KBNS Interim Workshop 1:
Self-Knowledge and the A Priori
20th-21st May 2017, Stirling Court Hotel, University of Stirling

Programme

Saturday 20th May: Self-Knowledge
Venue: Stirling Court Hotel, University of Stirling

10.00 – 11.30	**Giovanni Merlo** (Stirling): "A defense of Lichtenberg" Chair: Giacomo Melis
11.30 – 11.45	Coffee
11.45 – 1.15	**Marie Guillot** (Essex): "Self-knowledge and the phenomenal model of the self-concept" Chair: Mike Wheeler
1.15 – 2.00	Lunch
2.00 – 3.30	**Alex Byrne** (MIT): "Knowing that I am in pain" Chair: Adrian Haddock
3.30 – 3.45	Break
3.45 – 5.15	**Aidan McGlynn** (Edinburgh): "The Whats and Whys of Wh-Misidentification" Chair: Sonia Roca-Royes
5.15 – 5.30	Tea
5.30 – 7.00	**Jennifer Hornsby** (Birkbeck): "Self-Knowledge in Practice (Knowing How etc.)" Chair: Peter Sullivan
7.30	Workshop Dinner, Stirling Court Hotel Restaurant

Sunday 21st May: The A Priori
Venue: Stirling Court Hotel, University of Stirling

11.00 – 11.15	Coffee
11.15 – 12.45	**Giacomo Melis** (Stirling): "The Indefeasibility of A Priori Propositional Warrants: a Critique" Chair: Giovanni Merlo
12.45 – 1.45	Lunch
1.45 – 3.15	**Sonia Roca-Royes** (Stirling): "Rethinking the epistemology of modality for *abstracta*" Chair: Philip Ebert
3.15 – 3.30	Tea
3.30 - 5.00	**James Pryor** (NYU): "Immediate Justification and Trusting one's Sources" Chair: Moritz Baron
5.30 – 6.30	Dinner

Sunday 21st May: Public Events
Venue: Stirling Court Hotel, University of Stirling

6.30 – 7.30	**Public Lecture: Carrie Jenkins** (UBC): "Knowing Our Own Hearts" Chair: Crispin Wright
7.45	**Café Philosophique**: Informal discussion led by project members.

Abstracts day 1

Giovanni Merlo (Stirling): "A defense of Lichtenberg"

Cartesians and Lichtenbergians have diverging views of the deliverances of introspection. According to the Cartesians, a rational subject, competent with the relevant concepts, can come to know that he or she thinks – hence, that he or she exists – on the sole basis of his or her introspective awareness of his or her conscious thinking. According to the Lichtenbergians, this is not possible. This paper offers a defense of the Lichtenbergian position using Peacocke and Campbell's recent exchange on Descartes's *cogito* as a framework for discussion. A thought-experiment will be presented involving two communities with radically different conceptions of the metaphysics of the self. The purpose of the thought-experiment is to suggest that substantive metaphysical principles, whose truth cannot be known a priori or on the sole basis of introspection, form essential part of one's grounds for believing in one's own existence.

Marie Guillot (Essex): "Self-knowledge and the phenomenal model of the self-concept"

Reflective self-knowledge is made of judgments containing a self-concept, such as "I believe that climate change is real" or "I have a pain in my left shoulder". In accounting for the way that this concept works, a number of authors (including, but not only, Castañeda, Kapitan, Nida-Rümelin, Bermúdez, O'Brien) rely on the idea that subjects have a basic experience of self, and that the self-concept is rooted in this experience. However, these writers differ on several key points, including the nature of the relevant self-experience, the mechanism through which the self-concept is grounded in this experience, and the strength of the dependence of the concept on the experience.

In this paper, I propose that the framework of phenomenal concepts, made familiar by discussions of ordinary perceptual experiences, can be a helpful tool to disentangle different possible dependence claims, and to clarify and compare the options. I end by tentatively proposing one interpretation of the phenomenal-concept model which might fit the self-concept. Along the way, I discuss the extent to which the phenomenal approach can shed light on the semantic and epistemological features traditionally associated with the use of the self-concept.

Alex Byrne (MIT): "Knowing that I am in pain"

How do you know that you are in pain? Surprisingly, although pain is the philosopher's favorite example of a sensation, the question has received little sustained attention from philosophers. Part of the explanation might be that some philosophers think that it is in the very *nature* of pain to make itself known, in which case it's unclear what more could be said. Another part of the explanation might be that some other philosophers, under the influence of Wittgenstein, think that talk of "knowledge" here is misplaced. As Wittgenstein famously said: "It can't be said of me at all (except perhaps as a joke) that I *know* I am in pain. What is it supposed to mean—except perhaps that I *am* in pain?" Against both groups of philosophers, the paper argues for a substantive epistemological account, one that fits well with the contemporary scientific understanding of pain, although it fits badly with "commonsense".

Aidan McGlynn (Edinburgh): "The Whats and Whys of Wh-Misidentification"

This paper aims to offer an improved understanding of James Pryor's notions of wh-misidentification and immunity to wh-misidentification, as well as to defend them from prominent criticisms found in the literature and to argue for their philosophical significance. First, it responds to arguments due to Joel Smith and Annalisa Coliva that try to show that wh-misidentification is philosophically uninteresting, and perhaps even spurious. Second, it proposes refined characterizations of wh-misidentification and immunity to wh-misidentification which improve in various ways on the characterisations that standardly figure in the literature, enabling us to see what unifies different varieties of misidentification while remaining mindful of potentially significant differences. Finally, it discusses one way in which such differences are significant, taking a cue once more from Pryor.

Jennifer Hornsby (Birkbeck): "Self-Knowledge in Practice (Knowing How etc.)"

I'll argue that questions about the nature of knowing how should be answered in philosophy, not linguistics. (a) Gilbert Ryle's conception of self-knowledge as requiring the "performance of higher order acts" prevented him from addressing such questions about knowing-how as arise in philosophy of mind and action. (b) Jason Stanley various misinterpretations of Ryle readily lead to his assumption that Ryle's anti-intellectualism is a thesis about *ascriptions* of knowledge.

Abstracts day 2

Giacomo Melis (Stirling): "The Indefeasibility of A Priori Propositional Warrants: a Critique"
I describe a simple case where the epistemic agent acquires a misleading defeater of cognitive failure (a defeater suggesting that the agent's cognitive performance was faulty in some respect), and I argue that it shows that attempts to account for the indefeasibility of a priori warrants in terms of indefeasibility of propositional (as opposed to doxastic) a priori warrants fail to characterize a notion of epistemic warrant that applies to human agents. I conclude by sketching an alternative proposal to capture the special epistemic security of a priori warrants.

Sonia Roca-Royes (Stirling): "Rethinking the epistemology of modality for *abstracta*"
The paper is an exploration of the sort of epistemology available to explain our *de re* modal knowledge about abstract entities. The thesis suggested—in a first approximation to the issue—is somewhat provocative: as modal epistemologists, we don't have much work to do here; instead, the work is down to ontologists. The paper first motivates the thesis by relying on a conception of abstract objects that makes the thesis a rather plausible one. It then considers some potential concerns and concludes that, while their treatment imposes some refinements and qualifications, the thesis stands.

James Pryor (NYU): "Immediate Justification and Trusting one's Sources"
I examine the prospects of getting justification from a source while lacking (a priori or otherwise) justified belief that the source is "good" (reliable or justification-providing). There are several cases to think about: (i) one has an _unjustified_ belief that the source is good; (ii) one has not considered the quality of the source; (iii) one has considered it but has no settled opinion. The third option differs from cases where one deliberately suspends judgment, and cases where one has real doubts about, the quality of the source. In these latter cases I suggest that it may usually be impossible for subjects to have fully coherent states of mind. (Deliberately suspending judgment about the deliverances of the source will not always achieve that.)

Public Lecture: Carrie Jenkins (UBC): "Knowing Our Own Hearts"
A long-standing philosophical question, one of the central topics of the *Knowledge Beyond Natural Science* project, is: how do we know our own minds? We seem to have special, "privileged" access to our own minds that we don't have to anyone else's. Do we have this same kind of access to our own hearts—for example, to whether, when, and with whom we are "in love?" Might it actually be easier to say when *someone else* is in love than to answer the same question about oneself? And what do we take to be evidence of love in ourselves, as opposed to in other people—do we look for the same signs?

In my book *What Love Is And What It Could Be*, I defend a "dual-nature" theory of romantic love, arguing that it is in part a social construct. This complicates the issue of self-knowledge. The social construction of romantic love includes social approbation of favoured forms of love, and policing of disfavoured forms. This can impact the question of *who is in love with whom* in at least two ways (one causal and one constitutive).

Methodologically, however, studies of love have relied heavily on self-reporting. There are various pitfalls with this (e.g. calibration difficulties and the possibility of inaccurate reports due to cognitive bias, dishonesty, poor memory, confabulation etc.). In this talk I want to bring an additional issue into view: ultimately, understanding what it means to be "in love" involves understanding our complex relationships with the social world around us.