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Won't Get Fooled Again: The Dogma of Quine's "Two Dogmas"

Abstract

[From the Introduction]

In the 1950's, W.V.O. Quine published what he thought was a crippling blow to the analytic/synthetic distinction. Hailed as one of the most important philosophical articles in the 20th century, the "Two Dogmas of Empiricism" sought to demonstrate how the concept of analyticity is circular in nature. The conclusions that Quine drew from this argument envisioned the collapse of reductionism and, subsequently, the verification theory. Both were theories central to the logical positivists whose hard-nosed doctrine dominated Anglo-American philosophy for much of early 20th Century. Although it has attracted criticism and praise, the article has held a profound influence in Western philosophy.

Unfortunately, the article is flawed in the same manner the author critiques analyticity and the two doctrines following in its wake: the "Two Dogmas" is dogmatic itself. Quine's essay strictly holds to ideas and claims that are clearly not true, highly contested, or preposterous. This article's first critique exposes two major dogmatisms cleverly embedded under the superficial and swift analysis. Readers are required to agree with Quine on the assertion that all definitions are synonyms. This ignores axiological components of the relationship between them as well as demand agreement with the Cluster theory of naming. The second dogmatism is the blatant ignorance of two extremely conflicting theories of meaning (logical positivist and ordinary language philosophy) that is embodied in his dual categories of analyticity. For Quine to bridge the gap between the theories and ground analyticity, what he really did was set up an impossible task of needing to conform one theory of meaning to another. The third dogmatism that Quine, his followers and his critics are guilty of is the avoidance of syntheticity, thereby leaving the other half of the analytic/synthetic dichotomy untouched.

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Won't Get Fooled Again

The Dogma of Quine's "Two Dogmas"

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In the 1950's, W.V.O. Quine published what he thought was a crippling blow to the analytic/synthetic distinction. Hailed as one of the most important philosophical articles in the 20th century, the "Two Dogmas of Empiricism" sought to demonstrate how the concept of analyticity is circular in nature. The conclusions that Quine drew from this argument envisioned the collapse of reductionism and, subsequently, the verification theory. Both were theories central to the logical positivists whose hard-nosed doctrine dominated Anglo-American philosophy for much of early 20th Century. Although it has attracted criticism and praise, the article has held a profound influence in Western philosophy.

Unfortunately, the article is flawed in the same manner the author critiques analyticity and the two doctrines following in its wake: the "Two Dogmas" is dogmatic itself. Quine's essay strictly holds to ideas and claims that are clearly not true, highly contested, or preposterous. This article's first critique exposes two major dogmatisms cleverly embedded under the superficial and swift analysis. Readers are required to agree with Quine on the assertion that all definitions are synonyms. This ignores axiological components of the relationship between them as well as demand agreement with the Cluster theory of naming. The second dogmatism is the blatant ignorance of two extremely conflicting theories of meaning (logical positivist and ordinary language philosophy) that is embodied in his dual categories of analyticity. For Quine to bridge the gap between the theories and ground analyticity, what he really did was set up an impossible task of needing to conform one theory of meaning to another. The third dogmatism that Quine, his followers and his critics are guilty of is the avoidance of syntheticity, thereby leaving the other half of the analytic/synthetic dichotomy untouched.

Quine's "Two Dogmas" and Popular Commentaries

Readers unfamiliar with the work in under attack will benefit from a brief restatement of Quine's central argument and several popular rebuttals to the article as well, for concepts within the rebuttals will appear again in the counter-arguments present in this essay. In beginning his examination into analyticity, Quine identifies two kinds of analytic statements. The first form consists of statements that are *logically true*. He offers the example of "no unmarried man is married." What is unique about the logical form is that "it not merely is true as it stands, but remains true under any and all reinterpretations of 'man' and 'married.'" The statement is true not due to the meaning of the words but by the presence of the logical particles.¹ Without consideration to the meanings for "married" or "man," the sentence is true regardless. Because of the presence and structure generated by logical particles such as "un" and "no," philosophers are assured that whatever statement fits the form will always ring true. What can be abstracted is a logical formulation that shows the structure of statements labeled analytic for the same reason. Any proposition that has the composition "No -Px is Px" (where "P" stands for a predicate and "x" takes the place of an object) must be classified as analytic.

The observant philosopher will recognize the framework of "No -Px is Px" as a manifestation of Aristotle's principle of contradiction (or sometimes called the law of non-contradiction).² In the *Metaphysics*, Aristotle established the principle as the follow: "For the same thing to be present and not be present at the same time in the same subject, and according

¹ Quine, 22

² The presence of the principle of non-contradiction is not covered in Quine's analysis of the subject-matter. Rather, this is a deeper analysis of the "Two Dogmas."

to the same, is impossible.”³ The law is easy enough to understand: it is logically impossible for same adjective or predicate to be simultaneously attributed and not attributed to a particular object at the same time. A man, by this principle, cannot be given simultaneously the property of married and unmarried. Immanuel Kant identified the link between analyticity and the principle when he wrote “all analytic judgements depend wholly on the principle of contradiction.”⁴ Keeping this in mind, we can further boil down Quine’s structure of logical analyticity to a simpler and more symbolic formula: $\neg \exists x (Px \ \& \ \neg Px)$. The jargon captures both the principle of non-contradiction and the logical analyticity in one fell swoop. Essentially, it reads that it is not the case that for all things “x” that it is “P” and not “P”.⁵

Not all analytic statements fit nicely into that framework. Propositions with largely different logical structures exist that are not of the form $\neg \exists x (Px \ \& \ \neg Px)$. For instance, what about the proposition “Gold is a yellow metal”? Quine, as he did with his “bachelor” example, would switch out “gold” for its synonym “yellow metal” (why that is so will be explained shortly). Thus, the statement is now “Yellow metal is a yellow metal.” Obviously, it does not have the same logical structure as “No unmarried man is married.” What is present is a tautology: a statement that is *unconditionally true*. Abstracted from that is the logical formula “Px is Px” and boiled down even further to $\exists x (Px \ \& \ Px)$.

Essentially, both tautologies and the principle of non-contradiction are saying the same thing but differently. The law of non-contradiction says that *an object x cannot have and not have a particular predicate*. Tautologies state that *if an object is assigned a particular predicate, then*

³ Aristotle, 72

⁴ *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*, 10

⁵ Quantum physics be damned! Bizarre as the governing mechanics may be (the possibility of superpositions of elementary particles, for example), physicists argue where quantum systems give way to macroscopic views. In

it has assigned that particular predicate. Being a tautology means a statement is abiding by the law of non-contradiction. Why bother pointing out that similarity? The advantage of the principle of contradiction and tautologies is that it provides a sound and irrefutable base for analyticity. There is no need here to further glorify the principle of non-contradiction or tautologies. What matters is that it provides Quine an ideal platform for analyticity.

The second kind of analytic statements are those such as “Gold is a yellow metal,” and “No bachelor is married.” A term to label these will be *naturally* analytic statements. Note that this does not mean there is an inherent property of analyticity within these statements; the label only refers to how such statements might be encountered through the *natural* discourse of language. Quine declares what makes natural forms analytic is because of their ability (theoretically) to be transformed into the logical kind. Ideally, the term “bachelor” could be swapped for “unmarried man” and, therefore, we are left with the proposition “No unmarried man is married” which is certainly the logical form via the principle of non-contradiction. Unfortunately, Quine is not satisfied with the second category of analytic statements. “We still lack a proper characterization of this second class of analytic statements,” writes Quine, “and, therewith analyticity generally, inasmuch as we have had in the above description to lean on a notion of ‘synonymy’ which is no less in need of clarification than analytic itself.”⁶ There is no characteristic of the naturally form that allows them to be classified as analytic. What connects the natural form to the logical form is synonymy. The term “synonymy” is one that Quine believes is misunderstood. Therefore, the fate of analyticity rests with a strong foundation requiring a firm grasp of synonymy. If synonymy cannot be described clearly, then analyticity must be tossed to the wind.

other words, the level to which humans operate allows the principle of contradiction to hold.

A natural place to start an investigation into synonymy is with definitions. It dawns on Quine that “definition rests on synonymy rather than explaining it.” A definition, to Quine, is just a synonymous term. Consider the word “bachelor” and its definition “unmarried man.” No English speaker will deny the fact that these terms are synonymous of one another. “Bachelor” can, in nearly all situations, be replaced by the definition/synonym “unmarried man.” The nature of this relationship between definition and synonymy leads Quine to the conclusion that examining definitions is a dead end since definitions *express* synonymy rather than explaining it.

⁷ Because of this feature, Quine quickly turns his attention back to synonymy.

Yet another undeniable feature of synonymous terms is their ability to replace one another *without altering the truth-value* of the sentences they appear in. Synonymous terms, obviously, have the ability to replace each other, but it is absurd to even suggest that two terms can replace one while changing the nature of the sentence from true to false. Identifying this feature, Quine writes: “The question remains whether interchangeability *salva veritate*⁸ (apart from occurrences within words) is a strong enough condition for synonymy, or whether, on the contrary, some heteronymous expressions might be thus interchangeable.”⁹ Thus the discussion has gone from being about synonymy to its dual characteristics: interchangeability and maintaining truth-value. This issue leads him to develop what he calls cognitive synonymy: the means to alter naturally analytic statements into the logical form.¹⁰ He sees interchangeability *salva veritate* (if possible) as the sufficient condition for cognitive synonymy. The investigation then turns towards finding what justifies (*if* there is justification of) cognitive synonymy. Quine proposes the statement

⁶ Quine, 23

⁷ Quine, 26

⁸ *Salva veritate*: “with unharmed truth,” a term coined by Leibniz

⁹ Quine, 28

¹⁰ Quine, 31

“Necessarily all and only bachelors are bachelors.” This statement is clearly true. Now, cognitive synonymy should dictate that the first instance of 'bachelors' is replaceable with 'unmarried men,' the resulting sentence being “Necessarily all and only bachelors are unmarried man.”¹¹

There is, Quine argues, really nothing supporting that statement. In language, two synonymous words sometimes refer to the same object, like Frege's “morning star” and “evening star” both signify Venus. Being that “evening star” and “morning star” denote the same celestial body, the terms are in what we call extensional agreement. However, Quine writes the following: “There is no assurance here that the extensional agreement of 'bachelor' and 'unmarried man' rests on meaning rather than merely on accidental matters of fact.” Simply because two names designate the same object does not guarantee that they are related in meaning. Because two entities may be described as either a bachelor or an unmarried man does not *prove* there is something inherent joining together those terms. An object might be describable by two words through purely accidental reasons. Quine's example uses the descriptors “creature with a heart” and “creature with kidneys.” Sure, there are creatures where it is applicable to employ either label. Then again, having hearts and kidneys could be something that occurred purely by accident. For either phrase, nowhere in its meaning dictates that if a beast has a heart it will necessarily have kidneys, or *vice versa*. To state their meanings are indeed related demands an appeal to analyticity to establish a connection through meaning rather than by extensional, and potentially accidentally, agreement.¹² Accordingly, Quine concludes that the justification for analyticity is circular. Naturally analyticity must be rooted in the logical kind. The conversion needs an understanding of synonymy, which in turn relies on interchangeability *salva veritate*. That is the sufficient condition for cognitive synonymy. Yet that requires an appeal to analyticity

¹¹ Quine, 29

to determine if two terms are actually synonymous rather than just accidentally related.

The author does provide an extra argument based in symbolic logical. But that case is not being criticized in this essay. All that will be mentioned is it stands as a counter-argument against those who may attempt to understand the nature of analyticity through a non-extensional language and semantical rules. Quine swiftly does away with that.

There are numerous responses to the “Two Dogmas.” Hilary Putnam in his article “Two Dogmas Revisited” praises the piece, though he believes that Quine’s objectives were skewed. Putnam states that Quine was attacking the logical positivists. His assault of analyticity was actually a fight against was aprioricity: “the concept of a truth which is confirmed no matter what is not a concept of analyticity but a concept of *aprioricity*. Yet both Quine and the positivists did take this to be a concept of *analyticity*.” To put it briefly, the reason Putnam made the assertion was because the positivists thought a statement with a fixed range of confirming experiences is fixed in its meaning as well. Meaning-fixing is done by stipulation. Since *a priori* statements are true by meaning alone, the positivists determined analyticity followed from aprioricity since the former is true by meaning alone.¹³

Conversely, H.P. Grice and P.F. Strawson offer a stunning critique of “Two Dogmas.” One reply was that Quine's thesis is more suited to the discussion if it attempted to confirm that the criteria for the analytic/synthetic distinction “are totally misunderstood by those who use the expression, that the stories they tell themselves *about* the differences are full of illusion.” For these authors, Quine's paper never definitively destroys the division; it merely points out the circularity of our *present understanding* even though those terms still have an “established

¹² Quine, 31

¹³ Putnam, 90-92

philosophical *use*.”¹⁴ Grice and Strawson maintain the analytic/synthetic distinction seeing that Quine only succeeded in shining light on the misunderstanding of it.

A second counter-argument the duo writes states that “the distinction we suppose ourselves to be marking by the use of the expression 'means the same as,' 'does not mean the same as' does not exist either.” Either of those expressions are rewordings of synonymy. However, Quine “demonstrated” how ungrounded synonymy is. Grice and Strawson take that a step further and postulate that if words cannot be synonymous, then it is not logical to assume sentences can be synonymous also. If such is the case, then “it seems that talk of sentences having meaning at all must be meaningless too.”¹⁵ In essence, the authors are taking Quine’s argument and running it to conclusions that cause the whole essay to appear incoherent, a classic *reductio ad absurdum* argument.

Another significant criticism of the “Two Dogmas” appears momentarily in John Searle's book *Speech Acts*. Searle asks the reader to consider the definition of analytic statements as any statement that begins with the letter “A”. Obviously, that is incorrect. Searle remarks this in regards to our ability to deduce obviously false definition when we lack a solid grasp of the subject:

We know these things precisely because we know what the word 'analytic' means; further we could not know them if we did not know what 'analytic' means...our failure to find criteria of the purposed kind presupposes precisely that we do understand analyticity. We could not embark on our investigation if we did not understand the concept, for it is only in virtue of that understanding that we could assess the adequacy of proposed criteria.¹⁶

Searle argues we do indeed know what analyticity means, otherwise how else would be able to determine incorrect from correct definitions? Or how else could an investigation even start?

Quine, after all, did provide a fairly in-depth investigation for a concept he claimed was unclear.

¹⁴ Grice and Strawson, 143

¹⁵ Grice and Strawson, 145-146

From his knowledge of analyticity, he was able to put forth such notions about it like the logical and natural forms, the importance of synonymy, and cognitive synonymy. It appears contradictory that Quine states that analyticity is unclear yet at the same time he abstracts all of these features about it. Nor could Quine even have begun his investigation.

Notes to the Rebuttals

Before the rebuttals to Quine's essay are to be explored, an essential point is needed to be made about them to avoid confusion. Although these three rebuttals sometimes regard the same topic, or even seem to give rise to another, it must be mentioned that these are *not* to be taken as interrelated arguments supporting each another to form some single powerful criticism of the "Two Dogmas." Each is written isolated from the other two. The first counter-argument, for instance, is not designed to confirm or supplement the others. Failing to ignore this will certainly give rise to some contradictions in the overall essay. The reader should, upon finishing a section, not carry on the arguments onto the next sections. Again, these should be seen as three individual, distinct and non-related arguments against Quine's thesis.

Shaky Foundations

In the beginning of the essay, it was stated that there are parts left unexposed in regards to Quine's thesis. The premises that he operates with in the "Two Dogmas" are such an area unexamined. Naturally, all philosophers write with some premises that the reader must accept, at least for the duration of the essay. In most situations, the majority of the audience generally

¹⁶ Searle, 7

accepts the premises. Quine's premises, however, are not necessarily accepted by all of his readers. Actually, he never directly lays them out; the foundations are only brought to the surface through careful examination. Once the premises are exposed, it becomes apparent that the "Two Dogmas" only appeals to a very narrow selection of philosophers.

The appearance of the first premise arises when Quine discusses the relationship between definitions and synonyms. The relation he offers, unfortunately, is quite unclear. Quine writes that "definitions *rests* on synonymy rather than explaining it," and that a definition "*hinges* on prior relations of synonymy." What is Quine expressing by saying that definitions "hinge" or "rest" on synonymy? Two answers are possible. Either he means two terms are entirely reliant upon another insofar as the meaning of one depends greatly on the other and, thus, there exists a direct connection between words, or that their relation is partial and weaker. The second explanation simply does not work. If a synonym and a definition are not exactly connected with one another, then there exists some vagueness between them. Quine notices this and addresses it as follows: "not that synonyms so conceived need not even be free from vagueness, *as long as the vaguenesses match.*"¹⁷ Vagueness between terms is fine for Quine. It might be fine for others too if it were not for the fact that it is impossible to determine if vaguenesses match. A mechanism or theory must be in place in order to see if the vaguenesses are equal.

Think about the different synonyms for the word "substitute." Appropriate synonyms include terms like alternate, auxiliary, backup, fill-in, equivalent, surrogate, proxy, understudy, temporary expedient, reserve, and replacement. Assume, for sake of argument, that these terms all have some vagueness between them. For Quine to be correct, there must be equal vagueness between terms. The following question comes to mind: Do *all* of the synonyms need their

vagueness match *against one another* or does vagueness-matching count only between the word that is to be replaced with one of the synonyms? Quine is not clear about that. Answering either question leads to an absurd answer. If the first part of the question is the case, then that means that all words and their synonyms are in a “vagueness-stasis” with one another where vagueness is present but in an equal quantity between each term. If the other part is the case, then that requires one set of synonyms to hold the same vagueness and others not to hold to the same requirement. Yet there is no reason to suppose that the substitute-proxy pair must be of a particular vagueness whereas another pair such as substitute-understudy does not. Either of these conclusions beg the question of what is the *means* are to which vagueness can be measured. There exists no such theory or mechanism to detect if a synonym-pair is of equal or different vagueness.

Because of the philosophical problems the supposition that there exists vagueness between definitions and synonyms, this leaves the conclusion that all definitions are directly related to synonyms. Two synonymous terms must be interchangeable without any vagueness between the two. This is the first major premise of Quine's article. Unfortunately, there are serious tribulations with it

An early edition of this article was presented at Pacific University's Undergraduate Philosophy Conference in 2011. Whilst I was presenting the previous point, I mentioned this means that one can swap the term “Aristotle” with its definition “the student of Plato.” Amongst the sea of raised eyebrows, I corrected myself swiftly of the obvious blunder I made; Aristotle is typically referred to as the *most famous* student of Plato. Mulling over this later, I was hit with an epiphany: both definitions of Aristotle are correct; they only differ in the degree of how *effective*

¹⁷ Quine, 26-7, emphasis added

the definitions signified to Aristotle. It is correct to call him the most famous student of Plato. However, it is *equally* correct to call him the student of Plato as well. The latter case just is inferior to the former about how easily Aristotle is referenced.

Here is a grave problem with Quine's premise that all definitions are synonyms. In the claim, Quine is looking past how well a definition/synonymy pair might refer. As with the above example, both definitions are true of Aristotle. Now, a counter-argument might be made to state that calling him simply "the student of Plato" does not actually point him out since there are many students of Plato. This is incorrect because referring is still done, it is just the effectiveness is low. Think about a conversation where someone brings up George Harrison. The interlocutor unfamiliar with the name might ask who he is, and the response given might be "the Beatle." In that scenario, there are others who can be classified as "the Beatle" as well. To use the descriptor excludes many others and leaves behind a total of four possible people who Harrison might be. A better, *more efficient*, descriptor of him would be "the Beatle who is the lead guitarist." That directs the hearer to one specific person.

Now, this is not the time or place to establish some kind of definitional efficiency apparatus. The only true use would be to generate some sort of mechanism to demarcate the degree a definition/synonym pair effectively interact so they can be replaced by the others. Without an apparatus, however, it is still quite clear to the reader that in blindly accepting all definitions as synonyms is to ignore effectiveness, as shown in the Harrison/Beatle example. This is what troubles the first premise of the "Two Dogmas": not every definition/synonym pair functions as well as others. Ergo, Quine is mistaken with this point.

What if someone, not seeing the difficulties exposed above, adhered to the belief that all definitions are synonyms? He would be led the adherent to the Cluster theory of naming: a theory

of naming the premise greatly compliment.

The Cluster theory maintains that for every proper name there are various properties which can name the intended thing. These properties, individually or with others, must be able to pick out the individual person or object. In *Speech Acts*, John Searle lays out the principles of the Cluster theory. As with the previous example involving Aristotle, any one of the descriptions of him are capable of naming him. Searle writes in regards to the description of Aristotle, that “though no single one of them is analytically true of Aristotle, their disjunction is.” What he means is because no description of Aristotle, like him being the teacher of Alexander or the most famous student of Plato, is the absolute identifying trait for Aristotle; many other characteristics refer to him equally as well. From the collection of possible traits, what is true about them is at least one will refer to Aristotle, hence that is what Searle means their disjunction is true of him. He goes on to further state this point by writing that “it is a necessary condition for an object to be Aristotle that it satisfy at least some of these descriptions.”¹⁸

The Cluster theory, however, is not without its problems. Saul Kripke, in his *Naming and Necessity*, spends a lecture describing what he sees as the massive faults in the theory. A consequence stemming from the Cluster theory is the role necessity plays. Regarding the ways Aristotle may be described, he writes that “it just is not, in any intuitive sense of necessity, a necessary truth that Aristotle had the properties commonly attributed to him.”¹⁹ To Kripke, there must be necessary components involved with naming otherwise attributing names is arbitrary. Aristotle did not have to do or be any of the things that he is commonly described as. There is nothing about Aristotle that *required* him to be the most famous student of Plato, teach Alexander, or write the *Metaphysics*. We can, using Leibniz's idea of possible worlds, imagine

situations where Aristotle did not do any of those things. Yet in those possible worlds, we still call him Aristotle. At that point, Kripke offers his own theory of naming, known as the Causal theory. To put it quite briefly, Kripke states that once something is named, “an initial baptism takes place” where the name is fixed. From that moment on, “when the name is ‘passed from link to link,’ the receiver of the name must, I think, intend when he learns it to use it with the same reference as the man from whom he heard it.”²⁰ Instead of names merely being the disjunction of possible descriptors, Kripke sees a causal connection from person to person. When a student learns the name “Aristotle,” he is referencing the person that his teacher is referring to, who is the person that his teacher is referring to, and that goes all the way back to Aristotle himself.

What is the value in examining these conflicting theories of naming? It is clear that Quine’s writings within the “Two Dogmas” is far more compatible with the doctrine of the Cluster theory. However, that is not necessarily so with the Causal theory. Why this is so is due to the fact that a premise for the “Two Dogmas” is that all definitions can function as synonyms, thereby allowing for a theory of naming like the Cluster theory. This premise does not work with the Causal theory. Kripke certainly would agree that a synonym cannot simply replace a name. In fact, that was one of his critiques of the Cluster theory. Therefore, Kripke’s Causal theory does not conform to a main premise in the “Two Dogmas.” An additional outcome of this is that it demonstrates that one cannot accept necessarily any non-Cluster theory of naming whilst agreeing with Quine. If a philosopher thought that Quine was right in the “Two Dogmas” and Kripke was correct with his Causal theory, then his beliefs would clash upon finding out that the latter does not operate well with the former.

¹⁸ Searle, 169

¹⁹ Kripke, 74

²⁰ Kripke, 96

A reply might certainly arise in stating that what has only been exposed is that the Causal theory is incompatible with the “Two Dogmas.” Certainly, for compatibility between article and theory there will have to be *some* shared characteristics like of the relationship between definition and synonym. However, said counter-argument goes on, that does not mean Quine's piece is incompatible with many or all other theories of naming. Simply because a theory cannot conform perfectly to the premises does not discount there are other theories which do.

The above is a true concern. A philosophical leap of logic would be to assume that the definition/synonym premise of the “Two Dogmas” applies to only one reference theory and, therefore, requires readers with the particular view in order to agree with the conclusion. There are, though, other theories of reference that disagree with the Cluster theory and, thereby, disagrees with that premise.

In *Pragmatism and Reference*, David Boersema describes his pragmatic theory of reference all the while attacking Kripke's Causal theory and Searle's Cluster theory. Such issues he finds with said theories are ones easily avoided by adopting a pragmatic view of language. His theory “places the emphasis on what reference and names *do*” whereas the other theories simply state “what they *are* as part only of a conceptual analysis.” Describing the nature of naming as only a descriptive action is a major fault that Boersema sees for Kripke and Searle. Both of whom only say what naming is about and refuse to put it into a greater schema which includes the multiple ways in which language functions and interacts in daily discourse. Boersema goes on to say that “we do many things when we name and refer, in many different social contexts and for many purposes. Naming and referring function for us in a multitude of ways.”²¹ Searle and Kripke are equally guilty of ignoring the nature of language in the world. The Causal theory

divorces the utility of names from their causal chain; the Cluster theory identifies names as a hook to rest descriptors on, but that hook has no other given function.

“Reference and names,” Boersema writes, “are a matter of coping with and in the world; this coping is not just a matter of functioning in the world but also a matter of changing the world. *Effects of names are part of the very nature and function of names.*”²² The disadvantage of other views on referring is that they understand naming as a one-way street of sorts. Names go off into the world and shape it, but never before has it been considered for such names to turn around and return the favor unto names themselves. Though functions of names might have crossed the mind of theorists, their effect on us has not. And that, according to Boersema, is what sets his pragmatic theory apart. Within the nature of names are the effects which echo back upon it in its usage.

Upon a closer examination from this brief exposition into Boersema's theory, it appears that it, too, is in contrast to the premise regarding definitions and synonyms in the “Two Dogmas.” A major component of Boersema's theory was that language is effected by the way in which it is used for it is a part of its nature to adjust and change. Thus, language is not something to be taken in isolation. Language interacts with three “spheres,” as Boersema states: the subjective, the intersubjective, and the objective.²³ Respectively, these refer to the individual, language, and the world. Individuals can only speak of first-person experience. As a result, the world is objective in a sense. Language acts a buffer between the two insofar as it allows subjective agents to communicate about their own first-person experiences and to engage with the world. What Quine's premise of a direct corresponding relationship between synonyms and

²¹ Boersema, 234

²² Boersema, 236, emphasis added

²³ Boersema, 236

their definitions advocates is an isolation of language. In the section regarding the relationship between the two concepts and throughout the duration of the entire piece he seems to examine language in isolation. Never is language engaged with respect to the subjective or objective²⁴. Synonyms and definitions are discussed only with their dependency on other. Recalling the Harrison/Beatle situation, this argument becomes very obvious. The example intended to demonstrate that in swiftly calling all definitions synonyms, Quine ignored the efficacy of some definitions over others. Efficacy is not just a matter of intersubjective language; it, too, relates to the subjective and objective. The world is, in some sense, the measure of efficacy. For the external world gives speakers the ability to see if what is being referred to is done so in a well-enough manner that he knows who it being called out, or if refinement is needed. Alternatively, individual agents are involved in the Harrison/Beatle example since they are the agents who are determining said efficacy. Ergo, in making such a bold claim, Quine is treating language within a vacuum where such spheres, as well as features of language as context and social situation, are completely brushed off.

So what, the question can be posed, might Boersema say about the premise in question? The conclusions are certainly difficult to imagine, but the method is not. For he clearly would take the pragmatic approach and examine that functions, contexts, and the three spheres plays. Through uncovering how such factors mingle in language is to gain a deeper understanding of definitions and synonyms as opposed to the superficial commentary by Quine.

What has been exposed so far is that the first premise, which states that all definitions are synonyms. The investigation into proper names led to the next premise, which exposes the article

²⁴ His comments on extensional languages might be understood as an attempt to fuse his examination with the objective. However, that part only attends to the language-world relation insofar as to make the brief supposition that terms may agree extensional on accident, so that can be disregarded.

as being more *compatible* with the Cluster theory of naming while at the same time being *incompatible* with the Casual theory and the pragmatic approach. Both premises are not only related to one another; the second spawns from the first. The third premise is radically different than the other two for it revolves around the notion of the necessary condition of cognitive synonymy.

Quine's analysis of analytic statements eventually leads him to the concept of interchangeability of terms. He wrote that “a natural suggestion, observing closer examination, is that the synonymy of two linguistic forms consists simply in their interchangeability in all context without change of truth value – interchangeability, in Leibniz's phrase, *salva veritate*.”²⁵ This does indeed sound like a natural start to the exploration of interchangeability, which is needed for cognitive synonymy (which turns typical naturally analytic statements into ones which are logically true). By the end of the section Quine concludes that “interchangeability *salva veritate*... is not a sufficient condition of cognitive synonymy of the type required for explaining analyticity.”²⁶

In making such a claim, Quine is establishing the third premise that the reader must accept to agree with his thesis. That premise dictates that interchangeability and maintaining the truth value of a statement are two subjects intertwined so that they may be considered under the same single condition. What exactly this means should become more clear in looking deeper into the above passages from Quine. He thought that interchangeability *salva veritate* was not a sufficient condition for cognitive synonymy. What must be noted is that this is not a single condition, but rather *two separate and distinct conditions*. Somebody might be able to make that claim if there is something inherent within the concepts of interchangeability and *salva veritate*

that demonstrated a strong relation between the two. As it stands, though, there does not appear to be such a relationship. The component of interchangibility only refers to the swapping of one word for another. The other component considers the truth-value of a statement. For either, situations can be imagined where words are changed with thinking about the truth-value of them, or possible where a sentence is not altered at all so that the truth-value is maintained. The point is that there is no reason why these two concepts can or are lumped up to form one single, let alone sufficient, condition for cognitive synonymy. True as it might be that for the purpose of the study that they are related in some sense since synonymy is interchanging words with the hopes of keeping the truth of the sentence, that does not mean that interchangibility *salva veritate* is a single condition.

With the division between said conditions now made, does it still make sense to call them *sufficient* conditions? We cannot declare both of these to be sufficient conditions for analyticity. If one was satisfied and not the other, then analyticity is not determined and therefore it is senseless to call both terms a sufficient condition. Instead, both of these separate categories must be *necessary* conditions for analyticity. The reason why these conditions have moved to the realm of necessity is that neither of them are independently sufficient for analyticity; at the same time they are both required in order to complete Quine's cognitive synonym. To turn statements into logically true ones, it is unquestionably necessary that there is an interchange of words from one form to another. With that ability, the shift from naturally analytic to logically analytic statements is impossible. Changing words, however, does not inherently take into consideration the truth values. That was a main concern in the previous paragraph. That is why it must be its own necessary condition. The same is true of *salva veritate*. The concept is vital for Quine's cognitive

²⁵ Quine, 27

synonymy, yet it is not internally connected to interchangeability.

What this exploration into this premise has shown is that it is unreasonable to assume that interchangeability *salva veritate* is a single sufficient condition. However, Quine poses that this lone sufficient condition is all that is needed to take into account cognitive synonymy. As it has been shown, that single condition must be amended into two separate necessary conditions in order to make of that form of synonymy.

That elucidation concludes this part of the rebuttal, which its purpose was to uncovering the hidden premises within Quine's paper and their subsequent flaws. As stated, there are other areas of the "Two Dogmas" that contains philosophical problems.

Theoretical Troubles

For this criticism of Quine's "Two Dogmas," what will be examined are the theories of meaning that conform to the dual positions that Quine takes within the essay. In particular, how such theories of meaning fit with the concepts of the logical and the naturally analytic statements will be at the center of attention. To postulate two different kinds of analytic sentences, Quine is essentially offering two forms that actually reflect two radically *dissimilar* ideas of how words means insofar as they are not compatible with one another. Yet with his adherence of the ability for the naturally analytic statements to be transformed into the logically analytic, he is placing a foot in on each opposing side. The result of which is the baffling conclusion that he establishes. Had Quine either completely abandoned one theory of meaning for another, his thesis might have proven to be much stronger.

What are these theories of meaning that are being alluded to? They are those that were

²⁶ Quine, 31

taken up by some of the dominating schools of philosophical thought on language that existed during the time of the publication of the “Two Dogmas.” How the logical form of analyticity means can be answered by looking into the works of the logical positivists. These thinkers, to summarize their position briefly, examined the logical structure of language to avoid the confusion ordinary language causes. To them, philosophical problems are the result of the flaws inherent in natural language. Thus, by using symbolic logic, these advocates of logical positivism could understand philosophical truths in a much cleaner and clearer manner. Several notable names in logical positivism include A.J. Ayer, Rudolf Carnap, Mortiz Schlick and Otto Neurath.

Opposing them and embodying the theory of meaning for the natural form of analytic sentences are the ordinary language philosophers. Such thinkers were skeptical of the method of the positivists. Their investigations sterilized language and subjected it to an iron framework that runs counter to how humans use language in the day-to-day realm. Rather than abstract syntactical structures from sentences, adherents to ordinary language philosophy saw examining language in its natural state was the best approach. Philosophical truths, to them, cannot be uncovered by looking at structures alone but also at such aspects of language like context and speech acts. Famous thinkers who fall under the category include John Austin, John Searle, P.F. Strawson, and Gilbert Ryle.

What will happen next is a brief investigation into each school of thought. With a firm grasp of the theories under our belt, the connections between the logical positivist movement to the logical form of analyticity, and the ordinary language philosophy school with the natural form, will be understood. From there, the information will be applied directly to Quine's thesis. Ideally that will generate a clear picture of the fact that in order for Quine partake on his quest, he needed to have a stake in both the logical positivist and ordinary language philosophy accounts of

meaning simultaneously.

For our purpose, the works of Ludwig Wittgenstein will prove most profitable. Not only did he himself take both positions throughout the course of his lifetime, but Wittgenstein also composed the foundational (or, at least, extremely influential) texts for both movements. The pieces are the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (published in 1922) and *Philosophical Investigations* (published posthumously in 1953). The *Tractatus* contains numerous ideas agreed upon by logical positivists, such as the picture theory of meaning. In the *Investigations*, Wittgenstein does not explicitly offer a theory of meaning that counters his older view. What he writes, however, are harsh criticisms of the view directed against his previous work. Within the *Investigations* are two major concepts that will later define and influence ordinary language philosophers: language-games and the family resemblance of words.

In comprehending why the positivists take their approach the way they do, it is helpful to understand how language is fallible through what Wittgenstein wrote. He said the following: “In the language of everyday life it very often happens that the same word signifies two different ways – and therefore belongs to two different symbols – or that two words, which signify in different ways, are apparently applied in the same way in the proposition.” Language is littered with instances of words sharing the same symbol while differing meanings are assigned to them. The example that Wittgenstein gives is the word “is.” That word may refer to either existence or identity. Employed in the assertion that “Jack is happy,” what it implies is that Jack exists in a certain state of happiness. Used in “Tommy is Jack,” it is drawing parallels between two people. Simply looking at the isolated word individually, unfortunately, does not reveal what meaning should be employed. Because two meanings are employed by the same sign, that leads to serious philosophical issues. Wittgenstein goes on to note in the succeeding proposition that “there easily

arises the most fundamental confusions (of which the whole of philosophy is full).”²⁷

The solution to such problems is suggested in the following section:

In order to avoid these errors, we must employ a symbolism which excludes them, by not applying the same sign in different symbols and by not applying signs in the same way which signify in different ways. A symbolism, that is to say, which obeys the rules of *logical* grammar – of logical syntax.²⁸

Logical symbolism is the means that Wittgenstein envisions will save philosophy from the errors inherent in natural language. For in symbolism, the fundamental errors infecting language are readily recognized and dealt with in a manner that counters such situations identical the one with the word “is”. Philosophical issues appear in that word because the same sign signifies two ways. Logical symbolism will draft two different signs for separate meanings. Likewise, symbols will not be used to signify two meanings for the same reasons. Aside from circumventing philosophical errors, symbolism not only must obey logical grammar, symbolism exposes it clearly. If propositions are boiled down to their bare logical components, then how those sentences operate logically is open for examination. Thus for the logical positivists, what matters to them is searching for the underlying logical syntax of sentences to avoid the problematic features of natural language.

An additional point that will be taken from the *Tractatus* is the picture theory.

Wittgenstein starts his exposition into his theory in proposition 2.1, where he states, “we make to ourselves pictures of facts. The picture presents the facts in logical space, the existence or nonexistence of atomic facts. The picture is a model of reality.” What are these “facts” that he mentions? He is referring to atomic facts that are the basic descriptors of reality. That is what he means by such statements like “the totality of existent atomic facts is the world” and “the

²⁷ “Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus,” 17

²⁸ “Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus,” 17

existence and nonexistence of atomic facts is the reality.”²⁹ Like atoms composing the objects of the world, atomic facts describe reality at the most fundamental level. Why examine atomic facts? It is because they are “individuated and described, and it is therefore possible to make wholly true or wholly false statements about them.”³⁰ Atomic facts are disentangled from more complex facts regarding the world and, because of that, their truth-value can certainly be determined without being detrimental to others. Getting back to the matter at hand, Wittgenstein mentioned that we make pictures of these facts to ourselves. And due to the nature of these facts, generating a picture of them will subsequently mirror reality. Pictures also exhibit the existence and nonexistence of atomic facts.

How it is that these pictures picture? Wittgenstein mentions, “in order to be a picture a fact must have something in common with what it pictures.” So what is the common feature between the picture and reality? That question is answered later when he states that “what every picture, of whatever form, must have in common with reality in order to be able to represent it at all – rightly or falsely – is the logical form, that is, the form of reality.” Wittgenstein goes on: “If the form of representation is the logical form, then the picture is called a logical picture. Every picture is *also* a logical picture...The picture has the logical form of representation in common with what it pictures.”³¹ It is here that the role of the logical form of statements becomes critical. As mentioned, what the logical positivists saw as important in language is the underlying logical structure of sentences. Hence, logical symbolism was utilizing to express forms whilst avoiding the complications plaguing natural language. Yet it is the logical form that Wittgenstein claims is the connection between the picture and reality for it is identical between reality and the picture.

²⁹ “Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus,” 8-9

³⁰ Stroll, 48

³¹ “Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus,” 10-11

Due to this, any picture is a logical one as well. All pictures by their nature must display the logical form so that they may relate to the world, thereby being logical pictures at the same time. Therefore, the logical form is critical to the picture theory insofar as it being the substance that links the picture with the pictured.

Now, we have a general view of the picture theory. There are statements of natural language. Natural language, being deficient and troublesome, has everything excluding the logical structure subtracted. Statements like “Wittgenstein is philosophical” or “If it rains, then the sidewalk is wet” are broken down into logical components to create such statements like “ P_w ” and “ $R \rightarrow W$ ” respectively. With the logical form exposed, the forms between reality and the proposition can be compared for measuring the truth-value. To illustrate this theory further, consider how biographers believe that Wittgenstein was struck with the epiphany of the picture theory. According to Avrum Stroll, Wittgenstein read an article about an automobile accident that was brought before court. A model of the incident was created to inform the judge of what happened:

Wittgenstein was struck by the fact that the model was able to represent the accident because of the correspondence between its components and the persons, automobiles, and places actually involved in the accident. He thus suddenly realized that a proposition could serve a similar function. It could provide a picture of the world through a correlation of its linguistic elements with the actual persons and things it speaks about. Using this analogy, he decided that a proposition could be thought of as a picture of reality. Hence, the picture theory was born.³²

Wittgenstein saw the model presented in court as a snapshot of reality insofar as the elements of the model directly corresponded to the elements of the incident itself. Language, likewise, performs a parallel function, so says the picture theory. The components of language, by analogy, match up to the picture of reality that it attempts to display. Thus, the atomic facts the picture displays relates to language in a like fashion that a model does.

³² Stroll, 50-51

Tautologies and self-contradictions make their appearance in Wittgenstein's book as well. Remember that the usage of them within the context of the logical form of analyticity is their reliance on their unshakable foundations. On that topic, Wittgenstein writes on that whilst developing his idea of truth tables this:

Among the possible groups of truth-conditions there are two extreme conditions. In the one case the proposition is true for all the truth-possibilities of the elementary propositions. We say that the truth-conditions are *tautological*. In the second case the proposition is false for all the truth-possibilities. The truth-conditions are *self-contradictory*.³³

Wittgenstein is really saying nothing all that new about the tautologies or self-contradictions.

However, he adds onto the fact that these two forms of true or falsity at polar ends. They are the *extremes* of truth.

Wittgenstein later clarifies this point:

Tautologies and contradictions are not pictures of the reality. They present no possible states of affairs. For the one allows *every* possible state of affairs, the other *none*. In the tautology the conditions of agreement with the world – the presenting relations – cancels one another, so that it stands in no presenting relation to reality. The truth-conditions determine the range, which is left to the facts of the proposition...Tautology leaves to reality the whole infinite logical space; contradiction fills the whole logical space and leaves no point to reality. Neither of them, therefore, can in any way determine reality.³⁴

Tautologies and self-contradictions cannot function as pictures of reality alone. They lie on the extremes of meaning. Neither can either of them represent states of reality for one represents *all* possible states and the other *none*. In reality, tautologies are constantly present; someone who is a bachelor is always a bachelor. Also, within reality there is a consistency in regards to self-contradicts, for there are none in nature. The relationship between tautology and self-contradiction generates the spectrum of meaning to which the whole of meaning falls into. On the other hand, either determines no meaning whatsoever.

Fallibility of language, emphasis on the usefulness of symbolic logic, the relation between tautologies and self-contradictions, and the picture theory are four primary components of logical

³³ “Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus,” 38

positivism, each of which influences Quine's notion of the logical form of analytic propositions. Here is how. Remember that it was supposed that the logical form is, essentially, Aristotle's law of non-contradiction or a tautology. In rooting that form in generally accepted axioms, Quine gives analyticity (if the natural form connected to the logical) a solid and unshakable foundation. How it is unshakable? It is so in the exact same way that Wittgenstein brought up contradictions and tautologies where the whole range of meaning is composed, at its base, of tautologies or self-contradictions. Whereas statements like "No unmarried man is married" flesh out states of affairs, the foundation of its meaning is thanks to the core observance towards the law of non-contradiction. Thereby, this is the connection between thoughts on tautologies and contradictions among logical positivists and Quine's notion of logical analyticity. Logical analyticity observes the boundaries of meaning generated by those two concepts and respects them insofar as to require all logically analytic statements to conform in one way or another.

Another point of convergence among logical positivism and Quine emerges when considering the notion of the fallibility of language. A way to reduce the philosophical harm from natural language is to abstract it into symbolic logic. Semantics no longer pose problems when the signs have been reduced to variables. Though "is" has potential semantic problems, no reasonable person could be confused if, say, either option is assigned two separate variables. Likewise with Quine's example, we can further simplify his logical form into "No -Px is Px" and further to $\neg \exists x (Px \ \& \ \neg Px)$ immediately tells anyone what statements will follow the law of non-contradiction. Only examining the natural form cannot tell us right off the bat if it is to be deemed analytic or not.

Take, for example, the phrase "Green is an extended object." Used by Quine as an attack

³⁴ "Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus," 38

against analyticity, Grice and Strawson claimed it is unfair to exemplify the statement for displaying the confusion of analytic statements. Why so is because there are serious philosophical considerations involved in that statement. Does green count as an extended body? What does “extended” or “body” mean? Does that phrase refer to green objects, or greenness itself? Before any thought can be given to the analyticity of that sentence, these questions are hurdles that derail analytical determination. What this embodies are two like ideas from the logical positivists and the logical form of analyticity. First is the fallibility of natural language. Remember that Wittgenstein stated that philosophy was full of problems that were caused by the misuse of language. The same goes for the above example. Early Wittgenstein would claim that the issues stemming from questioning what it means to be extended is merely a puzzle of language. Natural language generates these puzzles that Wittgenstein believed must be done away with. This leads to the second point of convergence: the use of logical symbolism. Because language is flawed, used symbols with assigned meanings and the like can bypass such problems as above. Wittgenstein clearly made this statement in the *Tractatus*. Quine also is showed to believe the same when considering that the main reason why he uses examples like “No bachelor is unmarried” is so that meanings no longer cause issues. For the logical components make that statement unconditionally true. Also, we are able to simplify that statement down to a purely logical formula like $\neg \exists x (Px \ \& \ \neg Px)$. Therefore, here are two other instances of one category of analyticity conforming to the theory of the logical positivists.

Finally, how Quine's logical form is similar to the logical positivists view is that it proves to be an example of the picture theory. Call to mind what Wittgenstein said about the picture theory was that all pictures present a logical form, and that is what the picture has in common if what is being represented. Applying that to the logical form of analyticity, it might be argued that

the symbolic representation of the logical form acts like the logical form of a picture, which thereby directly represents reality. For any statement with the logical form of “No -Px is Px” will reflect reality since in the world there exists no such things that both possess and do not possess a particular trait. So the logical form of a statement like “No unmarried man is married” has a logical form that identical to that with reality.

With the association between the logical positivists view of meaning and the logical form of analyticity revealed, an exposition into how the natural form of language connects to the ordinary language philosophy's understanding of meaning can begin primarily through examining Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*. Unlike the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein never offers a theory of meaning in his later work. Instead, he criticizes his previous theory while examining features of language that are vital for a linguistic investigation which are left untouched by the positivist viewpoint.

Wittgenstein's self-critique appears while he is elucidating his idea of language-games.

Upon asking the rhetorical question of how many kinds of sentences are there, he replies:

There are *countless* kinds: countless different kinds of use of what we call 'symbols', 'words', 'sentences'. And this multiplicity is not something fixed, given once for all; but new types of language, new language-games, as we may say, come into existence, and others become obsolete and get forgotten...Here the term 'language-game' is meant to bring into prominence the fact that the *speaking* of language is part of an activity, or form of life.³⁵

According to Wittgenstein, language is a much more flexible concept than conceived by the logical positivists, who saw language (especially the grammatical structure) as quite rigid. The emergence of new kinds of components of language, like words, sentences and symbols, and the death of old kinds is a concept that Wittgenstein is willing to entertain. Why is this so? Because he views language speaking as an activity. And the stance of it as an activity greatly influences the creation and destruction of new and old kinds of sentences.

What, exactly, does Wittgenstein mean by saying that speaking language is an activity? True as it may be that the utterance of words is activity insofar as the body is expelling air through the vocal cords in order to generate the correct pitch and speed to be interpreted as words. However, Wittgenstein puts the notion of language as activity in a social context. This is the advantage of the term “language-games”: it summarizes the complexity of language insofar as the role that *context* plays in language. Playing a game requires the players to follow a certain set of rules. Different games enact different rules. Monopoly adheres to special move and action rules as oppose to checkers, which both are radically different than ice hockey. Just like with games, social activities have specific contexts to which the speakers follow the rules. *Language-games are the contextual rules accompanying a social-linguistic situation.* Some of the examples of language-games are situations like giving orders, taking orders, reporting an event, talking about an event, singing, playing, making up a story, asking, questioning, thanking, swearing, along with countless others. Tagging on at the end of that list is the passage by Wittgenstein saying that “it is interesting to compare the multiplicity of the tools in language and of the ways they are used, the multiplicity of kinds of word and sentence, with what logicians have said about the structure of language. (Including the author of the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*).”³⁶

Take an example of an activity where language exists in along with its language-game and one can see how critical context is. Imagine that you are performing in a play (thus the language-game is “acting in a play”) and you recite the line “Lo, I have been slain!” Remove the line and place it *verbatim* in another language-game and it is clear how valuable examining language-games are to truly understanding language. Let us take the line and stick it into the language-

³⁵ *Philosophical Investigations*, 11

³⁶ *Philosophical Investigations*, 11-12

game of, to borrow one from Wittgenstein's list, describing the appearance of an object. Though the line "Lo, I have been slain!" makes perfect sense in a play, when applied towards describing an object it no longer makes any sense whatsoever. What about in the language-game of reporting on an event? The line can certainly fit the context far better, especially if the speaker has been shot or stabbed.

Sense is not the only factor that matters when discussing language-games.

Comprehending what language-game an utterance is in can give deep insight to what is really being said. For example, if the line "Lo, I have been slain!" has been yelled in a play, nobody in the audience is going to run for the lobby to phone an ambulance. Because the listeners and the speaker know the language-game is "acting in a play," the viewers know that what is happening onstage is not real; it is an expression for the character that the actor is embodying if that situation occurred. To use some jargon by John Austin, language-games can help separate the locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary aspects of language. The locution of the line is simply the exclamation that one has been slain. The illocution says that the person uttering the line wishes to have the audience understand his character is hurt. And the perlocution is the consequence of the audience, perhaps feelings of sadness or pity. Hence, here is an example of how vital language-games can be to philosophy of language.

Avrum Stroll provides the following exposition on language-games:

A language game is a slice of everyday human activity; each slice is different; some may include the activities of builders, others of lawyers, and some may focus on such practices as affirming, doubting, believing, and following rules. Language games not only refer to individual human activities but to those that are common to the whole community...By appealing to language games, Wittgenstein is urging the traditional philosopher not to think but to look and see what person actually do and say in the course of their daily live. *The description of such activities and utterances rather than a synoptic philosophical theory about them will provide an accurate picture of reality.*³⁷

Stroll recognizes the importance of the interplay between language-games and human activities;

the two do not operate in isolation. Instead, language-games are as shaped by human activities as human activities are shaped by language-games. This occurs not only at the level of interaction within a workplace or a situation in life, but to a whole community. That is exactly what Wittgenstein was getting at when he wrote that “to imagine a language means to imagine a form of life.”³⁸

The philosophical implications that result from examining language-games is, so says Stroll, a shift away from what might be deemed a traditional view of philosophy where thinkers take an aspect of the world and abstracted foundations and forms of them. Wittgenstein urges, on the other hand, that philosophers look at how language functions in the arena of the world. Foundations and forms may be useful in some philosophical sense, but to sterilize philosophy and language from reality. The ultimate objective of such a paradigm shift is to look at utterances and descriptions is to adopt an attitude more accurate at describing reality.

This Wittgensteinian exposition will conclude with a study into an influential concept derived from the *Philosophical Investigations*, which reflect a shift from adapting a sterile figure of language to a more pragmatic model. And that is the concept of family resemblance; an idea where Wittgenstein demands philosophers “don't think; but look!” Consider this ancient example taken from the Platonic dialogue *Meno*. During the course of the dialogue, Meno confronts Socrates to ask him what is virtue. Claiming ignorance, Socrates turns the tables on Meno and questions him as to what he thinks virtue is. Meno propose such traits like carrying on the affairs of a city, doing harm to enemies and doing friends well, and differing traits for women, children and the elderly. Socrates is disappointed in the answer and gives Meno another try, and he ends up mainly repeating himself. Never was Socrates told the defining characteristic of *all* virtues,

³⁷ Stroll, 103, emphasis added

but *instances* of virtue. He says: “Although seeking one, we have found many virtues, but in another way than we did just now. But the one which exists throughout all of these we are not able to find out.”³⁹ Socrates does not want particular virtues, only what allows for character traits like justice and prudence to be labeled virtuous.

Whereas Plato will use the dialogue to propose his theory of Forms, Wittgenstein may claim that Socrates put Meno up to an impossible task. For virtue to be identified, there must be some common thread running through all examples of virtues. Wittgenstein does not fall back upon the Platonic Forms; he suggests the idea of family resemblance among words. In the case of virtue, there is no single, common thread running throughout all and every example of a virtue. By looking (and not thinking) of the many virtues that Meno lists, Wittgenstein would respond with this passage: “We see a complicated network of similarities overlapping and criss-crossing: sometimes overall similarities, sometimes similarities of detail.” A classification of virtues does not entail the discovery of the essence of virtue, for that is not the case. Many virtues have common features with some, but not with all. Such terms like virtues should, instead, be viewed as a network of these sometimes overlapping similarities, where “the strength of the thread does not reside in the fact that some one fibre runs through its whole length, but in the overlapping of many fibres.”⁴⁰ Here is a perfect example of what Wittgenstein means by “don't think, but look!” By looking at how language function can concepts like family resemblance arise.

Wittgenstein, of course, was not the only proponent of the ordinary language view. Another thinker popular amongst the movement is Friedrich Waismann. His article titled “Verifiability” challenges the thought that there is one correct description of the world through

³⁸ *Philosophical Investigations*, 8

³⁹ Plato, 3-6

⁴⁰ *Philosophical Investigations*, 31-32

exposing the philosophical concerns that surface in proclaiming the existence of exact definitions. Waismann notes what is problematic about expecting exact definitions is it requires speakers to assume nothing will ever change about said definition. This is equally true of scientific definition. Gold might be thought of amongst the general populace as a substance that has specific, unique characteristics. But what if a new material was mined sharing nearly all of the same features of gold, excluding that it has a radiation level is much higher? In light of this, Waismann concludes it would alter our definition of gold to include the component of gold having a particular radiation level and not another.⁴¹

From this, Waismann abstracts his idea of words being “open texture.” To expound the concept, he writes:

Try as we may, no concept is limited in such a way that there is no room for any doubt. We introduce a concept and limit it in *some* directions; for instance, we define gold in contrast to some other metals such as alloys. This suffices for our present needs, and we do not probe any farther. We tend to overlook the fact that there are always other directions in which the concept has not been defined. And if we did, we could easily imagine conditions which would necessitate new limitations. In short, it is not possible to define a concept like gold with absolute precision, i.e. in such a way that every nook and cranny is blocked against entry or doubt. That is what is meant by the open texture of a concept.⁴²

According to Waismann, there is no definition that is so airtight that it removes any and all room for doubt or re-examination. For exactness of definitions to be present requires such a concept to be revealed in all possible manners. There are features of gold that remain unknown to us. This does not mean that gold is a remarkably vague idea. But when metallurgistic discoveries challenge the common understanding of gold, it is the catalyst, which drives further investigations. Alternatively, the same is true of a person. No matter how close, two friends will never know everything about the other. So when it is found that one friend enjoys watching Mexican soap operas in their basement while listening to Georgian chants as they shave the

⁴¹ Waismann, 1951

⁴² Waismann, 1951

Greek alphabet onto their goat Herby, that challenges the other friend's present understanding of that person. Hence, concepts are open texture because they are open to doubt. Our knowledge of definitions is textured and, thereby, is open to skepticism and reform.

As with the exploration into the doctrine of logical positivism, this examination will conclude with the connection between this theory of meaning and one of the kinds of analyticity Quine outlined. Treatment as such has already been paid to the logical form; similar dues must be paid to the natural form. Now, unlike the logical form, Quine does not give the reader much to work with about this form. There are much less philosophical tidbits to chew on with it. Unfortunately, that means much of what can be gathered from the natural form must be inferred since as soon as Quine brings up that form of analyticity he immediately starts the investigation. This is particularly odd since he mentions that "the difficulty lies not in the first class of analytic statements, the logical truths, but rather in the second class."⁴³ If the difficulty lay with the second category, then why did he not explain what that kind was in depth?

That is a problem that should not stop the investigation and comparison between late Wittgenstein and the natural form of analyticity. Instead, we can only assume Quine was implying with the natural form whatever we can derive from natural language as a whole. What should our first step be? Clearly, it we should do as Wittgenstein said and look at our situation, and not think. Take Quine's example of a naturally analytic statement "No bachelor is married" and "zoom out" to understand the language-game that it is in. What is it? The manner that we have been looking at examples like this has been through a philosophical lens; far removed from many kinds of public discourse. In particular, our language-game has analyticity and its criteria at the core. We may describe the language-game of this entire essay as one of "performing a

philosophical investigation into analyticity.” The benefit it gives to the situation is it reminds us that the phrase above has a much different context than it contains in a situation where, say, two people are discussing marriage customs. Here, our talk of bachelors is not concerned with genders and marital partners. Our discussion is concerned with how the meanings of those words apply to our understanding of analyticity.

It might be brought up that, in our investigation into the naturally analytic, how Waismann's notion of open texture plays into the investigation. It could be argued that, because open texture states that words cannot have precise and exact definitions, that analyticity of that variety is a lost cause. Since our understanding of words can change with new empirical discoveries, then how can analyticity truly be a sound concept? What must be noted is, though open texture does indeed give some leeway to meaning, meaning is a not free-for-all. Words clearly mean. Open texture only states that we must be aware of the relationship between the meaning and the meant, what is pointing and what is being pointed to, is not a clear-cut direct relationship. It does not discount how analyticity is possible for natural language. Tautologies and self-contradictions can still occur even with the “wobble room” of meaning.

What results is that there is a shift away from any sort of attempt to generate a kind of logical structure that fits any and all kinds of analytic statements. Why? Because our apprehension of the current language-game suggests that we are not “zooming in” to the substructure of phrases but “zooming out” to gain a better understanding of analyticity in the general schema of language. Whereas logical positivists enjoy taking one instance of an analytic statement and discovering a universal structure, ordinary language philosophers would much rather look at the totality of what philosophers consider analytic statements. In other words,

⁴³ Quine, 24

analyticity is better grasped through seeing the grander picture that encompasses all analytic statements.

Think about what other sort of sentences have been universally classified as analytic throughout the history of Western philosophy. Consider those that have crafted philosophers' understanding of analyticity to what it is today. Obviously, there is the “all bachelors are unmarried” example that Quine enjoys. There is also “Gold is a yellow metal,” “all triangles have three sides,” and “all bodies are extended.” These are phrases pulled mainly from Kant: a thinker who most philosophers associate analytic statements with. Perhaps you have been taught to see what common features exist in all to define analyticity for yourself. Ordinary language philosophers would disagree to that method. Alternatively, these philosophers would claim that there is no single analytic fiber running throughout the classical examples. What the classical examples generate is a network throughout which analyticity is understood.

Examine what has just been done. Our acknowledgment of what language-game the exploration into analyticity has caused us to transcend nitpicking “no bachelor is unmarried” to redirect our attention to analyticity as a whole. This transcendence is the exact opposite move a logical positivist would make. Positivists would be much more comfortable continuing that nitpicking to an even more microscopic degree. Transcendence has thus made us look at what draws together our traditional examples of analyticity and question why they are lumped under the category. But that does not mean what single feature makes them all analytic. Rather, we looked at what network forms between them. Never was our intention to define analyticity through the lens of ordinary language philosophy. The intention was to show how the naturally analytic statements conform to a much different theory of meaning than the logical.

The reader will surely notice that through the previous section of the essay a stark divide

between the background theories of meaning accompanying the two categories of analyticity. The logical is associated with the positivists. These philosophers dig down to the formal underpinnings of statements, where abstracted logical forms reflect reality and obtain their meaning through how accurately the form of the sentence reflects the form of reality via the picture theory. The natural form is associated with ordinary language philosophy, which examines the language-games and family resemblance of meaning. Rather than deeply examining the microscopic features of language and cutting away whatever does not fit their neat format, ordinary language philosophers welcome the nitty-gritty. Proponents examine language in its social context and take in how human activities affect meaning, all the while building definitions through looking at not what is common among all but how the network of meaning is created.

Comparing and contrasting the above features of the two theories of meaning does not expose the far deeper philosophical implications of such ideas. Logical positivism and the ordinary language view differ on many deeper levels too. Where truth is drawn from is one such example of conflicts between them. For the logical positivists, truth of statements is determined by its *correspondence* with reality. What this means is that a statement like “Gold is a yellow metal” is truthful if that is how things really are. Wittgenstein's picture theory embodies this. The gist of that theory declares that all propositions are pictures which, via logical forms, reflect reality. It is a requirement for sentences to have meaning that they accurately reflect the world. Thus, the truth-conditions for logical positivists are determined by comparing the proposition with reality.

Contra the correspondence view is coherentism: a theory that dictates that propositions get their truth in the context of other propositions. How coherentism relates to the ordinary language view is clear when bringing up an example by Nelson Goodman. In countering David

Hume's notion of regularities of experience, Goodman proposes this situation. Just as we can classify an emerald as "green," we can also classify it as "grue." To say that something is grue is to state that it will be green up until time t is reached, and then afterwards it is blue. This means that for emeralds, we can draw two different inductions from them: one stating that they are green and the other saying they will be blue after time t . Our world can easily be categorized into classes such as green and blue, or equally grue and green. What Goodman sought to achieve was to show that regularities, though they appear in nature, appear in a multitude. A particular regularity might state that objects are defined as green or blue; another could say that said objects are grue or green. Which regularity is used happens to be a matter of pragmatics and habit.⁴⁴

With the grue/green thought-experiment, what is apparent is the coherentism of ordinary language philosophy. The point of Goodman's example was to show the way in which the world is classified is not done so through some natural regularity. There is nothing inherent within, say, emeralds demanding speakers to call it green over grue. Yet, if two speakers each called emeralds grue and green, both are correct. Grue functions fine as a means of demarcating the color of emeralds. In a way, between the green and the grue users, there are two functioning correspondence theories going on. There are *multiple correspondences*, in a sense, because both grue and green function. Because of this, we come to a conclusion that this is more of a coherence view of truth. Since there are multiple ways of describing the world, this means that correspondence in the sense that logical positivists use it cannot function as well.

This leads to an even deeper divide between ordinary language proponents and the logical positivists. It has been shown that the positivists agree with a correspondence theory of truth. As a result, the positivists also adhere to the notion that there is only one correct description of the

⁴⁴ "Goodman's Aesthetics."

world. The nature of logical forms and the picture theory states propositions cannot be interpreted in multiple ways. $\Box x (Px \ \& \ Px)$ can only be viewed as $\Box x (Px \ \& \ Px)$. There is no possible way to incorporate different meanings unto that statement.

Additionally, positivists strove for a single, correct, *scientific* explanation of the world. The inherent scientism of logical positivism is obvious in the thoughts of multiple proponents. Scientism states that the only meaningful things to be said are those of scientific propositions. Near the end of the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein makes the point by saying that the true objective of philosophy is “to say nothing except what can be said” which are “the propositions of natural science.” When encountering fields like metaphysics, Wittgenstein claims one must “demonstrate to him [the metaphysician] that he had given no meaning to certain signs in his propositions.”⁴⁵ A.J. Ayer, in his book *Language, Truth and Logic*, both agrees with Wittgenstein about the relationship between science and philosophy as well as attacks those who do not conform. He writes that it is not philosophy's task to generate speculative truths which pass over science. Rather, a philosopher's job is “to clarify the propositions of science by exhibiting their logical relationships, and by defining the symbols which occur in them.” Again, there is deep within the logical positivists tradition the feeling that science is superior on the grounds that it is the only form of knowledge where really meaningful things can be uttered. Ayer attacks metaphysics for the same reasons as Wittgenstein; he claims the metaphysician “produces sentences which fail to conform to the conditions under which alone a sentence can be literally significant.”⁴⁶ Since metaphysics is accused of sailing phony truths over the head of science, Ayer criticizes it by claiming that it cannot produce meaningful statements in the same way that science does.

⁴⁵ “Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus,” 81-82

⁴⁶ Ayer, 170-171

Ordinary language philosophy has a much different view on the world. Instead of believing that there is one correct description of the world, they believe that the world can be explained in multiple ways. Recall the grue/green example. In that case, it was determined that to call an emerald either green or grue was correct in either case; to maintain that green is the only true way to describe an emerald is to ignore the fact that regularities are pragmatic notions. Ergo, to the ordinary language advocate, there are many different ways to say the states of affairs in the world.

Unlike positivism, ordinary language does not have scientism inherent in it. That is not to say, however, that scientific propositions are excluded from said theory. What this means is ordinary language still holds the potential of expressing scientific propositions. But it also includes the social constructs inherent within language. That is a point already made through Wittgenstein and his language-games. It also appears in the works of John Austin in his book *How to do Things with Words*. In it, he claims the following while discussing performance and language:

The utterance of the words is, indeed, usually a, or even *the*, leading incident in the performance of the act...the performance of which is also the object of the utterance, but it is far from being usually, even if it is ever, the sole thing necessary if the act is to be deemed to have been performed. Speaking generally, it is always necessary that the *circumstances* in which the words are uttered should be in some way, or ways, *appropriate*, and it is very commonly necessary that either the speaker himself or other persons should *also* perform certain *other* actions, whether “physical” or “mental” actions or even acts of uttering further words.⁴⁷

What Austin is getting at here is performance as an integral part of speaking a language.

According to Austin, words themselves that lead the speaker into engaging in a linguistic act, to

⁴⁷ Austin, 292.

which the words also reflect said act. However, the exchange between word and act is not the only components. The context of the conversation is another important aspect to consider. Circumstances have to be appropriate to the matters at hand. And just as the speaker has actions that he must perform, so does the listener too. Hence sociality is obviously present in the ordinary language view. From what have been written by John Austin, the view takes into consideration the sociality of language, while at the same time being able to express any other sort of propositions, including scientific ones.

In all, there are numerous ways in which the two views vary. They differ so much that they cannot ever be reconcilable. There is no possible way that these two schools of thought can be either compatible or relatable. The ultimate result is that it demonstrates the fact that for Quine to turn the naturally analytic to the logically analytic would have required him to perform the impossible. *Quine needed to reconcile these radically two different theories of meaning by either breaking one down into the other or for him to makes these two forms function with one another.* Therefore, the endeavor central at his thesis is downright impossible.

To put the last nail in the coffin and demonstrates the serious philosophical consequences resulting from Quine trying to leap from one form to the other, consider this. In 1993, a film was produced about a biographical/philosophical play written on the life of Wittgenstein. On his deathbed, Wittgenstein is comforted by a colleague, who tells the following story outlining not only Wittgenstein's philosophical history, but also where he went astray. He tells this fable:

There was once was a young man who dreamed of reducing the world to pure logic. Because he was a very clever young man, he actually managed to do it. And when he finished his work, he stood back and admired it. It was beautiful; a world purged of imperfection and indeterminacy. Countless acres of gleaming ice stretching to the horizon. So the clever young man looked out around the world he created and decided to explore it. He took one step forward and fell flat on his back. You see, he had forgotten about friction. The ice was smooth and level and stainless. You couldn't walk there. So the clever young man sat down and wept bitter tears.

But as he grew to a wise old man, he came to understand that roughness and ambiguity aren't

imperfections; they're what make the world turn. He wanted to run and dance. And the words and things scattered upon the ground, were all battered and tarnished and ambiguous. And the wise old man saw that's how the way things were. But something in him was still homesick for the ice, where everything was radiant and absolute and relentless. Though he had come to like the idea of the rough ground, he couldn't bring himself to live there. So now he was marooned between earth and ice, at home in neither. And this was the cause of all his grief.⁴⁸

Logical analyticity forms the world of ice. It is smooth, perfect, and free of confusion or ambiguity. These features are embodied in the formulations like $\neg \exists x (Px \ \& \ \neg Px)$. This is perfect insofar as it is general, determinate and have a definite nature. Nowhere can the flaws of language persist. What is said reflects reality like a photograph. Yet it is not without its costs. Nobody can live on a world of ice. Equally, nobody can live operating entirely in the world of logic. Whereas the world of ice lacks friction, logic lacks the friction necessary to make daily linguistic encounters possible. Language is much more ambiguous than imagined in the logical sense. It is rough, sometimes confusing, and is a concept that we frequently wrestle to truly understand. What it does have, however, is the much-desired friction of life. Natural analyticity exists in this realm. Language-games and family resemblances create the jagged ground needed to explore the surface. It may not necessarily eliminate our urges for the stable foundations provided by logic.

Earth and ice form the conflict that this section was attempting to expose. For in trying to make naturally analytic statements conform to logical ones, Quine was essentially trying to mesh the background theory underlying the former into the latter. He was attempting to find that middle ground between earth and ice. The entire investigation in the "Two Dogmas" was Quine's method of breaking mountains while building glaciers, of finding how the logical form can reinforce natural analyticity. But the theories that support each category conflict and lead to different philosophical schools, doctrines, and ideas. Quine's essay was doomed from the start.

⁴⁸ Wittgenstein, 1993.

Just as longing for the world of ice on the earth lead Wittgenstein to despair, trying to root of form of analyticity in a radically different kind led to grief for Quine. There is one final point that will conclude this section. Quine might have saved analyticity from his attack and maintain the critique of logical positivism (if who Putnam suggested the article was directed towards is true) by simply fully embracing natural analyticity *only*. In tossing logical analyticity to the wind, Quine would no longer need to find a means to mesh the two. True, the natural category is not as clean when it comes to defining analyticity as the logical, thus requiring a lengthy investigation. However, that does not mean that determining natural analyticity by its own merit is impossible. Solely embracing that form of analyticity does not prove to be contradictory for the rest of Quine's work either. Consider Quine's idea of the indeterminacy of translations, which is a notion deeply embedded in the methods and style of ordinary language philosophy. Ultimately, Quine can endorse just one kind of analyticity as a means of avoiding trying to straddle between to conflicting and radically differing forms.

Studies in Syntheticity

During the course of my researching the subject, one peculiar fact became apparent. Being that the “Two Dogmas” caused quite a stir in the philosophical community, many articles were produced which run to the aide of the distinction through the defense of analyticity or to the aide of Quine by further breaking down the division. Synthetic statements, on the other hand, are left as untouched as before the “Two Dogmas” was published. Research did not come up with a single article either in favor or opposed to the idea of syntheticity. Even Quine himself ignores synthetic sentences.

The question is: why does it appear that philosophers are avoiding syntheticity? I say

“avoiding” because there is no comprehensible way in the time between this article and Quine's that no philosopher ever had the syntheticity on the brain. It is fallacious to declare that synthetic statements are equally unfounded merely since analyticity took a harsh blow. But, alas, the question remains. My response is to say that what makes syntheticity an avoided subject by Quine, his followers, and his opponents, is because *it is, essentially, a founded and sound concept.*

Luckily, the article will not require an investigation to the core of syntheticity, though it is helpful to begin by looking at where analyticity and syntheticity make an initial prominent appearance. Immanuel Kant is the first to explain the distinction. The legendary tome of the *Critique of Pure Reason* strikes a difference within the opening pages. Kant describes there being two different categories of judgments. He writes:

Either the predicate B belongs to the subject A as something which (covertly) contained in the concept A; or B lies outside the concept A, though connected with it. In the former case I call the judgement analytic, in the latter synthetic. Analytic judgements (affirmative ones) are therefore those in which the connection of the predicate with the subject is thought through identity, while those in which this connection is thought without identity should be called synthetic.⁴⁹

Other names that he gives analytic and synthetic statements are elucidatory and expansive, respectively. What Kant wrote about analytic statements fits our notion of it we have been working with through the entire essay. Analytic judgments are those where a predicate is contained with a subject and which are understood through identity. Our classic example of “all bachelors are unmarried” fits the mold. And, as mentioned earlier in the essay, these judgments require the principle of non-contradiction. Synthetic judgments, on the other hand, have predicates lie outside of the subject. This requires some sort of investigation in order to confirm or deny if said predicates link up with a subjects. An example of this is the phrase “All bachelors are unhappy.” Since there is nothing inherent within bachelors that dictate that all of them will be

unhappy. Hence, these kinds of judgments are expansive: if true, they increase our knowledge of some object.

Kant elaborates on this idea in the *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*. In that work, he notes that synthetic judgments are of “*a posteriori* judgements of empirical origin” and that “they cannot possibly spring from the principle of analysis, namely, the principle of contradiction, alone.” He mentions, however, that synthetic judgments will still need to follow the same principle anyway in order for them to make sense.⁵⁰ Unlike their analytic counterpart, synthetic statements cannot be determined true through analysis of subjects. Thereby, such judgments arise from empirical investigations into the world and through collecting sensory data.

We can gather much from just what he mentioned so far so that we can further understanding why philosophers of language had no need to shy away from questioning syntheticity. Even without principles firmly defined, philosophical conclusions can still be drawn.

Most, if not all philosophers agree with Kant's definition of syntheticity: it is the unification of a predicate with a subject where there is no prior connection can be deduced through analysis alone. Determining what subject/predicate unifications are true necessitates sense-driven empirical investigations. Compare this directly with an outline of Quine's philosophical inquiries into analyticity. The grounding of analyticity requires cognitive synonymy that leans on definitions, which are synonyms that in turn are determined true or false through interchangeability without altering the truth-value, so long as agreement is not solely extensional and accidental. Recalling the counter-argument written by the pair of Grice and Strawson, a gripe they have revolved around the notion that something so fundamental within language was being challenged (synonymy). Quine was not writing about synonymy to understand *how* it works; he

⁴⁹ *Critique of Pure Reason*, 43

was figuring out *if* it works. The same goes for many other concepts he analyzes. For interchangeability *salve veritate*, Quine did not operate under the assumption that terms are replaceable without harming the truth of the content. Rather, his article was to deem such an idea *possible or not*. The same goes for cognitive synonymy. Grice and Strawson, in their defense of synonymy, are attacking Quine for his lack of faith in such a fundamental aspect of language, which leads to more disastrous consequences.

With empirical confirmation, as opposed to something like cognitive synonymy, there is little doubt in philosophical literature to question if such is possible; that is, *no one seriously doubts that empirical confirmation is a reality*. True at the levels of everyday interaction with the world up to the upper echelons of scientific research, human beings generally accept that we can postulate about the world and generate tests for confirmation. If we wish to confirm the proposition that “All bachelors are unhappy,” then we can easily imagine scenarios where the statement is put to the test. Through surveys or psychoanalysis, evidence gathered empirically to serve the ends of affirming (or disconfirming) our postulations about the world is taken to be a general fact about the nature of reality and the human condition.

That is not to say that the idea of empirical confirmation is free of philosophical problems itself. The subject of what counts as sufficient empirical confirmation is a heated issue with the realm of philosophy of science. The debate entails asking the question of “how do we know when evidence gives us a good reason to believe that something is true?” In other words, where do we draw the line between proven hypotheses satisfactory and ones that require more experimentation? Bayesianism is an approach to answering those questions. According to that doctrine, there is a theorem that calculates the probability of truth of the hypothesis. Evidence

⁵⁰ *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*, 10-11

plays into this, writes Peter Godfrey-Smith, “when there is an uncertainty about a hypothesis, observational evidence can sometimes *raise or lower the probability* of the hypothesis.”⁵¹ The relation between the Bayesian theorem and evidence is, when provided, can have a dramatic effect on the probability of said hypothesis. Note that this is in the positive or negative direction. For example, the hypothesis “All ravens are black” is given a higher probability for every instance of a black raven. A white raven, on the other hand, lowers said probability.

Peter Achinstein, on the other hand, offers an alternative view on evidence. He criticizes scientists for a weak determination of what counts as evidence. He believes modern scientists turned empirical evidence *a priori* with mathematical calculations, as with above. Achinstein then goes on to list off four different kinds of evidence that arise in experimentation and investigation and how all of those interact with one another in order to give scientists a good reason to believe that a hypothesis is true.⁵²

Godfrey-Smith explains a view of scientific hypotheses that generates mathematical probabilities to deem said hypotheses true or not. Achinstein opposes such an *a priori* conception in favor of a theory where all forms of evidence are taken into consideration. More importantly, said evidence is not abstracted into a formula. Regardless of one's stance, it is to be noted how both of these writers treat the concept of empirical confirmation. Neither doubts that such a thing is possible. For if that were the case, then talk of what evidence counts as strengthening a theory or what evidence should taken into serious consideration would be futile. Instead, both Achinstein and Godfrey-Smith *assume* that empirical confirmation is a true and present concept. Nowhere in their writing does the question “can empirical confirmation even be possible?”

⁵¹ Godfrey-Smith, 181

⁵² Achinstein, 190-195

arise.⁵³

What was intended from this section is to demonstrate how, when discussing matters regarding empirical confirmation, the subject is always taken as a given and is rarely questioned. Questions of empirical confirmation are always asking *how* it is possible and to what degree it is successful, never *if* it is possible. Again, this relates back to Quine's treatment of concepts like cognitive synonym. He immediately starts asking the *if* question and never really goes into the *how* question as a result.

From what has been gather, we have an answer to why it is that philosophers have not touched syntheticity in light of the "Two Dogmas." At its base is a notion so fundamental to science and day-to-day human life that there is no need to question if it is possible at all. Seeing that, philosophers directed their attention to analyticity only. That seems like a fair assessment; analyticity is more problematic of the analytic/synthetic division. There, clearly, are philosophers probing the bases of analyticity and asking if the foundations are grounded, which is not the case with syntheticity.

This begs the question: if syntheticity is a stable concept with empirical confirmation, why is that not being brought up in discussions about the division? The attacks and criticisms that followed Quine's "Two Dogmas" never shed any light on syntheticity. Yet it appears to be a solid idea insofar as its basis of empirical confirmation is generally accepted as being a fact. Thus, if we take Quine to be right about analyticity, there is a one-sided fight going on. With philosophers bickering over analyticity, syntheticity remains strong. How effective philosophical

⁵³ Hume's induction fallacy might be brought up as a counter-point. The induction fallacy states, to put it loosely, no matter how consistently an event occurs, that is not sufficient grounds to say that it will happen again at another given point. Though the sun has risen everyday of my life, Hume believes that I cannot justify my belief that it will rise again tomorrow off of that. This concern, however, can be brushed aside. Not only does science function just fine in light of this, but what Hume's fallacy says is that we cannot *prove* that something will happen again.

investigations into the distinction can be when only one side is being critiqued?

Conclusion

Three dogmas of Quine's essay have been exposed. Firstly, there is the adherence to specific premises of which their truth is challenged and only attracts certain kinds of philosophers. Second, there is the dogmatism of blindly accepting the possibility of naturally analytic statements being rooted in the logical form whilst ignoring conflicting internal philosophical issues. And finally, the third dogma is the avoidance of syntheticity: a concept generally accepted as true by the greater community of philosophers. Perhaps in the future more works will arrive on the scene to deliver a deathblow to the analytic/synthetic distinction. Before the division is attacked again, however, these issues must be solved.

Yet what we are talking about here is actually about evidence *in favor* of confirming a hypothesis.

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