentation, or "Sachvorstellung," that is, as an idea that was not connected to a word or words) within a context of previous and associated perceptions. The word-presentation, as the memory of a previous perception or state, carries with it the quality that attracts the perceiving organ, consciousness. Still, the linking of an unconscious mental state to a word-presentation only supplies the possibility of being perceived by consciousness; the linking does not guarantee that the state will become conscious. Consciousness will perceive the preconscious state only if that state's word-presentation is relevant to or associated with

consciousness's current perceptions.<sup>5</sup>

Freud says that the two methods by which a state can become conscious are, if not wholly separate, different.<sup>6</sup> A state's seeking to discharge an unpleasurable excitation is a primitive or crude way of attracting the notice of consciousness. Linking an unconscious state to a word-presentation is a more sophisticated, "delicate" way of readying a state for perception. Freud says that the former method is like that used for "external" perception, whereas the latter has to do only with "internal" perception. In its early stages, the organism receives two kinds of excitation, each of which gives rise to consciousness: external, or sensory, perception, and unpleasure. Only later does the organism develop the ability to bring to consciousness unconscious states that do not have a sufficient quantity of unpleasure to excite perception. These unconscious states are ideas, or thought-processes; the system Pcs. is able to connect the thing-presentations of these ideas with the word-presentations found in that system.

The difference between the two methods by which an unconscious state becomes conscious is found in the difference between the two kinds of mental states: states that attach themselves to unpleasurable excitations, and ideas, states that do not. Freud distinguishes between unconscious feelings, which have no commerce with the system Pcs. ("feelings are either conscious or unconscious") and unconscious

ideas, which must be given word-presentations in the Pcs. before they can become conscious.<sup>7</sup> A feeling is perceptible simply because of a certain intensity of unpleasure; unpleasurable excitations can force themselves upon consciousness without any intermediary work by the Pcs. The reason that unconscious feelings are perceived directly by consciousness is this: feelings are perceptible as feelings; or, in other words, whatever a particular feeling is (called) does not matter so much as the simple discharge of cathexis. An unconscious idea, on the other hand, cannot attract consciousness without being linked to the residues of former perceptions, or word-presentations. These word-presentations are what make the idea perceptible.

We find in Freud<sup>8</sup> suggestions that an unconscious idea is the cathexis either of a memory (that is, something once, but no longer, perceived) or of an instinct or instinctual impulse. Unconscious ideas can exist "as actual structures in the system Ucs." An unconscious feeling, on the other hand, "corresponds to" a process of discharge, and cannot exist in the Ucs. the way a *Sachvorstellung* can. "Unconscious feeling" actually is a misnomer; the feeling itself is conscious but its idea is unconscious. That is, what we call an unconscious feeling is an affect whose idea has been repressed; the affect is not unperceived but is misconstrued by consciousness. Such a case occurs when a feeling, shaking itself free of its (unacceptable) idea, hooks itself up to an acceptable idea and,

parasitelike, rides up to consciousness.

It seems that it is not the case that there are two types of unconscious states whose way of becoming conscious corresponds to their difference, but rather that there are two components of an unconscious mental state and these components correspond to the two ways. These components are: the idea, which either is derived from perception and exists as a memory or is derived from some internal process and represents an unconscious instinct; and the affect or feeling, which is a process of discharge. Repression severs the connection between an affect and its idea. Repression can succeed in preventing an idea from becoming preconscious or conscious, in which case the idea remains unconscious; if the repression fails or the idea is unthreatening, the *Sachvorstellung* becomes linked in the Pcs. with its *Wortvorstellung* and has a good chance of becoming conscious. The affect exists in the Ucs. only as a "beginning" whose end product--the discharge of cathexis--is perceived by the Cs. as a feeling. If the affect's idea is repressed, three possible courses offer themselves to the affect: The affect may become conscious by attaching itself to another idea and in so doing causes itself to be misconstrued. Or the affect may simply exchange its idea for that of anxiety and be perceived as anxiety. Or the affect may remain as it is in the Ucs. as an undeveloped potential for the discharge of cathexis.

Freud's discussion of how unconscious ideas become

conscious by means of becoming associated with words is more important to my dissertation than his discussion of the method of discharge of cathexis, because later I will argue that an unconscious state becomes conscious only when one can avow that state. I will claim that being aware of a state and being able verbally to admit that state are the same thing. I believe that Freud is close to making the same claim when he says that a conscious state, that is, a state of which I am aware, is a thing-presentation linked with its word, whereas an unconscious state, of which I am not aware, is merely a thing-presentation.

Freud's method of helping his patients to become aware of their unconscious states corroborates the claim that words, or speech, and consciousness are closely connected. The psychoanalytic method is more or less the free-associative talk of the patient, in which the painful state (disguised in words that are associated with the state but are not the correct words for the state) pushes with an excess of cathexis up to consciousness: discovering the "true" unconscious state simply is a matter of getting the patient to label the state with the correct (or better, perhaps, meaningful) words. The psychoanalytic method for revealing our unconscious states is a different kind of answer to the question, How do unconscious states become conscious. The first kind of answer I gave to that question concerned the psychological theory Freud offers to explain the forces that function in the mind.



The second kind of answer, of which psychoanalysis is an example, concerns the way we become aware of our unconscious mental states. In the next section, I want to discuss another example of this second kind of answer; this example is Freud's explanation for why the concept of unconscious mental states is not only a necessary theoretical concept but also a means for our understanding others and ourselves.

Differences Continued: How We Become Aware  
of Unconscious Mental States

The problem is this: On the one hand, unconscious mental states are necessary for the assumption of a coherent mental life. On the other hand, these states are not available to us, for we are not aware of them. We know conscious mental states just because they are conscious. How do we know unconscious mental states?

While we are forced to assume an unconscious in order to make sense of mental life, in our everyday lives we are not inclined to assume such a concept. In fact, we repudiate it. But, says Freud, not only is the unconscious a necessary assumption for theoretical reasons, but also it is a wholly legitimate assumption from the point of view of "our customary and generally accepted mode of thinking."<sup>9</sup> Freud begins his argument by claiming that we assume mental states in others, and that these mental states are assumed, not on the basis of introspection--which is how we know our own (conscious) mental states--but rather on the basis of an "identification" that we

extend to others. In order to make his point, Freud speaks in the language of the Cartesian. Freud says that consciousness gives us only our own (conscious) mental states; we have "immediate certainty" only of our own conscious mental states. But we do assume that others have mental lives, even though we cannot know with "immediate certainty" that they do. Freud says that we infer by means of analogy that others are like us. The analogy is between the "observable behavior and utterances" of others and our behavior, which (although Freud is not explicit here) we connect to our consciousness. The inference is that others' behavior is connected to minds the way ours is, and that their minds are like ours. This is the standard argument from analogy that is used to show that we can have knowledge of other minds, and this attributing of consciousness to others is the "customary and generally accepted mode of thinking" that Freud appeals to.

Freud wants us to apply this type of thinking to ourselves; when we do so, we discover our own unconscious mental states. Here Freud's use of the Cartesian view of mind becomes interesting; for the Cartesian view--as well as the skeptical arguments that it tried to overturn--is based on the proposition that, whatever else may be doubted, the contents of consciousness cannot be doubted. Freud believes the opposite of this. Freud grants that we have immediate certainty of consciousness,<sup>10</sup> and he seems also in the best Cartesian tradition to believe that our knowledge of other minds is a

sort of inference. But whereas the Cartesian asks us to suppose that others are like us, Freud asks us to suppose that we are like others. The Cartesian relies for true knowledge on the introspectibility of one's own consciousness; and he presumes, by analogy, that others also have consciousness. Freud on the other hand places confidence in the inferential processes that he says we use on others and ought to use on ourselves. If I wish to attribute consciousness to others, I must infer it from their observable behavior--behavior that I can make sense of only if these others are conscious beings.

Freud is not really concerned with the skeptic's premise that we cannot know others' mental states, for he does not see knowledge of other minds as a problem. Yet Freud makes use of the argument from analogy which purports to answer the skeptic's skepticism, in order to justify the assumption of an unconscious. Freud says that we "infer" from others' behavior and utterances that they have consciousnesses; he says this to make a contrast with the non-inferential awareness that we have of our own consciousness. But then Freud in a parenthetical aside retreats from the position he takes by use of the argument from analogy, and says that actually we don't infer anything at all. He says that "without any special reflection we attribute to everyone else our own constitution and therefore our consciousness as well, and . . . this identification is a sine qua non of our understanding." Freud then retreats to his former position and concludes that "the

assumption of a consciousness in [others] rests upon an inference and cannot share the immediate certainty which we have of our own consciousness."

What are we to make of all this? Freud surely cannot have thought that throughout this passage he was presenting the same position regarding our beliefs about others' minds. To say that we infer from others' behavior that they have mental lives and to say that we simply, without any special thought, assume that others have mental lives is not the same thing. But when we keep in mind Freud's purpose in this passage, the inconsistency is less bothersome. Freud wants to show that our attributing unconscious mental states to ourselves is analogous to the process that we use to attribute consciousness to others, and that to do the former is legitimate because we do the latter. But to attribute unconscious mental states to ourselves requires a certain amount of inference and observation of behavior. Freud makes use of the argument from analogy to make the jump smoother from our customary mode of thought about others to the unaccustomed attribution of unconscious mental states to ourselves. The argument from analogy is based on the view that some process of inference is necessary before we can conceive of others as having mental lives--or, perhaps, before we can justify this supposition. This view perfectly parallels the problem with conceiving ourselves to have mental lives unavailable for our introspection. So Freud played up this view.

(Ironically, the plausibility of the argument from analogy derives from the case with which we can downplay the rather absurd complicatedness of the inferential process that the argument proposes. It is this ease that lets Freud--who has no skeptical doubts about other minds--slide into the parenthetical qualification in which he says that believing others to have human minds is a "sine qua non of our understanding.")

Freud seems to grant the skeptic's premise, that we don't know others' mental states (except by inference), that we know only our own (conscious) states. Then he reneges on his skepticism by claiming that we take it for granted that others have mental states. Freud relocates the skepticism that he so cavalierly disposed of so far as others goes; he agrees that it is hard to believe that we ourselves have mental lives of which we know nothing--but that this disbelief can be just as easily disposed of as the other disbelief. Freud uses the argument from analogy because it involves the sort of reasoning that not only laymen but also philosophers and psychologists and scientists are prone to use. Freud's parenthetical comment represents his own view on our knowledge of other minds. For Freud the move from inference to unthinking assumption is merely an adjustment of a view that is not quite right into a view that is right. Freud has no real feel for the allure of skepticism, and hence no real feel for the differences in the two positions on other minds that he presents.

Moreover, Freud wants only to show that in assuming an unconscious we are merely following our usual mode of thought. This mode of thought does not need to be philosophically respectable but only "customary and generally accepted." The concept of the unconscious may perhaps have seemed bizarre; Freud shows that people do in fact slide from a primitive acceptance of other minds to, sometimes, a rather more skeptical position. They do not as a rule wonder if everyone else is a robot or an illusion, but they do sometimes wonder if others have this feeling or that. Freud is taking advantage of the ambiguity that we show in our approach to others' minds in order to show that the assumption of an unconscious is not as far-fetched as it seems.

In this argument, Freud does not distinguish between the conscious and unconscious states of others. He speaks of our assuming or inferring others' "consciousness," but he is using the term to refer to others' minds and not simply to the conscious portion of their mental lives. Freud does this, first, because in 1915 "consciousness" was considered more or less synonymous with "mind," and Freud knew that his audience would be more inclined to hear him out if he did not yet argue the distinction between "consciousness" and "mind." Second, it makes no difference, so far as my apprehension of your mental state goes, whether your mental state is conscious or unconscious: Neither is introspectible by me.

Now, however, Freud distinguishes between the conscious

and the unconscious in ourselves. He says that psychoanalysis asks only that we apply to ourselves the process of inference that we use on others. If we do so, if we notice our own behavior that does not fit in with our introspectible states of consciousness, we must judge this behavior as if it were the behavior of another person. That is, we must connect this behavior to an inferred state of mind. This we ought easily to be able to do; as Freud has already shown, we readily infer from others' behavior their intelligible, unintrospectible (by us) states of mind. When we infer, rather than introspect, states of mind of our own, we are discovering our own unconscious mental states. Still, says Freud, although we can learn of our unconscious mental states in the way that we learn of others' mental lives, our unconscious is not exactly like the whole mental life of others.

Freud says that the analogy that we have drawn between others' minds and our own unconscious states drives us not to the Freudian unconscious but to the concept of a second consciousness, of which we know nothing, that is linked to the consciousness that we introspect. We assume a second consciousness because we must infer it the way that we infer others' mental states--from behavior. When we infer mental states of our own on the basis of our behavior, we are led to assume a consciousness which is like someone else's linked up somehow with our own consciousness. But Freud argues that "a consciousness of which its possessor knows nothing is

something very different from a consciousness belonging to another person, and it is questionable whether such a consciousness, lacking as it does, its most important characteristic, deserves any discussion at all." The "most important characteristic" is consciousness. But even though we have to infer both the mental states of others (conscious as well as unconscious states) and our own unconscious mental states, the parallel cannot be extended too far. The analogy applies only to the method by which we come to know these states. One reason that the analogy is limited is that the mental states that we infer in others represent a complete psychical order, whereas those that we infer in ourselves are only unconscious. Second, many unconscious processes are independent of one another. Freud says that this, coupled with our giving to our unconscious the nature of a second consciousness, must lead us to infer an unlimited number of consciousnesses, all of which are unknown to us and to each other; and this is far less plausible than merely assuming an unconscious mental life in each of us. Third, psychoanalytic treatment shows that some of these unconscious processes are characterized by "peculiarities" that are alien to the familiar characteristics of our consciousness, and thus that argue against being processes of a second consciousness. Given these considerations, says Freud, we should modify our first assumption--that we have a second consciousness in ourselves--to another, less drastic assumption, namely, that we have



legitimate grounds for believing in the existence of a mental order in ourselves that lacks consciousness.

There are a couple of problems with this analogical argument. Let me lay out the argument briefly. Freud says:

(1) We have immediate certainty of our own consciousness.

(2) We infer consciousness (mind) in others; we do this on the basis of others' "observable behavior and utterances."

(3) We infer, by an analogy between others' behavior and our own, mental states of our own that are not introspected; these are our own unconscious mental states.

(4) We have to modify this last inference, because it leads logically to the assumption of a mental life composed of both conscious and unconscious mental states.

Steps One and Two are an abbreviated statement of the argument from analogy that is used traditionally to show that we have knowledge of other minds. There is a link missing in Freud's statement, namely, that we connect to our consciousness our physical and behavioral dimensions; but this premise is implicitly assumed. The place that the argument becomes novel and interesting is Step Three. Here Freud takes the traditional argument from analogy and reverses it. In the traditional argument, we reason from the connection we see between our own mental states and behavior to the connection we must suppose to exist between others' behavior and mental

life. We reason thus because we observe that others behave similarly to us; others must have a mental life because they behave like us, and our behavior is connected to a mental life. Freud asks us to reason the other way around; he asks us to proceed from the mental lives of others, which we assume or infer from their behavior, to our own unintrospected mental states, which we must suppose are connected to our behavior in the way that others' states are connected to their behavior.

The argument from analogy no longer enjoys philosophical favor; but Freud's use of it to overcome our skepticism concerning an unconscious does not, I believe, encounter the same problems that undermine the traditional use to which the argument was put. The most basic objection to the traditional argument from analogy is that no sophisticated process of inferential reasoning takes place before we can know that others have minds. Our belief that others have minds and mental states is a primitive, pre-reflective response to others. If we questioned whether others are beings with minds, then an account like the one offered by the analogical argument might make sense. But we do not raise the question. Connected to this objection to the argument from analogy is another problem: Contrary to the argument, we do not reason from our own case to the case of everyone else. A two-year-old girl heard the yelping of a dog who was being examined by the vet. The little girl looked mournful: "Poor doggy, poor doggy." It

is not plausible to suppose that the child was making an inference from her own case to that of the dog.

The reverse argument from analogy is not susceptible to either of these objections. While the regular argument from analogy is misguided because it sees our acceptance of others as a sophisticated rather than a primitive response, the reverse argument is a pretty good account of how we do often come to know our own unconscious mental states. For the realizing of one's own unconscious state is not a pre-reflective, natural process; it takes a psychologically sophisticated person to notice and recognize in his behavior signs of unconscious activity. And the recognition of unconscious mental states in others, a recognition made on the basis of observing others' behavior, is the prerequisite for the analogous recognition of similar states in oneself. The second point, that we do not reason from our own case to that of others is consistent with, not contradicted by, the reverse argument. The reverse argument is that we reason from the case of others to our own case.

But is the reverse argument open to objections from other quarters? We have discussed the objection, which Freud himself poses, that what we are led to assume by the reverse argument is not an unconscious in ourselves but rather a second consciousness; Freud gives us three good reasons for drawing the first conclusion rather than the second. The only other real problem is that our becoming aware of our

unconscious mental states is very often a more subtle graded process than the reverse argument suggests. But while the usual case is that our discrepant behavior caused by unconscious states is not blatant enough for us to notice it as discrepant, nevertheless most of us at some time are victimized by our own odd and inexplicable behavior. In such cases, we do reason from our behavior to what "must be" our mental state. But even if such cases are unusual, they do provide an example of a process that is the starting point for the discovery of one's own unconscious states. And Freud uses the reverse argument for exactly that purpose.

Freud shows with the gap argument that the concept of unconscious mental states is necessary if we are to have an understanding of mind. He shows with the reverse argument from other minds that we habitually conceive of others in such a way as to make the assumption of unconscious states in others and ourselves easy. I believe that Freud saw both of these arguments merely as tools with which to get in the hostile psychologist's door; but in spite of his protests that they are crude arguments that later he will refine, they are interesting, persuasive, and ingenious.

Freud's characterization of conscious states as those of which I am aware and unconscious states as those of which I am not aware, his insistence that awareness or the lack of it is the main distinction between conscious and unconscious states, is the basis for a theory of mind that holds that our

mental life is a coherent whole. The characterization that Freud gives of unconscious mental states, which makes them sound very different from conscious states, can be accounted for by the lack of awareness that we have of them.<sup>11</sup> Being aware of a state makes us feel the need to incorporate it into the fairly well-integrated body of our other beliefs, it forces us to change our beliefs as we become more mature or different through experience, it causes us to weigh considerations of pleasure against the demands of other aspects of reality. When we are unaware of a state, we cannot subject it to the scrutiny of reason and reasonableness; in fact, we deny even having such a state. In the following chapters, I will pursue my own more properly philosophical course in distinguishing between conscious and unconscious mental states; but that course, for me, begins here, with Freud.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>See, for example, Sigmund Freud, The Interpretation of Dreams, in The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, ed. and translated by James Strachey, V (London: The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1953), pp. 610-618, and Sigmund Freud, "The Unconscious," XV, pp. 166-171; this sequence (of gap argument then distinction between Pcs. and Ucs.) is not followed in Freud's The Ego and The Id, XIX. (In this dissertation all references to Freud's work are to the Standard Edition.)

<sup>2</sup>Freud, "Unconscious," pp. 186-187. When Freud says that Ucs. ideas are exempt from mutual contradiction, he is not referring to the mere incompatibility of, say, desires that are inconsistent with one another and that give rise to ambivalent feelings in a person; he is saying that Ucs. ideas contain no degrees of uncertainty whatsoever, so that a pair of incompatible desires in the Ucs. would not be touched by ambivalence at all but rather would stand intractably opposed to each other. (Freud does not use "contradiction" in the logician's sense that the presence of A precludes the presence of B.)

"Cathexis" is another rather idiosyncratic concept. Cathexis is the quantity (of which we have no means of measuring) of "energy" or "excitation" in an idea. In the Ucs., ideas are subject to the "primary process," which means that ideas press "uninhibitedly" toward "discharge" through consciousness, hence, the "mobility" of cathexis. In the Cs., ideas are subject to the "secondary process," which is the repression or inhibition of cathexis. I will discuss this topic in more detail in the second section of this chapter.

<sup>3</sup>Freud, "Unconscious," p. 171; see also Interpretation, pp. 573-575, and Ego/Id, pp. 20-23.

<sup>4</sup>Freud, "Project For a Scientific Psychology," I, p. 312; Interpretation, pp. 573-574; Ego/Id, p. 22.

<sup>5</sup>Freud, Interpretation, pp. 600, 617-618; "Unconscious," p. 201ff.; Ego/Id, pp. 20-23.

<sup>6</sup>Freud, Interpretation, pp. 573-575.

<sup>7</sup>Freud, Ego/Id, pp. 20-23.

<sup>8</sup>Freud, "Unconscious," pp. 177-179, 201.

<sup>9</sup>Freud, "Unconscious," p. 169. All other quotes in this section will be from this paper, pp. 169-171.

<sup>10</sup>But even on this point Freud withholds final acquiescence, for he believes that much of our introspectible mental life is disguised, hence often we introspect only the disguise.

<sup>11</sup>This is not to claim that the characteristics he gives to unconscious states actually exist, but only to say that such characteristics are not inconsistent with our lack of awareness of such states.

## CHAPTER II

### ANALYSIS OF THE CONCEPTS

#### "Conscious" and "Aware"

I want to show that conscious mental states are states of which one is aware. I want to show that if I am not aware of my mental state *m*, then *m* is not conscious, and that if I am aware of my mental state *m*, then *m* is conscious: I want to show that one's awareness of mental state *m* is both a necessary and a sufficient condition of *m*'s being conscious.

It may seem superfluous to point out the close connection between "conscious" and "aware," since often we use the terms interchangeably. We say, "She was aware of a light footstep in the hall," and, just as easily, "She was conscious of a light footstep in the hall." (We find the easy interchangeableness of the terms in the verbal forms that take "of" or "that," not so much in the other forms of the terms.) But if we do often use the terms interchangeably, then my characterization of conscious mental states as those states of which one is aware seems to be pleonastic or trivial. But



I will argue that treating the two terms as if they are synonymous obscures the relationship between them and leads to certain misconceptions about the nature of consciousness (and of the unconscious). And while we do in fact often interchange "aware" and "conscious," nevertheless, we also often show a preference for one term over the other. We snap, "I'm aware of that!" to show that nothing important has slipped by us, that we are alert to all the ramifications of the situation, that we are at least two steps ahead of you; we do not say, "I'm conscious of that!" We say with relief, "He is conscious now," but not, "He is aware now." The former statement expresses the distinction between being conscious and unconscious, or perhaps, being revived and knocked out. The latter statement obviously has its roots in the former but is not interchangeable with the former. If you say, "He is aware now," you may be a member of a religious sect speaking of a recent convert; your use of "aware" functions as a metaphor, as in "I was blind, but now I see." Or you are the father of a sixteen-year-old who thought that drivers have the right-of-way through pedestrian crosswalks, and who ran over a pedestrian who failed to yield to him; you post bond, lecture the kid all the way home; as you tell your wife the story, she exclaims, "How could he not be aware that pedestrians have the right-of-way?" You say grimly, "Well, he's aware now." In this case, the question of being conscious or not concerns the unfortunate pedestrian.

Adopting a few explicit distinctions between "conscious" and "aware" will undercut the charge of pleonasm; the distinctions are justified by the ordinary cases in which we prefer one term to another, just as our habit of treating the two as if they were synonymous is justified by the instances in which we show little or no preference.<sup>1</sup> The distinctions I propose will guarantee that the claim "Conscious mental states are those of which one is aware" is a significant claim, and will felicitously provide a means for the exorcising certain demons lurking in traditional theories of mind. Let us turn now to the distinctions.

In Content and Consciousness, D.C. Dennett proposes to limit "conscious" to non-intentional<sup>2</sup> uses; that is, he prohibits our use of "of x" and "that x" after "he was conscious." Dennett says that we can use "conscious" only in contexts like these: "he is conscious," "he is unconscious," "he is a conscious being." Dennett would form all intentional idioms with "aware," not "conscious," for example: "he was aware of x," and "he was aware that x." Dennett says that ordinarily we use both terms both intentionally and non-intentionally; but he points out that, if in the interests of order, we limit each term to one use only, "conscious" sounds more natural than "aware" in non-intentional idioms. And "aware" sounds at least no less natural than "conscious" in intentional idioms.<sup>3</sup> I propose to follow Dennett in this distinction.

However, limiting "aware" to intentional uses still leaves some ambiguity in our use of the term. As Dennett points out, often we confuse two very different, intentional notions of "aware." When we confuse these notions, we are led into such errors as our supposing, when we say that the swerving bee is aware of the tree, that we are saying the same thing about the bee as we are saying about the person when we say that he is aware of the tree. We reinforce the error, rather than remedy it, when we realize that, since the bee cannot tell us what he is aware of, we cannot know what he is aware of. Here we become--absurdly--involved in the problem of knowledge of bees' minds. And also we start asking questions like: Is the bee aware of the tree as a tree, or as an obstacle in the course of his flight, or what? The confusion between our notions of "aware" arises, says Dennett, because we have not separated the two features of our talk about awareness: introspection and behavior control.

Sometimes when we are asked what we are aware of, we respond by giving an introspective report; we report, say, our feelings or perceptions. A dumb animal can never respond in this way. And yet we often speak of animals being aware of things: we say that the bee that swerved just before hitting the tree "must have been aware of" the tree. Similarly, we say of the driver of the car that he "must have been aware of" the route after he steered the car around the curves of the (familiar) road and got off on the right exit. We say

this even though the driver paid no particular attention to his driving or to the road, and in fact was thinking of other things throughout the drive and upon reflection cannot recall making the correct turns. Dennett wants to call the type of awareness that involves the introspective reporting of the contents of our consciousness "awareness<sub>1</sub>." He restricts this type of awareness to speaking creatures. "Awareness<sub>2</sub>" has to do with the directing and control of behavior, and all sentient creatures can be aware<sub>2</sub> of something. Awareness<sub>2</sub> can involve later speculation: "I must have been aware of what I was doing, because although I didn't think about it, I got off the highway at the correct exit." Such speculation is not privileged in the way that introspective reporting connected to awareness<sub>1</sub> is held to be privileged. Another person can be in an equally good--or even better--position to comment on a person's directing of his behavior.<sup>4</sup>

Let us turn now from a discussion of "aware" to one of "conscious." Dennett does not break down his analysis of the use of "conscious" further than his initial restriction of the term to non-intentional uses. But even if we restrict "conscious" to intentional uses, we are left with several uses of the term. For A to have a conscious mental state, and for A to be a conscious being, and for A to be, simply, conscious, are all different things. We easily can see this by looking at the contrasts to examples of each case. When we say "A's mental state is conscious," we are contrasting

his state to an unconscious mental state; the contrast is between, say, a conscious desire and an unconscious one. When we say, "A is a conscious being," we are contrasting him with the sort of entity to which we do not attribute consciousness, for example, a rock. When we say, "A is conscious now," we mean that he has come out of a coma; we mean that he is not "unconscious," or not in "a state of unconsciousness."

The distinction among our uses of "conscious" is connected to the distinction between our uses of "aware" in at least these three ways: First, that A is conscious and somehow engaged with x entails only that A is aware<sub>2</sub> of x. (That A is conscious does not entail that A is aware<sub>1</sub> of x.) Awareness<sub>2</sub> typically is a necessary and sufficient condition of A's being conscious. [There seems to be a striking exception: sleepwalking. Think of the sleepwalker who gets out of bed, gets his socks from the dresser drawer, puts them on his feet, descends the stairs, goes out the front door, and locks himself out. He is aware<sub>2</sub> of the dresser, the socks, the stairs, the front door, because his behavior takes account of these in the appropriate way (as the bee's behavior takes account of the tree in the appropriate way); but certainly he cannot at any point in the sleepwalk give an introspective report on what he is doing or thinking. If we were to awaken him, he would not know where he is or what he is doing; he is asleep. Here, awareness<sub>2</sub> is not a sufficient condition for A's being conscious. But, I am not sure that we would want to regard

being asleep as being unconscious, at least not in the way that we regard being knocked out or in a coma as being unconscious; so I am not sure that sleepwalking is an exception to the claim that awareness<sub>2</sub> is a necessary and sufficient condition of A's being conscious.] Awareness<sub>1</sub>, on the other hand, is only a sufficient condition for A's being conscious. For example, we know that A is conscious--and not in a coma--when he drives home from work. If you are in the car with A, and you ask him what he is thinking, and he says, "I am concentrating on my driving, because the road is so slick," we would say that A is aware<sub>1</sub> of his driving. If his answer is, "I am watching for my exit," we would say that he is aware<sub>1</sub> of looking for the correct exit ramp. In both these cases, our saying that A is aware<sub>1</sub> entails that he is conscious. But that A is conscious does not imply that he is aware<sub>1</sub> of any aspect of his driving home. Suppose you ask him what he is thinking, just before he changes lanes to go onto the exit ramp, and he replies, "I am thinking how hungry I am." Here, we cannot say that A is aware<sub>1</sub> of looking for the exit ramp; we can say only that he is aware<sub>2</sub> of it, and that that entails that he is conscious. And that A is conscious and doing something entails that he is at least aware<sub>2</sub> of something. That is, his driving home successfully entails that he is aware<sub>2</sub> of, perhaps, the car ahead of him, or the slickness of the wet highway.

The second way in which "aware" and "conscious" are

connected is this: That A is a conscious being means that A is a creature capable of awareness<sub>1</sub>; but just what creatures are capable of awareness<sub>1</sub> is open in some cases to dispute. Rocks are not capable of awareness<sub>1</sub>; people are. Are very small children? Are animals? While we want to say that animals are conscious, when they are not drugged or in a coma or so forth, nevertheless, we are not inclined to say that a giraffe is a conscious being. With the exception of certain pet lovers who anthropomorphize Fido's every action, we restrict the status of "conscious being" to human beings. We do this because "only people think." But here, I think, our reasoning ought to be: "Only people speak." For when we make thinking, i.e., the conscious thought process, the mark of the conscious being, we divide the world into thinking and non-thinking creatures. And again, when the examples are a rock and a normal adult human being, we have no difficulty with the categories. But what do we say of the cat who, tiny paws cupped, shovels the contents of his litter box onto the clean kitchen floor after you have locked him in the kitchen overnight? We might want to say, "He decided to get back at me," and this is perfectly all right in that we habitually ascribe intentions to animals; it makes sense to ascribe intentions to animals. It is more reasonable to suppose that Morris meant to get back at me for locking him up than to suppose that his scattering the litter was entirely coincidental, especially if whenever I lock him up he scatters the

litter or tears the curtains. But saying that Morris meant to get even does not involve the claim that Morris, distraught and conniving, thought to himself, "Let's see, now, if I were to shred these curtains, she'd sure be sorry. . . ." We do not want to consider the cat a thinking, conscious being in the way that we consider a human being a thinking, conscious being. But why not?

We cannot suppose the cat's action to be the fulfillment of a consciously perpetrated plan. Our reason for saying this so confidently is that it makes no sense to say otherwise. There is no "test" by which we could tell that the revenge was conscious, i.e., reasoned out, thought through. How do we tell with human beings then? Human beings tell us that they meant to do such-and-such, or deny that they meant to. But cats cannot speak; they cannot avow or deny their intentions. "No, no," you say. "The point is that Morris had only to think to himself that he intended such-and-such." But animals who cannot speak cannot think, at least not in the way that human beings think (when they consciously think), and the way human beings think is the standard, and ultimately involves speech. The confusion concerning "intentional" comes from our thinking that, if an action obviously is intended, it must have been thought through consciously. But intention has to do with the appropriateness of the action--say, doing something naughty (ruining the clean floor)--to the proposed aim--say, getting back at someone (upsetting



me); intention does not necessarily involve the perpetrator's being engaged in a verbal thought process which spells out the plan of action. If the cat cannot (ever) tell us that he thought or meant such-and-such, then we must say that he is not capable of thinking (the way humans think)--because he cannot, any more than a human can, have a private introspective language. Humans introspect, because they have (a public) language, because they are linguistic.<sup>5</sup> The criterion for a creature's being a conscious being ought to be his ability to use language rather than his ability to think.

We don't quite know what to say of talking dolphins or language-using apes. When the criterion for being a conscious being is the ability to think, to "reason," then deciding whether or not A is a conscious being is to some extent a matter of convention--because we cannot decide whether the cat "must have been" thinking or not. I will argue that the decision need not be so arbitrary and should be based on the criterion of speech. I think that most of us would agree that robots are not conscious beings, but perhaps someday, faced with a linguistically fluent C3PO, we would want to say that an android<sup>6</sup> can satisfy the criterion for awareness<sub>1</sub>, that is, for introspective reporting, and hence is a conscious being.

The third connection between "conscious" and "aware" is this: For A to have a conscious mental state  $m(x)$ , A must be aware<sub>1</sub> of  $x$ . That is, awareness<sub>1</sub> of  $x$  is a necessary

condition of A's having conscious mental state  $m$ . It does not follow from this that A is not conscious if he is engaged in behavior that indicates that he has mental state  $m$  and yet is not aware<sub>1</sub> of  $x$ . What follows is that A is aware<sub>2</sub> of  $x$  and is conscious.

Only language-users can have conscious mental states because only language-users can be or not be aware<sub>1</sub> of  $x$ . This is not to say that non-language-users have (only) unconscious mental states. The distinction between conscious and unconscious mental states applies only to language-users because the criterion by which we judge a state conscious is the subject's ability to speak, to give an introspective report. An analogy will support this: It makes no more sense to say that the mental states of cats are all unconscious mental states than to say that a rock is unconscious all the time: being unconscious applies only to sentient creatures, that is, to creatures who are capable of being both conscious (not drugged or knocked out) and unconscious. A rock is neither conscious nor unconscious; a cat can be either conscious or unconscious, but he can have neither conscious nor unconscious mental states (although he does have mental states, such as wanting, believing, and so forth); a human being can be conscious or unconscious, and he can have conscious and unconscious mental states.

To sum up: To be conscious, you have to be aware<sub>2</sub>, and vice versa; awareness<sub>2</sub> is based on sentience; both language-

users and non-language-users can be aware<sub>2</sub> of  $x$ . To be a conscious being, you have to be capable of awareness<sub>1</sub>, which is dependent on the ability to speak. To have a conscious mental state  $m(x)$ , you must be aware<sub>1</sub> of  $x$ . Only language-users can be aware<sub>1</sub> of  $x$ .

In the next section, I will focus on the concept of awareness<sub>1</sub>, in particular on its relation to introspection. In this chapter, we have seen that awareness<sub>1</sub> is closely related to the concept of conscious mental states and to speech. In Section Two, we will see that our discussion of the concept of awareness<sub>1</sub>, and speech, and conscious mental states, will lead us to redefine the concept of introspection, which, in turn, will illuminate the conclusions of this section.

### Introspection

I want to argue for the traditional claim that all conscious mental states are introspectible, but I want to reassess what it means for a mental state to be introspectible. I claim that the traditional concept of introspection is embedded in a view of mind that is wrong, but that reworked in a post-Freudian framework, the concept provides the criteria by which we can distinguish conscious from unconscious mental states. We will find that such a reworking results in a view that consciousness is a quite specialized mental phenomenon, and not--as the traditional view has it--the "typical" condition of mind.

The traditional theory of mind describes introspection as the attending of consciousness to its own workings or to its own states. This concept of introspection is based upon three interlocking traditions: the use of thinking as the paradigm conscious mental state, the identification of mind with consciousness, and the contrasting of introspection with perception, a contrast that ultimately suggests that the two are the same sort of process but are focussed upon two different types of objects. The first two traditions are examples of generalizing from a quite restricted species of datum--in this case, the conscious thought process--to a wide-ranging genus of data--here, all mental states. These two views burden the concept of introspection with functions that it cannot perform because the concept makes sense only when applied to one type of mental state, the paradigmatic conscious mental state. If the concept of introspection is asked to perform only in terms of that one type mental state, then it very nearly distinguishes conscious from unconscious mental states.

The primary question concerning introspection has always been, does introspection accompany every mental state? Philosophers thought that it must, for the nature of mind--i.e., of consciousness--is its peculiar transparency or reflexivity. In fact, this reflexivity was considered so fundamental to consciousness that no term--other than "consciousness" itself--was assigned to refer to this peculiarity until

the late nineteenth century. Then, the term "introspection" was introduced, and contrasted to the term "perception," which refers to consciousness's attending to external objects.<sup>7</sup>

If introspection is not just closely associated with consciousness, but is actually part of what consciousness is, then by definition introspection accompanies every (conscious) mental state. Obviously, then, introspection has to be innocuous enough not to obtrude upon the mental state that it accompanies, and yet salient enough to warrant our philosophically noticing it at all. For if, on the one hand, we conceive introspection in too innocuous a way, we have the absurdity that part of the nature of consciousness, which intuitively is accessible or transparent, is inaccessible--that is, unconscious. And if, on the other hand, we think of introspection in too pronounced a way, as a sort of examining, then we have the difficulty of explaining why in fact we cannot find it operating much of the time. This second difficulty we have still to face even after we no longer identify consciousness with the whole of the mental, because of the traditional analogy between introspection and perception.

If introspection is a mark of the mental, then unintrospectible (mental) states are not, by definition, mental states--or better, there are no unintrospectible mental states. This is the pre-Freudian view. The post-Freudian view holds that unintrospectible mental states do exist,

therefore consciousness cannot be coextensive with the mental. On both of these views, only and all those states that can be introspected are conscious states. But on the pre-Freudian view, the paradigm of the thought process obscures other kinds of mental states traditionally held to be conscious, however clumsily they fit that mold. An example of such states is perception; many of our perceptions are unconscious.<sup>8</sup> Take the case of the man who successfully drives from his office to his home without noticing any of the landmarks that map his route, although he must have perceived them in order to have taken the correct exit off the highway.

On the post-Freudian view, we have allowed ourselves the luxury of unintrospectible unconscious mental states. But we still perhaps are bound by the convention that all conscious states are introspectible in the way that conscious thought processes are. Here is one place that the juxtaposition of introspection and perception confuses us. Perception is the attending to an external object; the paradigmatic example of perception is seeing--especially, seeing a tree. Introspection is the attending to an internal object, the conscious state itself. Another way of putting this is that perception has to do with outer stimuli and introspection with inner stimuli. The relationship would then seem to be this: We perceive the tree and we introspect the perception of the tree. We think of introspection as an inner analogue to perception, so we might rephrase the relationship like

this: We perceive the tree and we perceive that perception. Just as when we (consciously) perceive an object we take note of it, so also when we introspect a mental state, we take note of that state. Or so goes the reasoning. But even if introspection is "consciousness attending to itself," it does not follow that "attending" here means "watching." We are misled even by the word itself: "introspection" makes us think of "inspection," which suggests a careful visual examination. It just seems that watching is what introspection must be when our typical conscious mental state is held to be a thought process and when our analogical model for introspection is perception, typically seeing.

But viewing introspection as a sort of perceptual process that accompanies our every mental state seems to entail not only that we are--every time that we perform--our own audience, but also that we suppose that every mental state that we have is followed by an infinite series of mental states. The first state in that series would be either a perception or an introspection; if the first, it would have to be introspected, and that introspection, which is a mental state, would have to be introspected, ad infinitum. If the first state were an introspection, the same result would follow. But there is no necessity for interpreting "attending" as "watching." "Attending to" our (conscious) mental states could be conceived as being set for a certain kind of action, that is, being in a position with relation to the state such

that a certain kind of behavior could be expected. On this interpretation, a conscious state of love would involve, perhaps, saying, "I love you," to the loved one; on the traditional interpretation, a (conscious) state of love necessarily would involve a scrutiny turned inward, a self-conscious examination of the nuances of the feeling. And while such a scrutiny is not rare when one is in love, nevertheless it clearly is wrong that one's being in love consciously necessitates one's being in love self-consciously.

There is no reason that "introspection" has to be a watching process. The only demand is that we do justice to the phenomenon that introspection is supposed to account for--our awareness of our conscious mental states. And this awareness can be explained by an appeal to the kinds of things we may be expected to do when, say, we are aware of our being in love. Part of our wanting to conceive of introspection as a monitoring or watching process is that our model for introspection is perception, and both the paradigm and the typical perceptions are seeing something. We extend the example of sight metaphorically to all cases of knowing something: We "view" his theory askance when we are skeptical of its worth; we "see the light" when finally we understand a proposition; we say that you have "second sight" when you are especially perspicacious. And we think of introspection, which is the means for knowing our conscious mental states, as a sort of seeing the contents of consciousness. It is



harmless to say "I see" when you finally understand how to work out a problem in symbolic logic, because you do not literally mean that your understanding is visual; you are speaking metaphorically. But when you think of introspection as an observing of your thoughts, as an inspection of your consciousness, that necessarily occurs every time you are consciously engaged, then the metaphor is harmful; it is misleading. For we are not continually gauging our conscious mental states, we usually are not watching ourselves, are not taking explicit note of our feelings, are not "self-conscious." When we explain the distinctive element in conscious mental states, which is our introspective awareness of them, in terms of watching, we demand that it be the case that human beings are constantly vigilant over their mental lives. But that just is not the case. I propose to sever introspection's analogical tie to visual perception and to interpret introspection in terms of the behavioral follow-up that we expect as a consequence of one's being in conscious mental state  $m(x)$ .

There is another contrast between perception and introspection supporting the claim that introspective awareness involves, not observation, but a certain expectable behavior. In giving examples of perception, we do not separate the perception of an object from the specific type of perception involved. We say, "He heard the sound of raucous laughter"; and we say, "He perceived the sound of raucous laughter." We

may be aware of a more formal tone in the latter statement, but essentially we hear no difference between the two statements. "Perception" is the generic term for every kind of perceiving. If I were to say that I perceive a tree ahead, you understand immediately that I see a tree ahead; if, running my hands over the table I wanted to buy, I say that I perceive a slight crack in the wood, you understand that I feel a crack. If I perceive something, I see it, or hear it, or touch or smell it; we do not think of perception as occurring apart from a specific instance of sight, hearing, or otherwise sensing.

But we demand that introspection be an essential part of all conscious mental states and yet also be separable from them. In other words, we wish introspection to function both generically and specifically, as a type of state in itself. We want "introspection" to be a generic term that functions like the generic term "perception," but invariably we distinguish, say, introspecting an emotion from feeling it. If I say that I feel great sorrow, your expectation is that I will cry or otherwise perform in a way that shows my sorrow. However, if I say that I am introspecting great sorrow, you perhaps think of me noting the nuances of my sorrow, but you do not expect me to cry.<sup>9</sup> Arthur Falk claims that the reason for our wanting to distinguish the introspection of sorrow from the feeling of sorrow is that we associate with the feeling certain behavioral consequences that we do not associate with

the introspection. If I itch, you expect me to scratch; if I introspect my itch, you do not. Falk finds no reason to suspect that we employ "two different modes of access" to each mental state (although he believes that, with certain mental states, divided attention may occur: for example, we can drive a car and listen to conversation simultaneously). The temptation to assume a separate, unique form of introspective attention arises from the difference we perceive between your saying that you feel an itch and your saying that you introspect an itch. This difference arouses in us different expectations concerning your probable behavioral follow-ups: I expect you to do one thing if you feel an itch, namely, scratch, and another if you introspect an itch, namely, mentally examine the itch. But these differing expectations need not in themselves lead us to postulate two separate modes of access to the state.<sup>10</sup>

Still, in spite of Falk's disclaimer about different modes of access, we want to ask: Why insist that "introspection" be a generic term like "perception"? And: How can we claim that introspection functions analogously to perception?--for we have seen that some perceptions are introspected, so that it would seem that the set of introspections includes some perceptions and not that the set of introspections and the set of perceptions are equal and separate sets. The answer to the second question is that perceptions are mental states and introspection characterizes

all conscious mental states; therefore all perceptions that are conscious are introspected, in just the same way that all conscious "inner" states are introspected. The analogy between "introspection" and "perception" concerns the question whether or not introspection is a unique mental state. We have found that we are inclined to use the two terms analogously--but if we do, we must view introspection as a generic concept, like perception. And if we see introspection as generic, then the genus to which "introspection" refers must be the group of mental states that are conscious. But many perceptions are conscious, and conscious perceptions are introspected. Therefore we have the absurdity that introspection and perception both function analogously and do not function analogously. If, on the other hand, we decline from the start to use the terms analogously, if we decide that introspection is a unique type of state, then we must view introspection in the traditional way, as a reflective process that accompanies some mental states. But "reflection" is a perfectly good name for such a process, and there is no need to coin "introspection" to refer to the reflective review of certain states that we do occasionally take. So, while we do not want to think of introspection as a unique mental state and do want to think of it as a generic concept, we do not want to say that introspection functions analogously to that other generic concept, perception.<sup>11</sup>

In the next section, I will argue that the basis for

distinguishing between feeling an emotion and introspecting it is that the characteristic behavioral follow-ups to be expected in the two cases differ. I will argue that the difference in the behavioral follow-ups functions as a criterion for distinguishing conscious from unconscious mental states. We know, when you scratch your arm, that you itch; but we do not know if that itch is conscious: it may be that you have no idea that you are scratching--and therefore itching--until I say to you: "Stop that; you're going to make yourself bleed." But suppose you have poison ivy and have been warned not to touch it; you do not scratch, but you say: "I'm going out of my mind from the itching!" I will claim that your introspective report is the characteristic behavioral follow-up of your introspecting your itch. I will claim further that the introspective report is our guarantee that your state is conscious, and that your inability to give an introspective report or avowal--in spite of all sorts of leading or informative behavior--indicates that the mental state is unconscious.

### Thought and Speech

Much of our thinking about the concept of introspection parallels our thinking about the concept of thought. This is so for at least two reasons. First, the concept of introspection is modelled on that of the traditional concept of conscious thought; I have discussed this above. Second, introspection is to introspective reporting as thought is to

speaking. That is, just as the introspective report supposedly is an expressing, publicly, of the introspection itself, so also the speaking supposedly is an expressing of the inner thought. In the previous section, when I discussed the first reason for the linking of the concepts of introspection and thought, I claimed that thought is only one example of a mental state and further that it is not the typical mental state. I suggested that, on the other hand, "introspection" is a generic term for an aspect that is characteristic of all conscious mental states. These two claims result in the proposition that thought is less than we had supposed, and introspection more. The conclusion was that the analogy between thought and introspection was not apt.

In this section, I want to examine the second reason that we are inclined to think that introspection and thought are of a piece, namely, the supposed parallel between introspection and introspective reporting, and thought and speaking. I will show that the traditional view of the relation of thought to speaking is misconceived and that thus the traditional concept of the relation of introspection to introspective reporting must also be misconceived. Since I have already shown that introspection and thought are quite different, it may seem superfluous or irrelevant to go into this second matter. However, my emphasis will be on the relationship between the inner and outer workings of language. I want to show that the inner and outer, or private and public,

executions of our mental states are not linked in the way that philosophical tradition and naive supposition have it.

In line with traditional philosophy, we are inclined to think speaking dependent on thinking, that is, that "if the thought isn't there, you can't say it." If we say of someone that he spoke "without thinking," we mean that he didn't weigh his words, and in such a case we often want to absolve him of some or all of the responsibility for what he said. But the important point is the suggestion, if we qualify your words by saying you spoke "without thinking," that it is out of the ordinary to speak without thinking first, that usually speech repeats thought. And we have a connected belief, which is that while thinking may be verbalized, you do not have to "divulge your thoughts" unless you choose to.

But our ordinary experience belies our belief that (conscious) thought is necessary for speech. Think of the times that you have said something like "I don't like tea," only to realize with surprise that "I didn't know until I said it that I don't like tea. But I see now that I don't and never have." Very often we surprise ourselves with our pronouncements on subjects that (consciously) we have not thought about before.

Another, more compelling counterexample to the belief that thought is necessary for speech lies in our everyday way of conversing. It is rare for us to "stop and think" about what we are going to say in the give and take of conversation<sup>12</sup>;

the usual case is that we simply talk, without thinking--or at least, without thinking of the sort supposed. Usually we do not "read off," or translate into words, thoughts. Thinking and speaking are different sorts of things, even though often what we say corresponds to what we are thinking and even though thoughts may be formed with the same words and even sentences that we later use in speech. But thinking is not a rehearsal for speaking (except unusually--think of anxiously rehearsing an apology)<sup>13</sup> and speaking is not an airing of a completed and private process.

Nevertheless, I am not suggesting that thinking and talking have nothing in common. Language is common to (conscious) thought and to speech; indeed, this link causes us to believe that thinking and talking are more alike than they are. When we look at mental states other than thought--say, anger, sexual desire, or a lasting hatred--we see that such mental states are not at all like talk. The feeling of anger is not like "I am angry with you"; the thought "I am angry with him" is much more like the spoken sentence than the feeling that it describes or avows. The discrepancy between most mental states and our talk about them reflects the fact that the former do not use words--are not "put into words"--whereas the latter does use words. The difference is quite significant, for when we put those mental states into words--whether in thought or in speech--they become conscious, and when we do not put those states into words, they remain unconscious.<sup>14</sup>



In comparison to speech, many of our thoughts are vague and incomplete. Many thoughts are like the speeches of the flighty Lily Tomlin character who, in the course of a long and ecstatic monologue, cannot complete one sentence.<sup>15</sup> We somehow understand the monologue, because the monologue is a verbalization of the sporadically articulate and free-associative pattern that our thoughts often assume. Usually thoughts are not in sentences. Thoughts usually balance on the rim of consciousness, leaning now in toward consciousness, now away into unconsciousness, depending upon the degree to which the thought is put into words. Measured against what in this context is the grammatical ideal of speech, thought cannot be considered an inner blueprint for talk. So far as the use of language goes, writing is much closer to talk than thinking is.

One example of the relationship between thought and speech is this<sup>16</sup>: You come over to my house and you ask me any one or several of these questions: "Why do you keep looking out the window?" "Why are you so fidgety?" "Why won't you come with me to dinner?" "Why are you so dressed up?" My answer to each of these questions is "I'm expecting Jack." The traditional theory of the relation of thought to talk would be absurd here, for it is not the case that I have been thinking these words to myself: "I'm expecting Jack," and that your question or questions prompted me to repeat my thought out loud. My expecting Jack takes

the form of my performing several activities, such as looking out the window for his car, restlessly pacing, and having put on my best dress. My expecting Jack is the reason that I cannot accept your dinner invitation. My expecting Jack means that I am ready to avow at any time that I am expecting him.

An objection here might be that expecting is not a thought, and of course it is not. But if traditional theory suggests that talk is the expressing of a thought process, then the mental state "expecting" would have to be translated into a thought before being translated into a public declaration of expecting. And this is wrong. The example clearly shows that all sorts of activities prompt one, when questioned, to provide the unhesitating explanation: "I am expecting Jack." Think of the jilted lover who upon being berated for refusing to leave the house says (to her own surprise): "But I'm hoping Bill will call." Consciously, she was not hoping that Bill would call; she had no hope left, or so she thought. Yet her painfully unhesitating and surprising statement shows that indeed she has been hoping that Bill will call and that she will be home to receive the call. There need not be conscious thoughts preceding our statements. Our statements are provoked by or arise from many sorts of activities and states.

Our talk about our states and activities is introspective talk.<sup>17</sup> Introspective talk--or an introspective report--performs in the way that we wanted to believe that

the supposed partnership between thought and talk performs. I have suggested that while in some circumstances, e.g., when one mentally devises and rehearses an apology, conscious thought corresponds to speech, far more often conscious thought consists of the identifying of an emotion or the sudden making of a decision. Furthermore, speech almost always occurs without conscious thoughts preceding it. The phenomenon that the supposed relationship of thinking to speech was believed to explain is introspection--but not a concept of introspection modelled on that of the traditional concept of thought. Not only is speech not a public expressing of thought, but introspective reporting is not a public copying of introspection. In the previous section, I claimed that introspection was not a thinking about a (conscious) mental state, but rather a being set to act in some way with reference to that (conscious) mental state. This being set to act may result in the introspective report.

The introspective report is peculiarly linguistic--and so, of course, is conscious thought, as traditionally seen, that is, as the blueprint for speech. And it may seem that introspection and thought function similarly, providing the scripts for the introspective report and for speech. But neither relationship works this way. Phenomena such as mental rehearsing, mulling, and the conscious parts of the evolving of an idea give us the belief that conscious thought is the basis for speech: if we do not seem to think before

we speak, we reason, then surely the explanation is that the thoughts occurred too quickly for us to catch hold of. But this belief is wrong. We have seen that conscious thought is not necessary to speech. Still, this wrong picture of the relationship of thought to speech distorts our picture of the relationship of introspection to introspective reporting. To see an analogy there is to duplicate the problems inherent in the traditional view of thought and speech. I suggest that introspection is a being set to avow a state and the avowal, the introspective report, is our guarantee that the state is conscious. A mental state becomes conscious when it is introspected, that is, when I am enough aware of it that I put it into words. The thought is not truly conscious until it is explicitly put into words--and this is far more easily accomplished by speech (and writing) than by thinking. It is too easy, when thinking, to drift over transitions, to substitute image for word, phrase, and sentence. Only the explicit use of language can render a mental state conscious. As I stated previously, most (supposedly conscious) thoughts float in and out of consciousness; introspective reporting locks them into consciousness. Of course one can reflect on one's state, but this is not introspection. Generally, introspection is not thinking about one's mental state; it is a recognition of one's mental state that takes the form of avowal. This avowal is not--at least, not usually--the result of a (prior) decision

to avow it; indeed, the avowal can be a statement that surprises the speaker, like the statement, "I am hoping that Bill will call."

At least two results follow from this characterization of introspection. First, only language-users can have conscious mental states. Only language-users introspect, for only language-users have the ability to affirm in speech their state. Only those states that can be affirmed by language can be considered conscious. If you cannot tell me what you are feeling or thinking, then your state must be unconscious. In Section One (Chapter II), I correlated having a conscious mental state (x) with being aware of mental state (x). In Section Two, I showed that introspection characterizes all conscious mental states. In this section, I have shown that introspection is best viewed as the ability--that is, being set--verbally to avow a mental state. Therefore, being aware of mental state m is equivalent to being able verbally to avow mental state m.

We attribute mental states to non-language-users. For example, we say "Fido is jealous because I'm sitting so close to you," or "Spot thinks he gets to go with us." But we cannot say that these mental states are conscious, because Fido and Spot cannot be aware, in an introspective way, of their mental states.<sup>18</sup> It is unexceptionable to attribute desires and beliefs to dumb animals. We say of the dog who lunges for the door when we show him the leash: "Fido wants

to go out." If pressed ("Why on earth would he want to go out--it's freezing out there."), we might say, "He loves to play in the snow." We would say this for the reasons that 1) Fido acts as if he wants to go outside, and 2) it seems that the explanation for his behavior must be what the explanation for our behavior would be if we lunged for the door when our father brings up the sled from the basement: we love to play in the snow. One of our most primitive responses is investing others with our feelings. Recall the two-year-old girl who heard the dog's yelps and who said, "Poor doggy." There is no real problem in attributing feelings to animals on the basis of their behavior--for their behavior approximates that of human beings, and we correctly attribute feelings to other people on the basis of their behavior. Rather, the problem arises when we wonder if the feelings of animals are just like our (conscious, introspectible) feelings. We want to say that Fido's desire to go outside is like ours when we want eagerly to go out. We want to infer from the relationship between our mental state (wanting to go out) and our behavior (going for the door) to a relationship between Fido's mental state (wanting to go out)--which we must attribute to him--and Fido's behavior (going for the door). This is understandable but dangerous for a theory of mind. For our mental state may not be anything like thinking "I want to go out," which is what naively we suppose to be "going on in our mind" when it is the

case that we want to go out. My wanting to go out may, given the situation, just be my glancing out the window, then donning my coat and going to the door. My conscious wanting to go out is shown by my response to your asking me why I am putting on my coat: "I want to go out." The parallel with Fido can extend only to the similar behavior involved--which is quite sufficient to justify our saying "Fido wants to go out" as easily as our saying "Dianne wants to go out." But there is no canine parallel for the introspective avowal: "I want to go out."

The distinction between conscious and unconscious mental states has nothing to do with the expressiveness or complicatedness of the behavior involved. It has to do with expressing in language the mental state that motivates or explains or describes the behavior. Much complex behavior is unconsciously motivated, that is, is prompted by beliefs and desires that the subject is not set to avow. Suppose that you are the jilted lover who refuses to leave the house and that you cannot give us any (good) reason for refusing to go out. We say, "If you're hoping Bill will call. . . ." and you say, "I know he won't call; that's not the reason. I just don't want to go." Your not being set to avow your mental state (because you are self-deceived) means that your mental state is unconscious; if you cannot tell us your state, then your state is unconscious.

This brings me to the second result of my

characterization of introspection: namely, that the introspective report is our guarantee that your state is conscious. If you avow mental state  $m(x)$ , then we have evidence that you are aware of  $x$ . But, you may object, what about behavior?--surely behavior counts as evidence for, say, sexual desire. For often behavior is so clearly indicative of a certain mental state that your denial of that state could not possibly count as evidence for your state of mind. But however expressively your behavior indicates mental state  $m(x)$ , behavior cannot count as evidence for your being aware of  $x$ . The dog's pitiful yelps in the vet's office clearly show his fear, but they do not show that he is aware of his fear. If you cannot avow mental state  $(x)$  (say, you deny  $(x)$  or avow  $(y)$  or cannot say anything at all), then we cannot say that you are aware of  $x$ . And if you are not aware of  $x$ , then  $m(x)$  is not conscious.

Only in language-users do we find discrepancies between what one says and how he acts, that is, between his awareness of  $(x)$  ("I love you") and his behavior as if  $(y)$  ("I hate you"). It is easy to see why this is the case. Behavior is all that we have to judge non-language-users by; non-language-users cannot contradict themselves by claiming to feel one way and acting as if they feel another way. We must interpret language-users, when they contradict themselves, by balancing their avowals against their behavior. Fido cannot say, "On the one hand, I'd like to



stay in here and warm myself by the fire; on the other I'd like even more to go out and cavort in the snow." The concept of contradiction is a concept that arises from the use of language. Rationality, reconciliation, logic are the demands with which language and consciousness confront us. The desires of a dog do not have to be reconciled; Fido acts in accordance with whatever beliefs and desires motivate him most strongly at the time. Dogs seem straightforward ("I'd rather have a good dog than a woman anytime; a dog won't lie and won't try to use me."); people dissemble. But the dog's "straightforwardness" has no moral value, as does a person's, for the dog cannot but be straightforward--he cannot use language, he has no conscious mental states. Moreover, we language-users are self-deceivers because we must try to reconcile our actions and our reasons for our actions with our conscious beliefs and desires. And this can be problematic, because our actions may in fact be prompted by all sorts of unconscious and conflicting beliefs and desires. The ability to use language, which produces conscious mental states, is the basis of the discrepancies we find between our behavior and our explanations for our behavior.

It has been held traditionally that introspective reports are incorrigible; but, as we will see in the next chapter, we can give introspective reports that are wrong. It seems, from the discussion above, that the reason for

this is the inability introspectively to account for our unconscious mental states. What is it about introspective reports that makes them seem unchallengeable and that yet we challenge?

### Incorrigibility and Introspection

The concepts of infallibility and incorrigibility are closely linked with the concept of introspection and are often confused with each other. Here I will distinguish them; the way in which I do so will suit my own purposes but will, I think, be fair.

It has been said that it is impossible for (sincere) first-person psychological statements to be mistaken. The reasoning behind this is that only the person making the introspective report has the special access to his mind that enables him to "see" his thoughts. Only that person knows, first-hand, what he is thinking; only he has the transcript of his thoughts in his mind's eye. Since the introspective report is merely the verbal reproduction of a private mental script, the person making the report must be considered infallible; and it must be that his (sincere) introspective reports guarantee their own truth.

But earlier, I rejected a major link in this line of reasoning when I denied that the introspective report is a sort of reading aloud of a person's thoughts. I pointed out that very often we discover our own thoughts by talking and that only in special circumstances do we repeat our thoughts

out loud. It seems odd to say that we are logically infallible authorities on our mental states if we can surprise ourselves by stating our thoughts.

Another, more telling objection to the notion that introspective reports are infallible is this: When I do not challenge your introspective claim, my reason is not that I believe your claim to be infallible, but rather that I have no reason to doubt your claim. If I should challenge you, my reasons will be practical, not logical. I will say, "If you're so happy to be divorced, why do you cry all the time?" The applicability of the concept of logical infallibility is undercut by the type of grounds that we in fact use for challenging an introspective claim: we challenge your claim if it is at odds with your behavior or if it is strange in view of your circumstances.<sup>19</sup> We do not challenge your claim in spite of the logical impossibility that it be mistaken; we challenge it in spite of our intuitive and usual assumption that you are not wrong.

The argument for incorrigibility, like that for infallibility, is based on the claim that we have privileged access to our own minds. But the claim of incorrigibility provides only that, if we have no evidence to the contrary, we must accept your introspective report. We might characterize the notion of privileged access as the belief that so far as your own mind goes, you are the only sighted person in the world. The proponent of the claim that introspective

reports are infallible would draw from this characterization the statement that, if you are the only person who can see *x*, then you are of necessity the unimpeachable authority for *x*. Others have to take your word. But the proponent of the argument for incorrigibility would say that while it may be the case that you are the only sighted person in the world and that only you can say, "I see a tree ahead of me," nevertheless, others can check your report. They cannot check your claim by looking, but they can go touch the tree, or smell it, or hear it in the wind. There are certain checks available to others that may be used to challenge your claim. When others accept your claim they are not crediting you with logical infallibility, but with (a limited) authority.

But surely it makes no sense to say--as I seem to--that while your introspective report is incorrigible, nevertheless it may be wrong.<sup>20</sup> But that is what I wish to claim. However, I want to take the intuitive belief that ordinarily an introspective claim is unchallengeable and tie this belief not to the truth or falsity of the claim, or to the rightness or wrongness of the claim, but to the awareness the person who makes the claim has of his mental state. We believe strongly that you have the authoritative word on your own mental states; just as strongly, we believe ourselves sometimes justified in challenging that word. By locating incorrigibility in your awareness of your mental state, we do justice to both beliefs.

Let us look at some examples of introspective reports.

If Arnold claims that, during the day that he--bound and gagged--spent locked in the closet while his kidnappers demanded and received a ransom, he felt no fear, but rather alternated between frustration at his helplessness and a sort of curiosity or surprise that such a thing had happened to him--well, generally we accept his claim. We know that Arnold is a stolid man; we know that his wife loves him and has the money to pay the ransom, and we know that Arnold knows this; we know that Arnold does not lie; and we know that Arnold is above average in his ability to recognize his feelings. We also know that the kidnappers were not rough with Arnold. All these factors argue against our discrediting Arnold's statement that he felt no fear during his captivity--even though the situation Arnold found himself in is one that is likely to produce fear in most kidnappees and Arnold's response is not the usual one.

But suppose that Arnold is in the 7-11 during a hold-up. Suppose that there has been a series of 7-11 hold-ups in town and that three people have been killed so far in these hold-ups. In Arnold's case, the store employee is killed and Arnold is threatened with the gun. The next day Arnold tells us that he felt no fear. We are incredulous. For in this case, Arnold's wealth and loving wife do not increase his odds for survival; they are irrelevant. Even Arnold's celebrated

honesty and stolidity of temperament, and his sensitivity to the subtleties of his mental state, do not counter the strangeness of his reaction to the hold-up. We ask Arnold what he did feel. "Well, actually, I felt nothing except a sort of heaviness, an apathy." Arnold's wife says that Arnold had the shakes the rest of the day and nightmares all night. What do we say now?

Do we say: "The oddness of your reaction to the situation, coupled with your behavior after the fact shows that, while you felt nothing during the robbery, nevertheless you were afraid." Or do we say: "You should have been very much afraid, Arnold. Anyone with any sense would have been afraid. You are sensible. You probably were afraid, but didn't show it until afterwards." (This is what we might have said after Arnold gave us his account of his feelings during his being held for ransom--except that we had no reason to doubt Arnold's account except for its oddness. But it wasn't that odd. It was odd enough for us to challenge, but his explanation satisfied us.) Or do we say: "You weren't afraid until afterwards, when you thought about it." Or, perhaps: "You don't experience fear the way most of us do. For you fear takes the form of lassitude. Remember last summer when you fell out of the boat and plummeted to the bottom of the lake? We fished you out, revived you. We asked you what you, a non-swimmer, had felt as you sank. You replied that you had felt no fear, but rather a sort of lassitude. We

said: 'Resignation?' You said: 'No. I had no thoughts about death, I made no decisions. I was in a blind thrall of torpor.' So it seems probable that in situations that would elicit recognizable fear from most of us, you feel lassitude. And feeling that is how you experience fear."

Suppose Herbie goes to the bank, which is then held up by three machine-gun-toting bank robbers. A camera films the robbery, and Herbie gets particularly good coverage, by both the camera and a machine-gun-pointing robber. That night we ask Herbie what he felt. He says, with a touch of pride: "Oddly enough, I felt exhilarated." We watch the footage of the robbery on the news. There is Herbie. Herbie looks ill. Herbie is grinning with maniacal terror. "Come on, Herbie," we say. "You look like a man who thinks he's going to die. You look scared to death." "I look afraid," agrees Herbie. "But I did not feel in the least afraid." We might accept that, especially if Herbie's hobbies include sky-diving and stock-car racing.<sup>21</sup> But some of us might still say: "Your fear disguised itself as exhilaration during the hold-up. The exhilaration was a means of coping with a situation that terrified you."

If the introspective report is supposed to be incorrigible, then surely it can be said to function as a means of identifying<sup>22</sup> one's mental states. But it seems that one's identification reasonably can be challenged, when one of at least these two cases holds: The first case occurs

when the account you give of your mental state is not appropriate, given the situation. Your behavior is consistent with your account of your feelings, but given the circumstances, neither the behavior nor the account is appropriate. The second case arises when the introspective account is belied by your behavior. Here, the report can make sense, can be appropriate, but your behavior is at odds with your account of your feelings. If either condition holds, we may invite you to qualify or correct your introspective account.

The first type of case is rarer: it is easier for people to call you on; and it is more difficult philosophically to explain, because of the question: What is meant by behavior being appropriate to a situation? The charge against you, if we charge you with inappropriate behavior, is that your behavior is not what we should expect. This is not to claim that there is a correct way, a standard way, to react to every situation. It is to claim that, things being what they are in the world of human beings, there are certain ill-defined lines of action and reaction that we would predict for certain situations--and situations like those situations. When your behavior and introspective account deviate from what we would have expected (had we thought about it), we respond to you in ways that range from vague disquiet to gaping disbelief.<sup>23</sup> The behavior that we expect we call "normal"; those lines of conduct that we would have predicted are "norms."



The closer your behavior approximates those norms, the less inclined we are to challenge your verbal corroboration of that behavior. We are a community of judges of behavior. But we are lenient judges: we will acknowledge all sorts of extenuating circumstances and accept all sorts of reasons for your strange behavior and your stubborn avowal of strange feelings prompting that behavior. We look at your personality, your history, your circumstances; we weigh your sincerity; we have faith in your mystery and complexity.

We are doubtful at first of Arnold's account of his reaction to the kidnapping, but after we have considered all the factors, we become, if not satisfied, unable to press our disquiet. We think: "His version doesn't seem quite right, but then, he doesn't get rattled easily and they were gentle with him." We let it go. But Arnold's account of the 7-11 robbery-murder provokes sure--yet perhaps vague--disbelief. Our disbelief is based on the feeling that Arnold's behavior is not at all what we should expect. After he repeatedly assures us that he felt apathetic throughout the ordeal, we believe that he felt apathetic but not that he really was apathetic. If a witness corroborates Arnold's account of himself, we are denied the move we made in Herbie's case; we cannot argue that all the evidence except his testimonial points to his being afraid. The witness says: "He just stood there." Or: "I thought that he thought

it was best to go along with the robber, that it was less dangerous that way." Or: "He looked bored. I couldn't understand it. I was so afraid that I couldn't stop crying." But in spite of the consistency of Arnold's report with his behavior, we would say that apathy is inappropriate in response to such a situation and so Arnold's claim of apathy is suspect. It is not suspect for the reason that we doubt his sincerity or even his perspicacity. We are persuaded, even, that apathy is what Arnold felt. But we still want to argue that Arnold's response really was fear. A point on our side--which would not be present in every case--is that Arnold seems to respond with feelings of lassitude to other situations that call for fear.

Arnold's introspective report is incorrigible in that his awareness of his mental state at the time was of apathy. But still we are inclined to say that in some sense Arnold's claim of apathy is wrong. Arnold's claim does not ring true. And yet, if we cannot give a reason for our disbelief or unease, we may go on record with qualifications, but we must let his claim stand.<sup>24</sup>

The second type of case in which an introspective report is open to challenge is one that we are often called upon to judge. In this type of case, your account may or may not be appropriate for the situation but it is at odds with your behavior. Herbie claims that he was exhilarated by the bank robbery, but his filmed responses are not

consistent with what our practiced idea of exhilaration looks like. Herbie's behavior leads us to think that he was very nervous and upset, and such behavior is appropriate.<sup>25</sup> Herbie's behavior fits the situation, but his introspective report fits neither his behavior nor his situation. In Herbie's case more so than in Arnold's, we wonder about sincerity; we might whisper among ourselves: "You know how macho Herbie is; he doesn't want us to know he was scared." But if we think that probably Herbie is sincere, what do we say? Everything, including his behavior, points away from his account of his feelings. How can we account for this?

We might say that while exhilaration is not wholly appropriate to the situation Herbie found himself in, nevertheless such a reaction is no stranger than Arnold's reaction to being shut up in a closet by kidnappers--and we accepted Arnold's account of his feelings there. We might claim that Herbie's situation is like Arnold's kidnapping, and that Arnold's claim of frustration at being tied up and his sense of surprise at being at the center of an adventure were unusual, but not wrong, as his apathy at the 7-11 was. We might say that we know of people who respond to danger with "a flow of adrenalin,"<sup>26</sup> in which they use their fear efficiently; sometimes this response takes the form of exhilaration, and we do not question accounts that claim this response. If Evel Kneivel were to say that danger exhilarates him, we would not argue with him. We might call him

crazy, or brave, or different; in doing this we are acknowledging that his response is not "normal" (hence initially it is open to doubt), but nevertheless is correct (for after consideration we believe him). But we would have to admit that this type of case corresponds to Arnold's cases, where our doubt is directed to Arnold's whole response (verbal and behavioral) and not to Herbie's case, where we doubt just his report. Herbie acted afraid; but he insists that he was exhilarated. The person whose claim of exhilaration during danger we would accept does not act afraid. If he does, we say, "You were afraid." We say to Herbie, "You may have thought you were exhilarated, but you were afraid. You should have been afraid, you acted afraid; therefore, no matter what you say, really you were afraid."

But the usual case is that we do not challenge your introspective report. Usually, your report reveals a mental state that is in harmony with your behavior and appropriate to the situation. In such cases we take your word; we do not question you when your introspective report corroborates what we should have thought your mental state to be. In the usual case an introspective report yields as unchallengeable an identification<sup>27</sup> as we could wish for. Even in slightly unusual cases, after questioning you, we give your introspective report the benefit of the doubt: When Arnold insists that during the kidnapping he felt only surprise and frustration, then, with some reservation, we accept his

claim. We have weighed the evidence other than his report--his personality, his treatment, and so forth--and that evidence inclines us in favor of the rather strange report. But in really bizarre cases, our prejudice in favor of the introspective report is outweighed by one or both of these two things: our sifting through the evidence, and our intuitive assessment of the overall situation. When Arnold claims that he felt apathetic during the hold-up, we are baffled, because such a reaction is counterintuitive. In the end, we decide that he felt apathetic--and so his introspective report is correct--but that really he was afraid. In Herbie's case, we finally believe Herbie's claim that his mental state was exhilaration during the robbery, but, again, we believe that Herbie really was afraid.

What are we doing in those unusual situations when we distinguish between your introspected state and your "real" state, between your claiming that you did not feel fear and our believing that you were afraid. We are giving your introspective report credit and at the same time we are limiting its scope. We are recognizing that so far as your conscious mental states go, your report is correct and thus finally unchallengeable; but (it may be said) we are also recognizing that in the context of the situation your report is bizarre. The bizarreness of your report gives us reason to doubt the completeness of your assessment of your state. An appeal to an unconscious mental state can satisfy our

desire to make your report fit into an understandable whole. As Freud said, the reason--and the compulsion--for assuming unconscious mental states is that their influence explains much otherwise inexplicable behavior. When we say that yes, you may have felt apathetic but "really" you were afraid, we are recognizing that unconscious states can foul up what ought to be the smooth functioning and interlocking of situation, response, and report. Sometimes the mental state that is introspected is in drag, so that introspection, in identifying the (disguised) conscious state is misidentifying the "true" unconscious state. We introspect only those states that are conscious, that we are aware of.

Perhaps Arnold is a man who must be in control--of himself, of his situation--at all times. Perhaps his stolidity in those situations in which control is effectively denied him is an attempt at least to control his feelings. Perhaps his lassitude is terror, not so much of guns and kidnappers as much as of being manipulated, victimized, of being at someone else's mercy; perhaps, further, his lassitude is terror disguised in a way that he can bear. If we view Arnold's case in this way, we say that Arnold's apathy is appropriate in view of his unconscious mental states.

Sometimes the introspective account need not be bizarre, may in fact be a sufficient explanation for an action that is appropriate--and yet we may want to assume an unconscious companion motive. For example, he: "I knew you were

trying to seduce me when you came out in that outfit." She (indignant): "I was not trying to seduce you. I told you, I just wanted to change into something more comfortable than that dress I wore to dinner." Many actions lend themselves to a variety of explanations, any one of which might be sufficient. This is one reason that we can challenge a report even if it does sufficiently account for an appropriate action--as in the case above.<sup>28</sup> The overdetermination of behavior also accounts for the opposite of seeing a person's behavior differently than he sees it, namely, our usual acceptance of introspective reports. We are inclined to accept your report, for the state that you are aware of usually accounts satisfactorily for your behavior.

Your introspective report is not incorrigible in the sense that it is a necessarily true account of your state. Rather, your introspective report is incorrigible in that it assures the ultimate unchallengeability of your report of your conscious mental state. This is most clearly the case with mental states such as sensations and feelings: At some point in our interrogation, Herbie's insistence that he felt exhilarated becomes unchallengeable. We say, however hesitantly, "Well, anyway, he must have felt exhilarated." Your introspective report seems more challengeable than Herbie's when you are reporting a belief or motive or intention. When you say, "I only wanted to get comfortable. I assure you that I had no intention of seducing you," you are more

vulnerable to challenge than Herbie in that with intentions and motives contraindicative behavior counts heavily against you. If you are ready--however little you realize it--to seduce your date, he is warned of it by your behavior, and your protests serve only to make you seem coy. In the case of beliefs and intentions and motives, the introspective report may have to be qualified: "At the time, all I was thinking was 'If I don't get out of this dress and these shoes, I'll die.' But the more I think about it, the more I see that I was hoping you'd make a move that evening. So I suppose that I was trying to be provocative." Later reflection and discussion may shed new light on the beliefs that we have of ourselves and our intentions. Such reflection yields less qualification in the case of emotions, however. The most Arnold can say now is: "I see that actually it was fear that made me act that way, not boredom. Still, I felt bored." But however we later qualify what "must have been going on," the introspective report is unassailable in this respect: introspection reveals what you were aware of at the time. That is what the introspective report gives us; it is not a complete accounting of a person's mental life at any moment; it is simply an authoritative statement of a person's conscious mental state, and functions therefore as either a satisfying account or a clue toward one.

#### "Unconscious" and "Unaware"

In Section One, I followed D.C. Dennett in limiting



"aware" to intentional idioms and "conscious" to non-intentional idioms. Still following Dennett, I divided awareness into two categories: awareness<sub>1</sub>, which involves introspective reporting, and awareness<sub>2</sub>, which involves behavior control. Then I distinguished among our three uses of "conscious," and linked these uses to the two ways we use "aware": For one to be merely conscious, one must be aware<sub>2</sub> of x; and for one to be aware<sub>2</sub> of x, one must be conscious. For one to be a conscious being, one must be capable of awareness<sub>1</sub> of x; that is, one must be capable of providing an introspective report of m(x). Finally, for one to have a conscious mental state m(x), one must be aware<sub>1</sub> of x; that is, one must be ready to give us an introspective report of m(x).

I wish now to discuss "unaware" and "unconscious." I will limit "unaware," like "aware," to intentional idioms, and "unconscious," like "conscious," to non-intentional idioms. I permit, "Deep in thought, she was unaware of the approaching storm," but not, "Deep in thought, she was unconscious of the approaching storm."<sup>29</sup> In the case of non-intentional expressions, only "unconscious" sounds right; we cannot substitute "unaware" for "unconscious" in the following sentences: "He is still unconscious"; "His love for her is unconscious." "Unaware" insists on being intentional; it demands to be followed by an "of" or "that." The only case in which "unaware" stands alone is when we use it to mean

"unawares," as in "He caught her unaware(s)."

So "unaware" and "unconscious" follow their contraries in the ease with which we can limit them, one to intentional uses and the other to non-intentional uses. But beyond this initial pairing-off, the contrasts that we would suppose to hold in every case between "aware" and "unaware," and between "conscious" and "unconscious," exist only in most instances. For example, when we want the contrast to the "conscious" in "A human being is a conscious creature," we do not find a use of "unconscious" such as "A rock is an unconscious creature." We do not even say, "A rock is an unconscious thing." We might say that a rock is a "non-conscious" thing, which implies, rightly, that there just is no useful contrast between the "conscious" in "conscious creature" and "unconscious." Or we might call a rock "an inanimate object"; and this implies not a conscious/unconscious distinction but rather a sentient/non-sentient distinction. But calling human beings "conscious beings" is meant to imply a faculty different from and higher than mere sentience. The nebulous concept of "conscious creature" is tied up in our mythology with the concepts of "rational being" and "soul." The traditional belief was that the set of those who possess consciousness (conscious beings) is coextensive with the set of those who possess the power of rational thought and also is coextensive with the set of those who have souls: this set was believed to be composed exclusively of the set of human

beings. (There were some qualified exceptions allowed, such as dead infants, and some qualified inclusions permitted, such as angels.) Further, if we look to the nonhuman animal world for a contrast to "conscious being," we are faced with the absurdity of calling sentient creatures such as dogs and giraffes "unconscious beings." Dogs and giraffes are unconscious when they are drugged or knocked out, but even then they are not "unconscious beings." There is just no good sense to be made of the concept of "unconscious being."

"Unconscious" does have a good use when we contrast it to our use of "conscious" in "He is conscious now." If he is not conscious, he is unconscious--that is, passed out, or in a coma. We recognize shades in this use of "conscious" and "unconscious": we say, "He is regaining consciousness" and "He is coming to," to describe the grey states between alert full consciousness and oblivious unconsciousness.

The third sense of "unconscious" is contrasted with the "conscious" whose omission characterizes certain mental states. Here, we assume that the mental state is conscious unless we are told otherwise. Ordinarily, we do not say, "Ralph consciously destroyed Ann's career"; rather, we say, "Ralph destroyed Ann's career,"<sup>30</sup> and the unspoken understanding is that Ralph destroyed Ann's career not unconsciously, that is, that he was aware that he was doing so. We may suppose that Ralph was (at least fairly) straightforward (at least to himself) about his beliefs and desires

(and perhaps motives): "Nothing but the destruction of her career will satisfy me." "If I tell them that she served time in jail for embezzlement, they'll refuse to hire her." And so forth.

If in such a case we do use the adverb "consciously," we mean and are taken to mean "knowingly" (in keeping with the etymology of "conscious") or, less plausibly (i.e., with less authority) but more usually, "deliberately." When we say, "A consciously did x," we mean something like "A did x knowing full well what he was doing," that is, something different from simply "A did x" (i.e., not unconsciously). The use of "consciously" often carries a moral or legal flavor: When we say that A "consciously" did x, we are informing you that the action was performed in such a way as to assign some sort of culpability to the subject. We say, "Ralph consciously destroyed her career," and we mean that Ralph deliberately destroyed her career. But saying this is quite different from saying that Ralph did x (merely) consciously (i.e., not unconsciously). Consider the claim, "Ralph unconsciously destroyed her career." Here we mean (simply) that Ralph was not aware of his intention to sabotage Ann's career. (Ralph says, quite reasonably and apparently sincerely, "But as an officer of the bank, I had to inform the directors that she had been convicted of embezzlement.") While it is true that "unconsciously" is often used to release the subject of the action from culpability, to excuse him, nevertheless,

"unconscious" is the "trouser" word here<sup>31</sup>: When neither "consciously" nor "unconsciously" is used to modify the verb, we mean that the action was done in the usual (not unconscious) way; we mean that Ralph was in a position to avow that he was destroying Ann's career. When "unconsciously" is used, we mean that the subject was not aware of his action or state as such; we mean that Ralph was not in a position to report that he was destroying Ann's career, because of, say, self-deception about his feelings about Ann or about his motives for doing or having done certain things that concerned Ann. But when "consciously" is used, not only do we mean that the subject was aware of what he was doing, but also we imply that he, say, acted without regard for the danger involved or for the ethics involved or for some expected consequence. "Unconsciously" has a purer use than "consciously."<sup>32</sup>

In my view, a conscious mental state is a state that the subject is set to avow. But the use of "consciously" to mean "deliberately" inclines us to think of a conscious action as an intentional action (and not merely an action of which one is unaware) and, then, conversely, to think of an unconscious action as an unintentional action.<sup>33</sup> But since the use of "consciously" distorts the meaning of the concept of "conscious," and since the use of "unconsciously" corroborates the conscious/unconscious distinction based on awareness, we should expect that the way we use "unintentionally,"

on the one hand, and "unconsciously," on the other, differ. And this is so.

The kind of thing that we can be said to be doing when we do something consciously or unconsciously is different from the kind of thing that we can be said to be doing when we do something intentionally or unintentionally. If we say, "By doing x, he unintentionally hurt her," we are claiming that he hurt her as an inadvertent by-product of whatever else he was doing. If we say, "By doing x, he unconsciously hurt her," we are claiming that he was unaware of his desire to hurt her, that the desire to hurt was unconscious. But the difference is shown also in that we would not be likely to use the sentence construction of the first statement for the second. We would be more likely to put the second statement in this way: "He did x out of an unconscious desire to hurt her." And here we clearly see that not only was he not doing the same thing when he hurt her out of an unconscious wish as he was doing when he hurt her unintentionally, but that in fact in acting out his unconscious wish he was hurting her intentionally.

There are actions that can be done consciously or unconsciously, but not intentionally or unintentionally, and there are actions that can be done intentionally or unintentionally but not consciously or unconsciously. You can hate your mother unconsciously but not unintentionally; you can unintentionally close the door on my foot, but you cannot

unconsciously close the door on my foot. We use "deliberately," "intentionally," and "unintentionally" to describe actions whose motive or purpose we might question: "He ruined my clean floor with his muddy shoes!" "I'm sure it was unintentional; he just never thinks about such things as clean floors." The question is not whether or not he muddied the floor, but whether or not he meant to. Again: You arrive home earlier than I and go on to bed. You have locked me out of the house; I pound on the door and throw rocks at the bedroom window. You defend yourself: "I wasn't thinking--I forgot that you had lost your key." Or: "I didn't realize that the lock was on." Or, simply: "It was an accident." There is no question that you locked me out. The question is: Did you do it on purpose? You say no, of course not. I say: "But you always forget to look to see if the lock is on, you are forever locking me out--you must mean to." It is only at this point, when we are stalemated, that the question arises whether or not you unconsciously intend to lock me out; perhaps many actions that we initially classify as unintentional we later reclassify as intentional and unconsciously motivated. "Leave me alone, will you? I didn't mean to lock you out." "That's what you want--you want me to leave you alone. You want to be alone. That's why you always lock me out of the house." In such a case, if I believe that your action fulfilled a purpose, then I will have suggested the notion that the purpose was

unconscious--but the question whether the purpose was unconscious is different from the question whether the action was intentional.

To sum up the contrast between the three senses of "conscious" and "unconscious": The first sense of "conscious," where we talk of "conscious beings" has no contrasting use of "unconscious." The second sense of "conscious" has a contrast of equal stature in "unconscious": "He is conscious now" vs. "He is still unconscious." (This sense provides the only case for which we use "unconsciousness": "He is slipping into unconsciousness" as opposed to "He is regaining consciousness.") The third sense of "conscious" and its contrast "unconscious" is found in our characterization of mental states. (This is derived from the first sense: It is only of conscious beings that we say, "He did it consciously" or "He did it unconsciously.") This sense makes frequent use of the adverbial forms "consciously" and "unconsciously." "Conscious" in this sense depends on "unconscious": only with the introduction of the concept of unconscious mental states is there an opposite impetus to think of mental states as conscious, and indeed, unless we explicitly characterize a state as unconscious, we assume that it is conscious. The presence of "conscious" is signified by its absence.

I wish to turn now from "conscious" and "unconscious" to "aware" and "unaware." "Unaware," unlike "unconscious,"



is a fairly straightforward opposite to its contrary. Earlier I distinguished "awareness<sub>1</sub>" from "awareness<sub>2</sub>": the first has to do with introspective reporting and is restricted to language-users; the second has to do with behavior control and involves all sentient creatures. You are aware<sub>1</sub> of x if your mental state involving x is conscious; you are capable of awareness<sub>1</sub> of x if you are a conscious being; and you are aware<sub>2</sub> of x if you are conscious (e.g., not passed out) and react with reference to x.

If you are unaware<sub>1</sub> of x, you may still be aware<sub>2</sub> of x. This will be the case, say, if you unconsciously resent your sister, or if you are a bee swerving past the tree in your path. If you are unaware<sub>2</sub> of x, then either you are unconscious (say, knocked out) or unable for some other reason to apprehend x (x may be a tree and you are a blind person ten feet away from it; or x may be a tree and you are a rock lying at its base). The interesting case is the first, which gives us the unconscious mental state.

When you are unaware<sub>1</sub> of a state, you are unable to avow that state; nevertheless you may act as if that state were the case. Both you and your sister go on a diet. You lose two pounds. Your sister loses fifteen pounds (and looks sensational). You say: "I'm so happy for you!" And you hand her the platter of onion dip and Fritos, her favorite snack, so that you two can "celebrate." When what you say you feel is inconsistent with your actions, we want to

impute to you beliefs or motives or desires of which you are not aware<sub>1</sub> but with which your behavior is consistent. If you are only aware<sub>2</sub> of x, you are like the bee: you behave appropriately with respect to x, but you are unable to avow m(x). You cannot say: "I gave her the dip and chips because I resent her weight loss" any more than the bee can say: "I swerved because I didn't want to hit the tree."

I want to turn now to the examination of a situation that will serve as an analogy for my thesis that the unconscious mental state is one of which I am unaware<sub>1</sub>, but aware<sub>2</sub>, a state, that is, which I cannot avow but which my behavior corroborates.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>It is interesting that "conscious" and its derivatives, and "aware" and its derivatives, have evolved from two very different sources. The adjective "conscious" derives quite straightforwardly from two Latin words, "com" (with) and "scire" (to know), and its archaic meaning is this: "sharing another's knowledge or awareness of an inward state or outward fact." The adjective "aware" comes from the Middle English "iwar," which comes from the old English "gewar," the word that spawned not only "aware," but also "wary." "Ge" is an associative prefix and "waer" is defined as "wary." Under the listing for "wary," not only are the Middle English "war" and "ware" and Old English "ware" given as etyma, but also the Old High German "giwar," and the Latin "vereri" (to fear) and the Greek "horan" (to see). The archaic meaning of "aware" is "watchful."

The noun "conscious" is used to mean "consciousness" when defined as "the upper level of mental life as contrasted with unconscious processes." "Aware" has no parallel use; however, the nouns "consciousness" and "awareness," like their adjectival forms, are used interchangeably. Note, though, that "consciousness" is given a listing separate from "conscious," and has listed five current uses or definitions, whereas "awareness" is merely listed under the entry for "aware," as the noun form of "aware." The weight given "consciousness" by the dictionary is corroborated by our everyday use of "consciousness" as synonymous with "mind," whereas we think of awareness often merely as a sort of alertness.

<sup>2</sup>In Content and Consciousness (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969), p. 20, fn. 1, Dennett capitalizes "intentional" and its derivatives to distinguish between the technical concept of intentionality and the ordinary (uncapitalized) concept. The technical concept is the concept as Brentano used it; the ordinary concept is the one we use when we say, for example, "She missed the appointment intentionally." In his later book Brainstorms (Montgomery, Vermont: Bradford Books, Publishers, 1978), p. 3, Dennett discards the

capitalization of the technical concept, but warns the reader that, whenever he uses "intentionality" or any of its derivatives, he is using the technical term. My use here is also technical.

<sup>3</sup>Dennett, Content and Consciousness, pp. 115-116.

<sup>4</sup>Dennett, Content and Consciousness, pp. 115-121.

<sup>5</sup>I will argue for the connection between speech and introspection in the next section.

<sup>6</sup>Just calling C3PO an "android" rather than a "robot" suggests a willingness to recategorize him.

<sup>7</sup>Charles Landesman, Jr., "Consciousness," Vol. 2 of The Encyclopedia of Philosophy, ed. by Paul Edwards (8 vols.; New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc. & The Free Press, 1967), pp. 191-192.

<sup>8</sup>Oddly enough, perception is often offered as the quintessential "outer" conscious mental state--and introspection, of course, is offered as the quintessential "inner" conscious mental state. This brings to mind one of the reasons that introspection is a confusing concept: some philosophers treat introspection as the quintessential conscious mental state; others discuss introspection as an accompaniment to or part of the nature of all conscious mental states. And often it is not clear which concept is involved or even whether the two have been distinguished.

<sup>9</sup>Actually, we ordinarily don't use the terms. No one says that he's introspecting, and we run across "perceive" only in mystery stories where it is flavored with the sense of "discover" or "realize": "He perceived that things had gone awry for the would-be murderer"; "She perceived his bloodied hand, held furtively behind his back." But philosophers use the terms, and use them in conjunction with ordinary language.

<sup>10</sup>Arthur E. Falk, "Learning To Report One's Introspections," Philosophy of Science (September 1975), pp. 227-229.

<sup>11</sup>The genres are different. "Perception" refers to that group of mental states which are sensed, to "external" as opposed to "inner" or "internal" mental states; "introspection" refers to those states--internal or external--that are conscious.

<sup>12</sup>In fact, people who habitually think about what they are going to say next are precisely those people who have not learned the art of conversing, an art which requires responding to what someone else is saying, not proclaiming one's views when the other person pauses.

<sup>13</sup>Another example: Your date, as is his wont, is late, and you will surely miss the beginning of the movie. As you seethe, you mentally rehearse scathing indictments to deliver to him upon his arrival. In such situations, the lines when finally spoken have an artificial quality that our usual speech lacks. Lines that should be spontaneous--like a witty comeback or an angry denunciation--fall flat if you store them. Such examples reinforce my claim that ordinarily talking is not simply the after-the-fact reporting of inner thoughts.

<sup>14</sup>See Ludwig Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations, trans. by G.E.M. Anscombe (3rd ed.; New York: The Macmillan Company, 1971), #78. Here Wittgenstein compares knowing and saying: if you know how high Mont Blanc is, then you ought to be able to say how high Mont Blanc is; but if you know how a clarinet sounds, then it is not absurd that you not be able to say it. Given that knowing in many cases takes the form of conscious thought, such examples would seem to count against my claim--which I do not yet argue for--that states that cannot be put into words are unconscious. But such examples perhaps are limited to cases of smelling, touching, and hearing: you may know consciously how roses smell, or how the surface of an egg feels, and yet not be able to say it. Still, if you are thinking how the egg feels, then surely it would be strange if you could not give us even a bit of a description; here, thinking x is different from merely knowing x. My point is that thinking requires words, and knowing does not.

<sup>15</sup>Actually, our ordinary conversations contain unfinished sentences, digressions--but if you habitually do not complete your sentences, or digress, we call you on it. We expect our spoken conversation to approximate written speech: we can tolerate only so much in the way of uncompleted sentences, Lily Tomlin notwithstanding.

<sup>16</sup>This example is suggested by Wittgenstein's discussion of expecting in the "Blue Book," The Blue and Brown Books (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1965), p. 20.

<sup>17</sup>I use the term "introspective report" more or less interchangeably with these terms: "introspective talk," "introspective avowal," and "introspective affirmation." I am not concerned here with the controversy over which term

more correctly describes the phenomenon. I realize that the term "introspective report" sounds more formal than the activity it involves, and even that in some cases what we are doing when we give an introspective "report" is not reporting as such. I ask that the awkwardness be overlooked by assuming the term to be technical rather than precisely descriptive.

<sup>18</sup>Recall Dennett's distinction between awareness<sub>1</sub>, which involves introspective reporting (hence language), and awareness<sub>2</sub>, which involves behavior control (and no language).

<sup>19</sup>I will discuss these two types of case later in this section.

<sup>20</sup>The possibility is not that you might be wrong all of the time; this would be absurd. The possibility is that you may be wrong some of the time.

<sup>21</sup>We might conclude that Herbie is different from most of us, that just as it seems that some people are incapable of love or of joy, it seems that Herbie is incapable of fear. (But I think this conclusion would be our last resort, for we want more of an explanation than this is.)

<sup>22</sup>My ambiguous use of "identify" is intentional here. The report is a means of identifying one's state both in the sense of finding out what that state is and also in the sense of telling others what it is.

<sup>23</sup>Where we stand in that range depends on all sorts of things that have to do with us as well as with you. We may or we may not be psychologically discerning, we may or we may not be habitually suspicious, we may or we may not like you or be jealous of you.

<sup>24</sup>The reason we give in the cases where the behavior and account are consistent with each other but inappropriate for the situation can touch on one or more of a number of difficulties. We cannot, as in the cases where the account belies the appropriate behavior, point to your behavior as evidence that your account is wrong. Our reasons must be telling in a different way: "You always act bored when you're scared." Or: "People just don't act that way when they've been held up." Or: "You were in a state of shock, you were out of it."

<sup>25</sup>"Nervous," "upset," and "afraid" of course are not synonymous, but in many situations we use them interchangeably. That we do so makes the settling of introspective accounts easier (in practice) and harder (in theory). I believe that whereas the first three statements might each be

more or less true of Herbie's reaction, the fourth clearly rings wrong: "You are nervous"; "You are upset"; "You are afraid"; "You are exhilarated."

<sup>26</sup>We use this phrase misleadingly. In a dangerous situation we all (usually) are pumped with adrenalin, but when we mention this common fact with respect to someone, we mean to distinguish his response from ours. We mean to say that he "works" the adrenalin to his advantage while the rest of us are victimized by it.

<sup>27</sup>In both senses: finding out what the state is and telling us what it is.

<sup>28</sup>But this is unusual, and perhaps occurs more often in sexual situations than other situations, because of the tendency we have to deceive ourselves about our sexual desires and intentions. Sometimes we are aware only of wanting to be friendly, or of wanting to "get comfortable," or of being "too drunk to drive home."

<sup>29</sup>Here is a different and wise suggestion from T. H. White in The Once and Future King (New York: Berkley Medallion Books, 1958), p. 388: "It is a pity that language is such a clumsy weapon that we cannot say that a mother was 'unconscious' of her baby crying in the next room--with the meaning that the mother somehow, unconsciously, knew that it was crying." White's point has to do not with the question whether to allow "unconscious of" but with the question whether to allow "unconscious of" to mean "unconsciously aware of."

<sup>30</sup>The past perfect tense would be better here, for I am supposing that Ralph did things over a period of time that, cumulatively, ruined Ann's (potential or probable) career as, say, a banker. But the past perfect tense is, for my purposes, clumsier than the simple past tense.

<sup>31</sup>See J. L. Austin on "trouser" words, in "A Plea for Excuses," in Philosophical Papers, ed. by J. O. Urmson and G. J. Warnock (2nd ed.: London: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 192.

<sup>32</sup>In many instances, there is no straightforward opposition between "consciously" and "unconsciously." "Consciously" has less good use than "unconsciously" (although it can make good and legitimate sense on occasion--as in the Ralph case). Perhaps it is the case that only certain types of verbs can be modified by "consciously." "Consciously" works better with verbs that denote intentions and motives than with verbs that denote physical movements and actions. "He unconsciously boarded the bus." (He was thinking of

something else.) But: "He consciously boarded the bus." (He knew it was the wrong bus? He was paying special attention to the high first step? He knew he had no money for fare?) In many instances, the use of "consciously" takes us out of the realm of "aware/not aware"; the use of "unconsciously" does not.

<sup>33</sup>Starting here, and continuing through this chapter, I will use "intentionally" and "unintentionally" and "intend" in their non-technical uses; see Chapter Two, Section One, p. 90, fn. 2.



## CHAPTER III

### IMPLICATIONS OF THE DISTINCTION THAT THE ANALYSIS HAS REVEALED

#### Introduction

Freud, investigating neurotic and pathological sexuality, discovered a great deal about how "normal" sexuality functions. I have taken the opposite approach. In Chapter Two, I discussed "normal," everyday examples of conscious and unconscious mental states, the ordinary, well-functioning cases where, for example, we say with authority, "He is unaware of his real motivation." I used such examples to illustrate how ordinarily we distinguish between conscious and unconscious states and, in the areas in which our ordinary assessments are fuzzy, I wished to recommend how we ought to distinguish between conscious and unconscious states. That is, I wished to provide a theory that takes into account both the case in which our ordinary way of distinguishing conscious from unconscious states is successful and the case in which our ordinary way of distinguishing gives us wrong or odd answers. I wanted a theory that does justice to the

misleading, as well as the clear, cases. I claimed that the theory that can accomplish these things uses what a person says--the introspective avowal--as evidence that a state is conscious, or unconscious: I said that if a person can avow his mental state, then that state is conscious; if he cannot, then the state is unconscious.

Now I want to take this theory, which is grounded in the ordinary--if sometimes misleading--cases, and apply it to the extraordinary, the bizarre, and the dysfunctioning cases, the cases that our ordinary theory of mind cannot explain. My theory of mind will be vindicated to the extent that its application to such cases helps us to understand and explain these cases. In turn, such cases, interpreted my way, will support my claim that consciousness depends upon a certain level of linguistic skill, and does not cause it.

In Chapter Two, I showed that our ordinary notions about the nature of mind are derived in part from a Cartesian view of mind. I claimed that at least some of the results of such a view are (1) the belief that rational thought is the paradigm mental state, (2) the belief that consciousness is coextensive with mind, and (3) the belief that introspection is an "inner" sensing in the same way that perception is an "outer" sensing. I claimed that we cannot explain the relationship of certain typical mental events to the behavior that typically accompanies them because our view of mind entails this: that one engages continually in an introspective

observing of the contents of one's mind, and thus that one is not only the best, but an infallible, judge of what one is about. And this is often just not the case. Recall Herbie: he claimed that he was not afraid during the hold-up, but we didn't believe him. We saw him on film and we knew he was afraid. And yet, ordinarily, we would want to say that Herbie has more authority than we on what he feels at any particular time. Another way that our Cartesian inheritance misleads us concerns our concept of awareness. Usually we associate awareness with introspection, but also we associate awareness with behavior control, as when we say, "The bee must have been aware of the tree; he swerved to miss it." Not distinguishing between the two senses of awareness--introspection and behavior control--reinforces our inability to account for ordinary phenomena such as one's successfully driving home without once thinking about the act of driving home. Whenever we say, "You must have been afraid" or "You must have been aware of the correct exit," that is when our ordinary view of mind has failed us, because our ordinary--and Cartesian--view of mind does not properly emphasize the role of behavior in our mental life.

I have claimed that a theory of mind that allows the unconscious and behavior their fair share of the limelight, and thus that accounts for much of the typical human activity that a Cartesian view ignores or misconceives, is a theory that bases consciousness on speech. I have claimed that

such a theory recognizes the two features of awareness, and recognizes that one of those features--introspection--is linguistic and is the necessary condition for consciousness; such a theory divorces mind from consciousness, and consciousness from thought, and marries consciousness to speech. But such a theory also accounts for much typical behavior and mental life--which our ordinary Cartesian view, with its emphasis on consciousness, cannot account for.

In Chapter Three, I apply my theory of mind to a typical behavior and mental phenomena. I discuss the case of split-brain patients who in certain experimental situations cannot avow their mental state  $m(x)$  but who act as if they have mental state  $m(x)$ . I argue that my theory of mind, which links consciousness to speech, can make sense of such patients' behavior--and that a Cartesian theory cannot. Also I discuss the apparent introspective avowals of language-using apes, which constitute behavior that in humans we would view as evidence of consciousness. I argue that if after learning a language these apes can do the things we can do when we have a conscious mental state--i.e., verbally express awareness of that state--then that further supports the view that language precedes consciousness, that consciousness is based upon a certain level of linguistic skill.

### Split-Brain Patients

Experiments have been performed on human beings in whom the two halves of the cerebral cortex were severed at

the corpus callosum. The results of these experiments are consistent with my distinction between conscious and unconscious mental states on the basis of our ability or inability to avow those states. Also, my thesis is advantageous here in that a theory that does not interpret the role speech plays in conscious activity the way I do must explain the results of these experiments in most implausible ways. Thomas Nagel, in his article "Brain Bisection and the Unity of Consciousness," describes the experiments and presents five implausible interpretations of their results.<sup>1</sup> For implausible reasons, Nagel rejects all five interpretations, and then presents his own implausible conclusions. Neither the interpretations that he examines nor his own conclusions recognize the significance of speech in our mental life; rather, Nagel's discussion focuses on the question, "How many whole minds does an individual have?" as the basis for the five interpretations he rejects and the one that he gives.

The experiments are set up so that only one hemisphere at a time is stimulated. Since the hemispheres are disconnected, neither hemisphere "knows" the information given exclusively to the other. Since the right hemisphere does not have a developed speech center,<sup>2</sup> information fed to that hemisphere cannot be reported by the patient. For example, if the word "hat" is flashed in front of the visual field controlled by the right hemisphere, the patient will

insist that he saw nothing--for the visual field controlled by his left hemisphere, which produces speech, "saw" nothing. The patient's left hand, however, will pick up the hat. If an object is put in the patient's left hand (which is controlled by the right hemisphere) and he is told to guess what it is, wrong guesses cause him to frown or grimace, and correct guesses cause him to smile; these reactions come from the "listening" right hemisphere, which "knows" what the object is. Yet outside the experimental situation, these people perform normally. They seem to be able to do so because the hemispheres co-operate by giving each other all sorts of sensorily perceptible cues to compensate for the frustration of their normal means of communication through the corpus callosum.<sup>3</sup>

Nagel suggests five possible ways to interpret these data; each of these ways is an attempt to make the data conform to our "concept of the individual mind." The first two interpretations are based on the question whether the activities of the right hemisphere can be said to be mental. The first interpretation identifies the responses of the right hemisphere with the processes of an automaton, processes, that is, which are not conscious mental processes. Nagel argues against this hypothesis by trying to show that the activities of the right hemisphere are not automatic and are in fact conscious, even though the subject always denies awareness of these activities. I too believe that the

hypothesis is wrong, but not for the reasons Nagel offers. It seems clear to me that most of the responses emanating from the non-verbal right hemisphere are (like) the sorts of responses we call unconscious, and that these activities, with the clearly conscious activities of the verbal left hemisphere, together constitute our concept of what a normal "individual mind" is.<sup>4</sup>

Nagel claims that speech is not "a necessary condition of consciousness,"<sup>5</sup> for while the information given exclusively to the right hemisphere cannot be reported, the other parts of the body controlled by the right hemisphere can respond appropriately to the information. But I do not think that we would want to say that such behavior is non-verbal reporting. Reports are verbal. If the only way that the patient can respond to the stimulus is, say, by picking up the hat, if he cannot tell us what word he saw, and further, if he insists that he saw nothing, then we must infer that he was not aware<sub>1</sub> of the stimulus. This is analogous to the case of the normal person who cannot report and perhaps even denies a mental state  $m(x)$ , even though his behavior indicates the mental state that he denies; in such a case, we say that the mental state is unconscious.

Nagel claims that

. . . what the right hemisphere can do on its own is too elaborate, too intentionally directed, and too psychologically intelligible to be regarded merely as a collection of unconscious automatic processes.<sup>6</sup>

In other words, for Nagel, responses that are (to the degree

that the right hemisphere's responses are) elaborate, intentional, and psychologically intelligible cannot be unconsciously directed, for unconscious states are merely "automatic processes." The activities of the right hemisphere must be conscious--at least those activities that have the three characteristics that Nagel believes mark conscious states. But it is not the case that the presence of those three characteristics distinguishes conscious from unconscious states, for at least this reason: unconsciously directed behavior is not always automatic, although often it is. Much behavior is the result of elaborate, intentional, psychologically intelligible unconscious mental states.

Think of the person whose unconscious resentment of her boss manifests itself in the propagation of all sorts of office disasters calculated to embarrass and frustrate her boss; she feels distress at or denies her continuing role in what she would clearly recognize as a plot or plan if her resentment were conscious. What distinguishes conscious from unconscious resentment, as in this case, is not the elaborateness, or intention, or psychological intelligibility of the activity, but rather the person's awareness<sub>1</sub> of the resentment. (In fact, action that is automatic is so because of our unawareness<sub>[1]</sub> of such action: the automaticness of an action is due to our not introspecting it. Furthermore, much of what we consider automatic, or instinctive, or "trained"--say, the responses of falcons or hunting dogs--is intricate,



and purposeful, and in many respects unrepetitive.)

Nagel thinks that the activities of the right hemisphere are not unconscious for the reason that they can be elaborate, and so forth. But their being elaborate and so forth does not count against their being unconscious. However, Nagel has another reason for concluding that we may refuse to call the responses of the right hemisphere unconscious. He says that

. . . the right hemisphere displays enough awareness of what it is doing to justify the attribution of conscious control in the absence of verbal testimony. If the patients did not deny any awareness of those activities, no doubts about their consciousness would arise at all.<sup>7</sup>

But the inability of the patient to give verbal testimony is precisely what causes us to doubt that the activity is consciously directed. The ability of the patient to respond appropriately to the stimulus to his right hemisphere shows the kind of "awareness of what [he] is doing" that we call awareness<sub>2</sub>--that is, the awareness that controls behavior. This type of control is not sufficient for us to regard as conscious the activity which results. When the subject denies awareness of x, when awareness<sub>1</sub> is absent, then however elaborate, intentional, and psychologically intelligible his behavior is, that behavior cannot be said to be consciously directed. A conscious mental state is characterized by my ability to make an immediate, relatively error-free, introspective report of it. An unconscious mental state is one which I may infer from later reflection on my behavior

or from others' reports or accusations. A conscious mental state is one of which the subject is aware<sub>1</sub>; and for a human being to be aware<sub>1</sub> of something is for him to be able in principle to report that awareness. For a human being, awareness and speech are closely connected. The primary basis for deciding whether or not to call a response conscious is the subject's ability to talk about it. The activities that are close to consciousness are so insofar as they are verbalizable.

Nagel says that the "right hemisphere is not very intelligent and it cannot talk. . ." <sup>8</sup> The first (intelligence) has very little to do with the question whether or not the activities of the right hemisphere are conscious, and the second (ability to talk) everything. Unconscious mental activities range in intelligence from quite primitive, unintegrated impulses to complex projects of great cunning. But Nagel evidently believes that the intelligence shown by a response has a bearing on whether an activity is consciously or unconsciously controlled, for he follows his statement that the right hemisphere is not very intelligent with the disclaimer that the right hemisphere can engage in a number of complex and discriminatory activities. Presumably Nagel means to be showing that although the activities of the right hemisphere generally are not done with the level of intelligence of the left hemisphere, still, the right hemisphere can do many things that exhibit the mental

dexterity that is found in the activities of the left hemisphere, and that we associate with consciously directed, intelligent behavior.

But trying to distinguish conscious from unconscious behavior by appealing to the intelligence shown by the behavior begs the question that Nagel is trying to answer. Nagel assumes that unconscious behavior is only automatic and then tries to show how superior to mere automatic behavior are the highly appropriate responsive activities controlled by the right hemisphere. Even if we grant that the right hemisphere shows some intelligence, it does not follow that to the extent that the right hemisphere is intelligent it is conscious. (Think of the responses of computers.) If intelligence has little, and talk everything, to do with consciousness, then Nagel has not made his case.

Nagel asks us to imagine a person deprived of his left hemisphere and thus dependent solely on his right; Nagel says that we would not on that account call this person an "automaton." He gives this as evidence for his claim that the responses of the right hemisphere are conscious. For, "though speechless, [this person] would remain conscious and active, with a diminished visual field and partial paralysis on the right side from which he would eventually recover to some extent."<sup>9</sup> First, Nagel has again begged the question: he says that we would not call this person an automaton because the person would remain "conscious and

active." But he has already told us that "unconscious" is equivalent to "automatic." Further, he implies that unconsciously directed behavior cannot be active; this is just not so.

But more important, Nagel is confusing "being conscious" with "having a conscious mental state." I agree with Nagel that we can call the man "conscious"--but this is only granting that he is not knocked out or in a coma. If the man cannot avow mental state  $m(x)$ , then that state is not conscious; if he can never avow any mental state  $m(x)$ , then on my analysis, we cannot even say that he is a conscious being, i.e., one capable of having conscious mental states. This man's status is troublesome in that presumably he was a normally functioning person before the loss of his left hemisphere. Nevertheless, his case is like that of the bee: We may want to say, "If he could talk, he would report that he saw the word 'hat' on the card." But, as in the case of the bee, we have no way of knowing "what is going on in his mind" when he performs his tasks--because he cannot tell us. His performance, like the bee's, has to do with behavior control, with awareness<sub>2</sub>.

It may be replied that, since the man could speak before, his case is not like the bee's, whose inability to talk is part of his make-up. It may be claimed that this man's dysfunction is comparable to the dysfunction of a man who has been gagged, or who is temporarily mute from

laryngitis. But the gagged man and the laryngitic man are merely prevented from speaking; our imaginary man cannot speak. It may be said that the gagged man's eyes "plead mutely" for deliverance, that clearly he would be begging for mercy if ungagged. I say, first, that there is no real substitute for verbalization.<sup>10</sup> Second, the imaginary paralyzed man is not trying with all sorts of gestures to let us know what he is "thinking." He is not like the man with laryngitis but without a pencil and paper, desperately trying to substitute non-verbal for verbal behavior. Think of the experimental subjects: they could talk, but they could not talk about the stimuli to their right hemispheres. It makes no sense to say of them, "If they could talk, they would say such and such." The paralyzed man is like them: like them, only his right hemisphere is stimulated and he cannot talk about the stimulus; as with them, it makes no sense to say, "If he could talk, he would say such and such." It is the absence of a certain kind of communication-center that is crucial in the cases of split-brain patients, as with the bee.

Nagel sums up this part of his argument by remarking that it "seems clear that the right hemisphere's activities are not unconscious . . ."<sup>11</sup> On the contrary, it seems clear that the right hemisphere's responses are precisely the kinds of responses that we would characterize as unconscious. It is trivially true that if I am not aware<sub>1</sub> of x, then I cannot

report such awareness. But the converse is true, and not trivially. If I cannot report awareness of  $x$ , then I am not aware<sub>1</sub> of  $x$ . If my behavior seems strongly to indicate that my mental state is  $m(x)$ , then in spite of the absence of my avowal of  $m(x)$ , we say that I have the state  $m(x)$ , and that it is unconscious.

The second interpretation of the experimental data, like the first, denies that the responses of the right hemisphere belong to a mind; this interpretation proposes to view the responses as being conscious--but as not belonging to a mind! I cannot make sense of a proposal that certain activities might be conscious but not mental and leave this proposal for your independent assessment. (Nagel argues that the activities of the right hemisphere have a "mental structure," and so, wisely, rejects this interpretation.<sup>12</sup>)

The last three interpretations of the experimental data do not, like the first two, question whether the activities of the right hemisphere are mental. The last three interpretations concern this question: Do split-brain patients have two minds, one mind, or a mind that occasionally splits in two? This question is essentially like that to which Freud addressed himself, in the early years of this century, when he justified his concept of the unconscious. He claimed that the main feature of unconscious mental processes is that we are not aware of them. He argued that unconscious mental states must be psychical by showing that

only the postulation of unconscious, mental phenomena can make meaningful our inconsistent or puzzling responses--responses that we deny or cannot explain. Also, Freud argued that it is absurd to think that we might have a second consciousness (mind) in ourselves that is radically unlike the first: how do you justify calling this second mind consciousness when its characteristics are so different from those of the first mind? Freud showed that only a mind made up of conscious and unconscious states can account for human activity.<sup>13</sup>

Interpretation Four, which suggests that the hemispheres together constitute a mind, seems on the face of it to be Freud's position. But Nagel argues against this position. He believes that the dissociation of activities in the experiments involving the two hemispheres are evidence that these brains consist of two minds. He points out the seeming oddness of the patients' functioning with apparent normalcy outside the experimental situations: the dissociated information becomes pooled, integrated.<sup>14</sup> But, given the Freudian model of the mind, isn't this exactly what we should expect? Nagel says that the problem in deciding on the number of minds that the split-brain patients have is aggravated by our "quaint" belief in the "ordinary simple idea of a single person." He seems to hope that "someday, when the complexities of the human control system become clearer," we will be able to abandon this belief.<sup>15</sup> But

there is no reason to abandon our highly intuitive and wholly workable concept of the individual human being with one mind when we have a model of mind that can account for the behavior both of ordinary human beings and of human beings whose cortices have been severed, human beings, that is, whose brains show specifically some of "the complexities of the human control system."

Only by assuming, with Freud, that individual minds comprise both conscious and unconscious mental states do we make sense of human behavior. Further, only Freud's model can account for the results of the experimental cases discussed. I do not wish to suggest that unconscious mental activity has a physical locale, and that that locale is the speechless right hemisphere, and that conscious mental activity has a physical locale, the verbal left hemisphere. I wish only to point out that the activities of the severed right hemisphere are amazingly like those that we would characterize as unconsciously controlled, and that the reason this is so is that the right hemisphere produces behavior that is responsive to situations and instructions, that is, purposeful ("meaningful") and appropriate, but that the subject is unaware<sub>1</sub> of; he cannot claim it as his own, he cannot avow it. Nevertheless, I do wish to claim the striking analogy between the responses of the right hemisphere and unconscious mental responses as corroboration of my model of mind, the Freudian model. And when we distinguish



between conscious and unconscious mental states on the basis of awareness<sub>1</sub>, we provide support for Freud's model.

If awareness<sub>1</sub>, which involves speech, is the basis for our distinguishing conscious and unconscious states, then what are we to say of language-using apes? Until recently, only human beings have been able to avow their states and so only they would have qualified as conscious beings, on my model. What consequences for my theory does the existence of language-using apes have?

### Language-Using Apes

I have claimed that awareness<sub>1</sub>, which involves the ability to make introspective reports, is a necessary and sufficient condition for consciousness, that is, for having conscious mental states. Until very recently, only human beings had the ability to make introspective reports and hence only human beings were capable of consciousness. Now several chimpanzees and a couple of gorillas seem to have been taught how to make introspective reports.<sup>16</sup> Shall we then say that these apes are conscious beings?

The question that immediately suggests itself concerns the nature of introspective reporting: How do we know that the ape really is making an introspective report? How do we know that the gorilla is "really" scared when she, for example, signs "Koko scared"?<sup>17</sup> Or, suppose we grant that Koko is scared (because she acts scared), and suppose that Koko signs "Koko scared": How do we know that Koko's being

scared and her saying that she is scared are linked in the correct way, that is, in the way that a human being's conscious mental states and introspective reports are linked? How do we know that Koko is really making an introspective report as opposed to merely reacting with a conditioned response to being scared? How do we know that Koko's avowal is like our avowal and not like the response of, say, a dog trained to bark when he is confronted by a stranger?

For one thing, we know that language-using apes spontaneously and correctly use language in contexts other than the original learning context and that they take words learned in a variety of circumstances and put them together in later circumstances. The meaningful application of a response learned in one kind of situation to other, novel, situations is (at least some) evidence that the response is not like the conditioned, rote response of the dog but rather is like the creative manipulation of language by human beings. This kind of linguistic virtuosity prompts not the question whether a statement is a real introspective report, but only the sorts of doubts we have about human beings' introspective reports. We do not wonder whether or not a human being's avowal is correctly linked to his state. We may question the sincerity or perspicacity of a person's avowal, but this sort of doubt is not the same thing as doubting that Koko's seemingly meaningful avowals are linked in the right way to her states. If I say to you, "I'm scared," then, if my face

is white and I cling to you, or if I start screaming, you accept my introspective report. But if I say "I'm scared" but otherwise act as if I am enjoying myself hugely or refuse to leave the movie theatre, then you doubt that I am really scared. You do not accept (anyway, unqualifiedly) my introspective report. Similarly, if Koko signs "Koko scared," and acts as if she is scared--say, she cowers, or runs to you and holds onto you--then, since her behavior and avowal are just what we should expect of someone who is scared and can talk, we have no practical reason to doubt her introspective report. Our philosophical doubts concern the question how introspective reports are linked to mental states, and it seems to me that such doubts are misapplied here. It seems to me that whether the subject making the reports is human or simian is irrelevant: anyone consistently doing the things that fulfill the conditions for making an introspective report is making introspective reports. The conditions are behavioral and contextual; they are observable. If we observe an ape making seemingly meaningful introspective avowals in situations in which the avowals are appropriate and are consistent with his behavior, then we are observing "introspective reports linked in the correct way to mental states."

If you start with the assumption, "An ape isn't a person, so how can these supposed introspective reports really be introspective reports?", you have started in the

wrong place. D. C. Dennett<sup>18</sup> points out that "humanity" and "personhood" are terms that we treat as coextensive--because so far, human beings are the only persons we recognize. But what makes one a human being is different from what makes one a person--the first requires a certain biological condition, namely, being born of human parents; the second requires certain normative conditions--about which there is little agreement--but not, as traditionally has been held, the condition of being human. Earlier, I had in mind a distinction similar to Dennett's when I suggested that "conscious being" and "human being" are not coextensive terms. I claimed that if one can make introspective reports then one can have conscious mental states and can be considered a conscious being; the necessary condition in such a case is speech, not humanity. This claim--reinforced by my argument<sup>19</sup> that the introspective report is not the public airing of a private process, is not an avowal linked by a ghostly chain to a mental state, but rather is the criterion by which we judge the subject's awareness of his mental state--provides for a set of conditions for consciousness that a talking ape could fulfill. We ought have no more problem accepting Koko's introspective reports than we have accepting yours, because what counts in either case is the meaningful interaction of avowal, behavior, and situation; whether or not Koko is a human being is irrelevant, because being human is not a necessary condition for consciousness.

Even in human beings, consciousness is dependent on the introspective report, so that if an ape does all the things that constitute what in a human being would be an introspective report, then we must say that an ape is having a conscious mental state. The person who claims that "real" avowals are made only by conscious beings (i.e., human beings) is putting the cart before the horse. Part of the problem in understanding the nature of consciousness is that, contrary to our mythology, consciousness is nothing more than the awareness<sub>1</sub> we have of certain states. And this awareness is not possible without a certain use of language, the introspective report. We have little inclination to call apes conscious (at least, not much more than we have to call dogs conscious)--until they have learned language and are making introspective reports. When Morris the cat meows naggingly at 6 p.m. and then, given his dinner, gobbles up his food, we know that he was hungry; but we do not want to call his hunger conscious. When Koko emphatically punches on the keyboard, "Want apple eat want,"<sup>20</sup> we must assume that Koko is aware<sub>1</sub> of her hunger, because she is avowing it in the way that we do when we make "real" introspective reports. If you, rather than Koko, were seated at the computer keyboard at snack time and were possessed of a simian disregard for English grammar, we would accept "Want apple eat want" as a meaningful introspective avowal. When the situation is such that, if Koko were a human being, we would accept her

introspective report, then, given the logic of my theory of consciousness, we must accept Koko's report as evidence that her hunger is conscious in the way that hunger in a human being can be conscious. If a person cannot avow his state, we call that state unconscious; and if a person avows a state in appropriate circumstances, we call the state conscious.

One might insist that whatever else consciousness is based on, at least it is based on reason, and that only individuals who reason can be considered conscious beings and hence can have conscious mental states: Surely animals who punch out "Want apple eat want" on a keyboard are not reasoning, therefore, whatever it is that they are doing, it does not constitute that stuff that conscious mental states are made of. But Lana, a chimp participating in Project Washoe, who had never seen orange pop but who knew the fruit orange and the drink coke, characterized orange pop as "coke which is orange"; her inference is a good--if simple--example of reasoning.

Lying is an even more telling example of an ape's reasoning ability; also, an ape's lying provides evidence for consciousness not just on the basis of reasoning but also on the basis of my criterion, awareness<sub>1</sub>. Koko broke the sink in her trailer by sitting on it. Ms. Patterson, Koko's teacher, was out; when she returned, she asked Koko if she had broken the sink. Koko pointed to Patterson's assistant,

who had been babysitting when the incident occurred, and signed "Kate there bad": obviously, Koko hoped to shift the blame for the broken sink to Kate.<sup>21</sup> Now, a lie is purposeful--it is used to fulfill an intention, and a lie is verbal. Unlike some forms of deceit, a lie requires words. An unconscious mental state can satisfy the first condition, for an unconscious mental state can be purposeful. But an unconscious mental state cannot be verbally communicated; an unconscious state is a state that I am unaware<sub>1</sub> of and that therefore I cannot report. So a lie must be consciously perpetrated. This is not to say that a lie is the same thing as an introspective report. The use of words that constitutes lying, i.e., misrepresenting something in order to achieve something, is not identical with the use of words that constitutes introspective reporting, i.e., avowing your mental state. But when you lie to someone, you must be aware<sub>1</sub> that you are lying to him. If you cannot avow the lie, you are not lying; you may be deceiving yourself as to what you are about, but you are not involved in the conscious manipulation of facts that lying requires. So if you are a creature who lies, you are a creature capable of awareness<sub>1</sub>, and of consciousness.

And it is unreasonable to suppose that Koko was not "really" lying, that she was not trying to mislead Patterson. For what explanation could there be for Koko's immediate denunciation of Kate's moral character in response to Patterson's

inquiry other than that Koko intended to place the blame on Kate? Here the question, "How do we know that Koko really is lying?" seems far-fetched. Here is an example in which there can be no doubt of Koko's awareness of what she is doing and of her reasoning ability. I suppose that a (very weak) case could be made for the view that Koko's statements felicitously coincide with the circumstances in which they are made: Suppose that Koko is always hungry or at least never turns food down, so that whenever she signs "Want apple eat want" the statement cannot fail to be appropriate. But to presume that Koko's lies are felicitous accidents is implausible: It is much more reasonable to view Koko's statement as a lie than to argue that her statement only seemed to be a lie, for what else could it be? A theory saying otherwise would have to rest on formulations far more preposterous than the view that a gorilla was trying to get somebody else in trouble in order to save herself. In any similar case involving a human being, our intuitive and immediate assumption would be that an attempt at deception was involved. To say, "But Koko is not a human, not a conscious being, so we can't assume as we would ordinarily that she's lying," is to beg the question.

Lies involve what Dennett calls "second-order intentions" and are made by "second-order intentional systems." We attribute to second-order intentional systems such ascriptions as: S believes that T desires that p, and S hopes



that T fears that q; that is, we ascribe to such systems beliefs, desires, and intentions about beliefs, desires, and intentions. Dennett says that we habitually and profitably ascribe first-order intentions, beliefs, and desires to animals; that is, we view animals as first-order intentional systems and explain their behavior on the basis of this view. But, he says, we are inclined to ascribe second-order intentions only to human beings. Yet animals do seem capable of behavior that involves second-order intentions, for example, the bird who feigns a broken wing in order to lure the predator from the nest. This behavior of course is instinctual or tropistic; the bird does not propose the ruse to herself or run through an argument or think out a plan in any way. Still, often human beings deceive and they do not consciously think through the plan to deceive either. What matters is that the deceiver by his behavior hopes to induce a certain belief in the deceived.<sup>22</sup> Dennett discusses this in part to show that second-order intentionality does not depend on language; if this is the case, then deception--or hoping that T will falsely believe that x--is not a peculiarly human sort of behavior; and thus it is not impossible or even unlikely that an animal with language can use that language in order to deceive, in order, that is, to lie. And if he is using language in order to deceive, he is aware<sub>1</sub> of his engaging in deception, and he is conscious. The article about Koko does not say that Koko admits her lies; so

far as I know, no one has asked her to admit them. But the point I am making is not undercut by Koko's not admitting or avowing her lies, for the logic of lying is that it is not possible to lie unless you are aware<sub>1</sub> of your doing so, unless you are able in principle to avow doing so. A misrepresentation is not a lie unless it is consciously perpetrated.

Both Lana's inference and Koko's lie are impossible without language. The view that reason is the mark of the conscious being is misguided, because it has us looking for the wrong sorts of things when we evaluate the concept of consciousness. We tend to limit the application of the concept arbitrarily because we have prejudged the field: "He must be able to reason because he is a conscious being; he is a conscious being because, as a human being, he has the faculty of reason." And: "Lana isn't really reasoning, because she isn't a conscious being." But when we look at cases of reasoning, we find that reasoning occurs both consciously and unconsciously, so that reason cannot be a criterion for consciousness. Think of the squirrel who figures out how to get round the obstacle you have placed on your telephone line to keep her from jumping from the line to the roof of your house; she, like the bird, doesn't consciously think through a plan, but she does figure out a way to circumvent the obstacle. "Reasoning" may consist of trial and error; reasoning need not involve any conscious thought at

all. I realize that my notion of reasoning here may sound idiosyncratic, but actually the unidiosyncratic principle by which we ascribe intentions to animals holds here: It is natural to view animals as intentional and therefore rational systems. It is natural to say of the squirrel: "She figured out how to get over that obstacle," and, of the bird: "She lured the cat away from the nest." We have no alternative way of viewing animals; for example, we do not think of squirrels and birds and dogs as automatons. We view much of animal behavior as on a line with much of human behavior. We say, "I solved the problem in my sleep last night," as we say, "The squirrel figured out how to get past the obstacle."<sup>23</sup> The assumption of inferential processes in ourselves and in animals is natural and profitable and is questioned only when we raise philosophical problems of mind.

The line between consciousness and the Unconscious does not involve reason, because reasoning occurs both consciously and unconsciously. The line involves language; the line involves the kind of awareness that presupposes language. The difference between conscious and unconscious reasoning is that you can avow the former but only assume or infer or ascribe to yourself the latter the way you would to someone else.

In Chapter II, Section Five, I questioned the value of the concept "conscious being." Consciousness is a concept that should not be attributed to species, or to the

members of a species, but rather should be a characterization of certain individual mental states.<sup>24</sup> The concept of consciousness should be limited to instances of introspective avowal that characterize conscious mental states. And language-using apes can have conscious mental states in the way that language-using humans can have conscious mental states: If you are able to make introspective reports, then those mental states that you introspectively report are conscious mental states. I have shown that Fido's wanting to go outside and Morris's shoveling his litter onto the kitchen floor do not qualify them for consciousness; purposive behavior alone does not indicate awareness<sub>1</sub> of anything. Teaching Fido to roll over or beg does not involve awareness<sub>1</sub>. But if you teach an animal to use language, and the animal uses language in situations that are appropriate and in ways that are consistent with his behavior--then, by my rules, the rules we in fact use in everyday life, that animal is capable of conscious mental states.

The case of language-using apes supports my belief that language precedes consciousness. Apes are quite like us, except, some would say, they lack consciousness. But if they learn to use language and then behave in ways that--in the case of a human--we would say are the results of consciousness, then we are inclined to entertain the view that expressing oneself in a language is a condition for consciousness, and further, that the distinction between conscious and unconscious is based upon language.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Thomas Nagel, "Brain Bisection and the Unity of Consciousness," The Philosophy of Mind, ed. by Jonathan Glover (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), 111-125. See also R. W. Sperry, "Hemisphere Deconnection and Unity in Conscious Awareness," American Psychologist, XXIII, No. 10 (October 1968), 723-733. Nagel refers to this article and other articles by Sperry and his collaborators.

<sup>2</sup>This is generally the case in right-handed adults; these particular experiments were limited to such people.

<sup>3</sup>Nagel, pp. 115-115.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., pp. 118-119.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 118.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., pp. 118-119.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 119.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 119.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 119.

<sup>10</sup>Plainly, a nod of the head, or a shrug of the shoulders, or sign-language, or drawing a picture may do quite as well as words in signifying awareness, in some situations. But this is not the sort of thing I am ruling out by my conditions for awareness<sub>1</sub>. I am ruling out behavior that indicates that the subject is (somehow) aware of an object but that the subject contradicts by denying awareness.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 120.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

<sup>13</sup>Sigmund Freud, "The Unconscious," pp. 168-171.

<sup>14</sup>Nagel, p. 121.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., pp. 124-125.

<sup>16</sup>Dr. Duane Rumbaugh teaches language to apes by means of a computer keyboard with lexicographical symbols. Among the apes he has worked with is Lana, who, along with the chimp Washoe at the University of Oklahoma, is a pioneer in her field. Dr. Rumbaugh sums up the language-learning skills of chimpanzees in these four points:

- (1) Apes learn words relatively easily.
- (2) Apes readily start stringing words together to form sentences.
- (3) Apes readily extend their language skills to situations beyond their original context; their use of language is not rote learning.
- (4) Apes coin labels; Lana, when first confronted with orange soda pop, asked for the "coke which is orange."

(There is considerable controversy about these claims, especially (2).) (Emily Hahn, "Animal Communication, Part II," The New Yorker, April 24, 1978, p. 78.)

<sup>17</sup>Koko the gorilla "speaks" in American Sign Language (Ameslan), which our deaf use, and also by typing on a computer keyboard. See Francine Patterson, "Conversations With a Gorilla," National Geographic, Vol. 154, No. 4, October 1978, pp. 438-465. Koko's skills are modelled on those of the chimps involved in Project Washoe and in the program at the Yerkes Center (which Dr. Rumbaugh directs): The chimps at Project Washoe use Ameslan; the chimps at the Yerkes Regional Primate Research Center communicate by typing statements on a computer keyboard. (Incidentally, the keyboard method has been so successful at teaching language to apes that Dr. Rumbaugh, who designed the computer system, has now designed a similar program for teaching language to severely retarded children. Dorothy Parkel, who put the program into effect, says that the hope is that teaching language to these children will help them extend their cognitive as well as communicative skills (and thus to live more successfully in a world of speaking, thinking human beings). Maxine A. Rock, "Keyboard Symbols Enable Retarded Children to 'Speak'," Smithsonian, April, 1979, p. 94.

<sup>18</sup>Dennett, Brainstorms, p. 267.

<sup>19</sup>See Chapter II, Section Four, above.

<sup>20</sup>Patterson, p. 454.

<sup>21</sup>Patterson, p. 459.

<sup>22</sup>Dennett, Brainstorms, pp. 273-277.

<sup>23</sup>This is not to say that animals reason unconsciously; the conscious-unconscious dichotomy applies only to beings who are capable of both conscious and unconscious mental states.

<sup>24</sup>But of course those who have one conscious mental state will have many.

## CHAPTER IV

### TYPICALLY CONSCIOUS AND TYPICALLY UNCONSCIOUS MENTAL STATES

My thesis is that conscious states<sup>1</sup> are those states that are characterized by a certain kind of behavioral follow-up, the introspective report, which functions as both a condition and a guarantee of the subject's awareness of that state, and that unconscious states are those states that are not so characterized. Since this is so, perhaps it is the case that certain states or kinds of states typically are conscious and others typically unconscious: we should expect, if my thesis holds, that typically conscious states should be those that ordinarily we would be aware of in such a way as to affirm them easily; that is, we should expect that typically conscious states--if they exist--would be easier for us to report than typically unconscious states.

Two kinds of states come immediately to mind as typically conscious: perceiving and having a sensation. Both are usually easy to report: "Yes, I see it now--it's grey and huge and hideously ugly." And: "I feel tingly all



over." Why is it so easy to report perceptions and sensations? One reason surely is that usually you cannot fail to be aware<sub>1</sub> of them: the tree just ahead of you, the pain in your leg, under normal conditions are nearly impossible to miss or to ignore. We are vaguely aware of vague perceptions, and we can build the vagueness into our report: "The fog is so thick that I can't tell if that's a body or just a tree trunk." The vagueness is part of the perception in such a case; we have many vague perceptions, when our wits are sharp but the thing being perceived is not sharp: we are clearly aware of x--but x is obscured by fog in the case of visual perception or x is obscured by the murmuring of people in the seats around you in the case of auditory perception. In such a case, you may have to strain to give your introspective report; the fault lies not with your not attending to x, but with x's being hard to see or hear.

Nevertheless, there is a sort of vagueness about some states that keeps them on the fringes of unconsciousness: You hear the clatter of garbage can lids in the alley and you realize that you have been listening for some time to the whine of the garbage truck from further up the block; only when the noise got louder did it isolate itself from the background and did the dimly felt undercurrent of sounds become alive in consciousness. Or perhaps, suddenly, "out of nowhere," you think, "Oh no--I forgot to take out the trash"--and, with that thought, you realize that you've been

listening to the garbage trucks and clatter, and that those sounds, heard nearly unconsciously, prompted the thought, "Oh no--I forgot to take out the trash"; the thought caused you to become aware retrospectively of the sounds. This last case indicates that in some cases, once we engage ourselves verbally with a state, we bring definition to the obscurity or fuzziness of a vaguely felt perception. When we can classify a perception that has been hovering on the rim of consciousness, we clear up (at least to an extent) whatever indistinctness may have been present.<sup>2</sup> And here the vagueness lies in your not (or not quite) attending to the object (although it's not just a matter of attention: if the whine and clatter were much louder or closer, you would have been less inattentive).

But think of the fragrance of a perfume that you can smell in the mind's nose, but that you cannot even begin to describe--say, you simply don't have the words for fragrances. Surely such a case counts against my claim that sensations and perceptions--even vague ones--are easy to classify or at least to describe and that that is why they typically are conscious. Surely, a distinctly perceived smell that cannot be described or classified counters my view that what makes a state conscious is its availability for introspective report.

But I think that a more careful look at the cases of vague perceptions will corroborate my claims, not counter

them. A person's lack or loss or ignorance of the right words to describe a distinctly perceived thing ought not count against the view that a conscious mental state is one that we are set to introspectively report. You say, "It smells like--it smells like--"; helplessly, you look at me, "I'm drawing a blank, I just can't tell you what it smells like." As an aficionado of fragrances, I suggest various fragrances to you, which you reject or perhaps accept qualifiedly. Perhaps you say, "Yes, that's it exactly!" Or perhaps we get nowhere, because you haven't the faintest notion of what smells like what. When impenetrable ignorance or a lack of astuteness or discernment causes you to draw a blank, rather than a word, for a smell, then do we have to say that the relationship between consciousness and introspective report--which I claim is necessary--simply fails to hold in this instance? We want to take your word that you do have the distinct smell "in your head" but just can't describe it.

But here we touch upon the crux of the problem. I have claimed that a conscious state is one that I am set to introspectively avow or report; is this the same as claiming that a conscious state is one whose object I can describe clearly or distinctly? I think not. Recall the case of the shape in the fog: there, we definitely and yet indistinctly saw an object; we clearly were aware that we saw something, but what we saw was not clearly one thing or another; we

strained to discern what the object was. And recall the case of the strangely colored house: we perceived very clearly the color, but had to strain to describe that color because we have no name for that color or because it is a rarely seen color. In both cases, our awareness<sub>1</sub> of the object is not in question: in the first case, we are prevented by the fog from seeing well; in the second, we are limited by our unfamiliarity with, and ignorance of the names for, rare shades of grey. In both cases we intently are attending to the objects and will avow that we are, but for one reason or another cannot properly describe the objects.

Sometimes the descriptive words fail us, but if we avow that we see something but we don't know what it is, or if we avow that we have a distinct memory of a smell but we don't know how to describe it, we have fulfilled the requirement for having a conscious state, namely, that we be aware<sub>1</sub> of x, that is, that we be set to avow that state. How well we describe our states, or the objects of our states, is another matter. In the case of the object obscured by fog, whether or not we are able to identify the object is entirely irrelevant to the question of whether or not our perception is conscious. But of course, there are cases in which our ability to identify, classify, or describe a perception or sensation determines whether or not we can say the state is fully conscious. For example, suppose that A says to you:

"You look strange--do you feel all right?" You, to your surprise and relief, say, "You know, I guess I am feeling peculiar." You might then think or say that you have been feeling a very vague sense of physical disquiet, a sensation like the onset of a flu, but simply were not aware enough of the sensation to classify it or locate it. You say, "So that's what's been wrong!"<sup>3</sup>

In those cases where the identification of the state is crucial to our being aware of the state, not identifying or describing the state will keep the state unconscious, or at least not fully conscious. And this corroborates my claim that conscious states are those that we are set to report introspectively. And the kind of case in which the object of perception is somehow obscured is also consistent with my claim, for the subject is aware<sub>1</sub> of the object, and can avow that he is; he just cannot tell you definitely what the object is. Finally, the lone case of the indescribable perfume does not count against my claim: for one thing, such a case really is quite rare, and for another--and this is why such cases are rare, and also is why perceptions and sensations typically are conscious--generally, perceptions and sensations are easy to classify.<sup>4</sup> The words for sensations and perceptions come easily to mind. A toothache, the sight of the color red or of the mimosa tree, the hearing of a scream, are easily translated into report. A rose is a rose is a rose, and even if the house is a particularly

peculiar shade of grey, we have the words at hand to attempt to describe that shade: "It's not pale and it's not deep-- it's kind of a pewter shade but there's some brown in it." We can ask you if the smell in your mind smells like x, y, or z, and if you still can't answer, we can have you smell perfume samples until you discover the right, or a similar, smell. The problem in this case has to do not with awareness, but only with ignorance of names.

Emotions seem to be, like perceptions and sensations, typically conscious, because they seem to be as immediately insistent. It seems unlikely that you could hate someone, or be consumed with anger, or be guilty, and not be as aware of it as you would be of a toothache. When quite young, we learn the labels: hate, anger, love, fear, guilt, sorrow; when quite young, we feel anger, love, fear, guilt, and so forth. We should expect that emotions typically are conscious.

But they are not, at least not in the way that they seem to be. Why not? We very often misinterpret emotions. Think back to Herbie, who claimed that he was not afraid during the hold-up, and to Arnold, who claimed that he was not afraid during his near-drowning. Such cases are examples of situations in which the emotions are unconscious. One might say, "All right, Herbie and Arnold 'really' were afraid, but what they felt counts: Herbie felt exhilaration and Arnold felt apathy. You can't say that they didn't feel

the emotions they say they felt. You can't say that the exhilaration and the apathy weren't conscious. That's what they were aware<sub>1</sub> of and that's what they introspectively reported." One says, further, "Those cases are like the cases used to show that perceptions typically are conscious. The woman who couldn't see well in the fog could have said, 'I see a body ahead' and then later found out that the object was a tree trunk. Still, you would say that her misidentification of the object does not erase the fact that her perception was conscious. Similarly, Herbie's misidentification of his emotion does not count against his being aware of feeling exhilaration."

But the two types of cases are not analogous. Misidentifying your emotion is not the same kind of mistake as misidentifying the object of your perception. The latter mistake is generated by fog or poor eyesight (and in any case doesn't count against your having perceived an inert cylindrical object x); the former mistake is not generated by conditions of visibility or, presumably, by any other physical fact. While emotions may be directed towards other people or towards things, emotions do not have objects in the way that perceptions do. If you think that you love Nancy, and then, in your psychotherapy sessions, find out that really you love Susan, not Nancy, your "mistake" is of a different order altogether than if you thought you saw a body but then later found that what you really saw was a tree trunk.

Why do people mistake their emotions? What is it about emotions that causes people to mistake hate for love, or sorrow for hate, which is different from what causes people to make the usually innocuous mistakes they make in perceiving? I believe that the answer is that emotions are charged with value judgments. Some emotions, say, hate or lust or anger, in some cultures and in some situations are discouraged so that if you have such a state you will be inclined to deceive yourself about it. In our culture, women are not encouraged--in the way that men subtly and not so subtly are encouraged--to feel indiscriminant lust and so are inclined, in periods of unfocused arousal, to disguise the state, to misinterpret it<sup>5</sup>; men like Arnold might disguise their fear as apathy. Emotions are felt, and thus seem always to be conscious; but when they are disguised, i.e., misperceived and misreported, they are unconscious.<sup>6</sup>

Emotions are not typically conscious, as sensations and perceptions are, because often we are inclined to misinterpret and thus misreport our emotions so that they will do us credit. Emotions are not typically unconscious, either, because, as with sensations and perceptions, we usually cannot fail to be aware of them and also often have no reason to disguise them. Love for your baby is not only acceptable but is considered admirable, and so you give that love free rein; on the other hand, resentment against your baby is unacceptable, not only to other people but to you,



so you refuse to hire babysitters not only during the day but also at night so that you ruin your and your husband's social life--and harm your relationship; in this way you can pay yourself back for your unconscious resentment of your baby, which you interpret as "loving my baby too much to leave him."

What about other mental states? Beliefs, intentions, motives, and desires function differently both from perceptions and sensations, and from emotions. These states typically are unconscious,<sup>7</sup> both for the same reason that many emotions are unconscious--that is, they generate self-deception--and for another reason, that they operate more often than not invisibly. You do not feel a motive or belief the way you feel a sensation, an emotion, and--though this sounds odd--a perception. Sensations, perceptions, and emotions have this in common: they are difficult to ignore, but beliefs, motives, intentions, and desires are easy to ignore, to miss, to be unaware of.

Often, without any awareness of his belief that p,<sup>8</sup> A acts as if he believes that p. Whether or not A says, "Oh yes, I believe that p," when asked, depends at least in part on the answers to these questions: Has A ever thought about p, and if not, is p the kind of belief that A readily would assent to or reject, or the kind of belief that he would want to consider, think through, before assenting to or rejecting? Is p a belief that A is likely to deceive

himself about, that is, the kind of belief that is incompatible with the beliefs, motives, intentions, and desires that he readily professes, or is it a belief that is compatible with those beliefs, desires, motives, and intentions that he professes.

Suppose that A (apparently sincerely) denies that he believes that p. Nevertheless, we may still assume that A believes that p, because we know that he believes that x, y, and z, and they are incompatible with not-p, or even, taken together, entail that p. Or we may infer that A believes that p, because A behaves as one who believes that p behaves. Or we may believe that A believes that p simply because he doth (apparently sincerely) protest too much. If we do not accept A's claims, we assume that A's belief that p is unconscious. If A "searches himself" and still denies that he believes that p, but all our other evidence--A's behavior, his other beliefs, his professed desires, his background--supports the conclusion that he does believe that p, then we must say that the belief that p is unconscious. And we suppose that A has deceived himself; here the unconscious belief functions like an unconscious emotion: A says that he believes that/feels p, but "really" he believes that/feels p.

Suppose that A (apparently sincerely) avows that he believes that p. (His avowal is subject to the same tests for credibility as his denial is, of course.) His avowal

may be prefaced by hesitation; A may be wondering, "Do I believe that p?", and finally after thinking p through, decides that he does. Or A's avowal may be immediate; here we would say that A's belief was "close to the surface" or easily "retrievable." When A's avowal that p is immediate, we are inclined to say that his belief that p is conscious, for it fulfills the condition that A be in a position to avow his awareness that p. But usually A would not be so immediately aware of his beliefs; A is aware of his beliefs only in situations where those particular beliefs are called into question or are likely to be (when A is testifying before the McCarthy committee, he is painfully aware of his conviction that one does not tattle on one's associates). Otherwise A's beliefs do not impinge upon his consciousness; usually he simply acts upon them without being aware of them. This is why I claim that, typically, beliefs--and motives, desires, and intentions--are unconscious.

Usually we think of thought, in the sense of reasoning, as being conscious, as when we think through or reason through a problem. But also we have a concept of unconscious thought that has to do with the "process" of reasoning.<sup>9</sup> We think of unconscious thinking or reasoning as being exactly like conscious thinking or reasoning, or working through a problem, except that we are unaware of the means--the succession of "thoughts"--used to get to the solution, or end. I should like to say that thought, or

reasoning, is, like emotions, neither typically conscious nor typically unconscious.

To sum up, I find that typically conscious states are those states that it is easy for us to distinguish and introspectively avow, for one or both of these reasons: either we cannot, at least typically, be unaware of them, or they are unlikely to generate self-deception. Generally, sensations and perceptions fulfill these conditions and are conscious. Typically unconscious states are those states that generally we are not aware of and so are not set to introspectively avow. Our beliefs, motives, desires, and intentions are conscious only when we have occasion to be aware of them; also, we often have reason not to be aware of them, so that in such cases, they are unconscious. Our "real" emotions, while immediately felt, sometimes are unacceptable and so are disguised, in which case we misinterpret them, and they remain unconscious. Our thoughts typically are conscious, in that we think of a thought as verbal; but we can have unconscious "thoughts" that really are the workings of unconscious processes of reasoning. Unconscious states differ from conscious states only in that we cannot introspectively report our unconscious states; and if a state is typically conscious or unconscious it is so in that it is characterized by the introspective report, or not.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Throughout the dissertation, I have talked of all sorts of mental "states," but of course it makes more sense to call some states "states" than others; nevertheless, I want to continue to ignore this consideration and to continue to use "state" in the widest possible way, to refer to any discrete or continuous conscious or unconscious (mental) activity whatsoever. Second, I have used, e.g., "conscious state" and "conscious mental state" fairly interchangeably; this is a deliberately casual way of showing that I do not know where the border between, say, physical and mental sensation is: surely many states are both mental and physical.

<sup>2</sup>This is similar to the telling of a dream: we fix words upon the evanescent images and then, forever in our mind, those images are defined and frozen into the patterns given them by our words.

<sup>3</sup>Another example of the role speech plays in conscious states concerns articulateness. We all know that in a situation of stress in which we must perform verbally--say, in an oral examination--one way to get beyond the blank wall that our mind erects in response to an examiner's question is, simply, to start talking: the words themselves often eventually lead us to (our awareness of) what we need to say.

<sup>4</sup>See p. 92, fn. 14.

<sup>5</sup>Or perhaps instances of this particular case are very rare, so that the dictum "ladies do not feel such things" is literally true. How then, in such rare instances, is the woman to interpret her emotion? Here perhaps the dishonesty and obtuseness of self-deception--the moral judgments we make--are almost inapplicable.

<sup>6</sup>A good discussion of unconscious emotions is Michael Fox's "On Unconscious Emotions," Philosophy and Phenomenological

Research (December 1973), pp. 151-170. Fox argues against two views of unconscious emotion: one view claims that an unconscious emotion would be an unfelt feeling, an unexperienced experience, and thus is a contradiction; the other view holds that unconscious emotions exist, but only as dispositions for emotions that would be felt if the conditions were right for them. Fox claims that an unconscious emotion is presently experienced, and is "unconscious not in the sense of being unsensed, unnoticed, unattended, or ignored, but in the sense of being unrecognized, uncommunicable, and unavailable to awareness." (p. 170)

<sup>7</sup>See Wittgenstein's remarks on belief in his Philosophical Investigations, Nos. 574 and 578. Also see Dennett on the differences between having an opinion and having a belief (Brainstorms, pp. 300-309). Having an opinion in some respects is like having a conscious mental state and having a belief in some respects is like having an unconscious mental state. These respects correspond to the ways in which having a conscious state is something only language-users can have and the ways in which having an unconscious state is something both language-using and non-language-using animals can have.

<sup>8</sup>Generally, this argument works also for motives, desires, and intentions.

<sup>9</sup>Bertrand Russell mentions this in describing his writing methods: Russell says that he needs to give concentrated conscious attention to a problem, and then must let the subject incubate in his "subconsciousness," until the solution "emerge[s] with blinding clarity." "How I Write," Portraits From Memory (New York: A Clarion Book, 1969, pp. 210-214), pp. 211-212.

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