behaviorism wrap-up
the identity theory
S is in mental state M iff S behaves in such-and-such ways

e.g. S is in pain iff S writhes, groans, etc.
dispositions (powers, tendencies)

a special kind of property

elements: fragility, solubility, elasticity

a fragile object is (to a first approximation) something that would break if it were struck

a wine glass is fragile (has the property of fragility) even when it isn’t manifesting the kind of behavior (breaking) distinctive of fragility
S is in mental state M iff S is disposed to behave in such-and-such ways

e.g. S is in pain iff S is disposed to (has a tendency to/is inclined to) writhe, groan, etc.

see Putnam on super-spartans and X-worlders
S believes that it’s raining iff S is disposed to open an umbrella, wear a raincoat, take shelter, etc.

what’s wrong with this?
three problems

1. a mental state doesn’t have ‘a fund of behavioral consequences to call its own’: what a person does depends on what mental states she is in

2. the special access we have to our own mental states is hard to explain on the behaviorist view

3. aren’t mental states the inner causes of behavior?
arguably, the behaviorist confuses epistemology with metaphysics

how we find out about others’ mental states

versus

what mental states are
what we (apparently) want is an account that identifies mental states with the inner causes of behavior, but which does not identify them with the states of an immaterial ‘soul’
the identity theory

proposed by JJC Smart and UT Place in the 1950s

a ‘theoretical identity’

water=H2O

heat=molecular kinetic energy

pain=c-fibers firing

‘c-fibers’ is just a placeholder for a more realistic candidate
Images removed due to copyright restrictions.
To view U.T. Place's brain, go to http://www.hss.adelaide.edu.au/philosophy/resources/place/.
‘the suggestion I wish to resist is…that to say ‘I have a yellowish orange after-image’ is to report something irreducibly psychical. Why do I wish to resist this suggestion? Mainly because of Occam’s razor…That everything should be explicable in terms of physics…except the occurrence of sensations seems to me to be frankly unbelievable. Such sensations would be ‘nomological danglers,’ to use Feigl’s expression.’
Ockham was a **nominalist**: properties (or ‘universals’) don’t exist

‘Ockham’s razor’: entities are not to be multiplied without necessity

that is, don’t believe in so-and-so’s unless you have to

William of Ockham
(c. 1287-1347)
identity

\[\equiv\]

an equivalence relation

correlation vs. identity

footprints \approx \text{the burglar} / \text{Bill Sykes} = \text{the burglar}

‘is’ of predication / identity

Sting is famous / Sting is (\(=\)) Gordon Sumner

strict or numerical identity vs. ‘identical twins’

‘analytic’ vs. ‘synthetic’ identities

the shortest bachelor = the shortest adult unmarried male / the morning star = the evening star
reading for upcoming sessions

read Place and Kripke