

Attending: Carrie Ichikawa Jenkins, Jonathan Jenkins Ichikawa, Giacomo Melis, Moritz Barron, Claire Field, Xintong Wei, Peter Sullivan, Jose, Sonia Roca Royes, Paul Conlan, Indrek Lobus, Giovanni Merlo.

Presenting: Carrie

Paper: Jenkins - "Intuition, 'Intuition', Concepts and the A Priori"

Four Bundles of Symptoms

- **Indrek** wondered whether the symptoms from different bundles can be mixed, i.e. whether we can talk about intuitions understood e.g. in the bundle 2 way and also ask whether the bundle 1 characteristics apply. For example, could we ask about the pre-theoretical bundle 2 intuitions? **Carrie** replied that yes, the intention in separating them this way is not to show there is an inconsistency in belonging to more than one bundle, it is rather to map out the way the term 'intuition' is used. **Indrek** suggested that the distinction between bundles might help formulate some responses e.g. to Williamson-style worries regarding understanding/assent links: we can talk about bundle 2 intuitions of deviant logicians and bundle 2 intuitions of laypeople.
- **Xintong** wondered whether these bundles could also be used to map non-propositional intuitions? Compellingness or obviousness could, for example just be a phenomenological occurrence rather than a fully expressed proposition. **Carrie** suggested that the set of symptoms should be understood as inclusively as possible. The literature that the paper is engaging with, however, tends to view intuitions as propositional. Things that are propositionally shaped but might not be a proposition should be included. **Xintong** then asked about whether e.g. the sort of diagrams we have been looking at in the last sessions would be counted as intuitions. **Carrie** replied that she was not yet clear as to whether they should count.
- **Giacomo** wondered whether is meant by the expression "intuitions are propositionally shaped" is just that intuitions are the thing that gets you a warrant to believe a proposition, rather than that intuitions themselves are propositional. **Carrie** acknowledged that there is an ambiguity between the vehicle and the thing delivered in the term 'intuition'.
- **Indrek** suggested that in the case of a complicated mathematical theorem, we don't use rational intuition to see the truth of the theorem directly but instead we use rational intuition to see the truth of more basic things (e.g. the validity of modus ponens or that numbers have successors) from which we eventually get the theorem. **Indrek** then wondered whether we might begin with bundle 1 intuitions and get to something unintuitive (in the bundle 1 sense). Take David Lewis' account of modal realism. It might be that he began with bundle 1 commonsense intuitions, and eventually got to something unintuitive (in the bundle 1 sense). **Carrie** responded that yes, this is a live possibility.
- **Claire** wondered about intellectual seemings and how they figure in the account. **Carrie** suggested that seemings are built into some of the senses of intuition discussed, but she has no strong commitments to them being a specific way.
- **Giacomo**, going back to what Claire was suggesting, wondered whether appealing to intellectual seemings may give us something that comes close to a unified account of intuitions including many of the features of bundles 1, 2 and 3. **Carrie** suggested that

‘seeming’ doesn’t fit very well with bundle 1 and 2 characterisation. **Giovanni** wondered whether the discussion of intuitions and seemings treated intuitions as beliefs. **Carrie** suggested that like in the case of the vehicle/deliverance distinction, she is not committed to any particular view.

- **Indrek** wondered what it meant that ‘the source of the intuition is unclear’. **Carrie** responded that it would depend on whose account of intuition one was engaged with. **Indrek** suggested that phenomenologically, ‘I know not where’ should be somehow less certain than a belief with a source. **Carrie** further responded that one can, for example, be completely certain that $2+2=4$ is true without knowing anything about the source of the belief.
- **Peter** suggested that it is a myth that a distinctive feature of analytic philosophy (characterised as philosophy done in the UK and US in the 20th century) is the appeal to intuitions as evidence.
- **Indrek** wondered whether it is possible to confuse bundle 1 intuitions with bundle 2 intuitions, e.g. could experimental philosophers criticize armchair philosophers by saying that armchair philosophers think they have bundle 2 intuitions while they in fact have bundle 1 intuitions (e.g. by pointing to data that the same questions philosophers answer by relying on intuitions are answered in different ways by the folk). **Carrie** responded that this is a good line of discussion, and a natural follow-up is how to the interlocutors know the difference between something a priori justified and something deeply ingrained – how do they know that the subjects are having e.g. bundle 1 intuitions.

Handout

Intuition, ‘Intuition’, Concepts and the A Priori

Carrie Jenkins

Overview

- (At least) four bundles of symptoms associated with the *word* ‘intuition’
- (At least) two key *notions* of intuition can be separated
- I defend one of those notions against some key challenges

I: Four Bundles of Symptoms

- *Bundle one*
 - Commonsense/everyday/the views of ‘the folk’
 - Pre-theoretic/uncontaminated
- *Bundle two*
 - A prioricity

- Necessity/felt necessity of subject matter
- Underwritten by conceptual competence/understanding
- Upshot of a special faculty
- *Bundle three*
 - Immediate₁: direct/non-inferential/source unclear
 - Psychologically or epistemically
 - Immediate₂: obvious/spontaneous/natural/compelling
- *Bundle four*
 - Starting points/foundations for philosophical enquiry
 - Reliance on them is distinctive of traditional analytic philosophy
 - Evidence/warrant-providing in philosophy

II: What's up?

- Competing theories of the same thing
 - Insufficiently charitable?
- Ambiguity/shiftiness
 - Can it sound good to say 'This is an intuition but not an intuition'?
- Semantic generality
 - Cluster concept/family resemblance?
- Indeterminacy
- A simple view
 - Any old belief (or disposition to believe) is an intuition
- My working hypothesis:
 - One sense tied (roughly) to bundle one
 - Another tied (roughly) to bundle two
 - Both uses then associated with bundles three and four
 - Some indeterminacy
- 'Intuitive'
 - Property of propositions

- Particularly associated with bundle one

III: Any old belief (or disposition to believe)?

- Simple, unified proposal
- Datum: all kinds of things can be ‘intuitions’
 - Contingent
 - Empirical
 - General or particular
- Reports of belief without corresponding intuition are a problem for this view
 - Other, more restricted senses?
 - Loss of simplicity
- Datum can be accommodated in other ways

IV: The First Challenge: Unclarity

- Of nature, workings, target(s), and source(s)
- The world \Rightarrow experience \Rightarrow concepts \Rightarrow belief
- Justification which is empirical *and* a priori?
 - Independence of empirical *evidence*
 - Conceptual examination is sufficient for knowledge
 - Different in kind from ordinary empirical knowledge
- Goldman (e.g. 2007): philosophical reliance on intuition is a way of finding out about our concepts
- Kornblith 2007:

I have argued that our concepts are not plausibly viewed as the target of philosophical understanding ... it is the extra-mental phenomena themselves which are the real targets of philosophical analysis: knowledge, justification, the good, the right, and so on, not anyone’s concepts of these things. ... The standard philosophical procedure cannot be redeemed by viewing it as an attempt to provide an understanding of our mental representations instead of the phenomena which they are representations of.

- My view: information about the world is encoded in the concepts
- Bealer: ‘determinate concept possession’ guarantees reliability in application

- Reliability is not sufficient for justification
- No explanation of *why* we have determinate concept possession
- Kornblith: concepts cannot encode *much* of use to *philosophers* because the philosophically interesting ones (*knowledge, causality, responsibility* etc.) stand for natural kinds
 - I'm just resisting the thought that philosophers investigate *either* concepts *or* the things they are concepts of. This is the real issue anyway, according to Kornblith 2007:

It really doesn't matter, for present purposes, whether knowledge and other targets of philosophical analysis are natural kinds. ... [E]ven if the topics of philosophical interest typically correspond to ... socially constructed kinds, it remains true that the concepts of the folk, and the concepts of philosophers as well, need not accurately characterize these socially constructed categories. Just as any individual's concept of aluminum may contain substantial errors or omissions, any individual's concept of a semiconductor, or Chippendale furniture, or of socially constructed categories generally, may contain substantial errors or omissions. So the gap between concept and category does not disappear simply because we have moved from natural kind concepts to socially constructed ones. And once we recognize that our concepts, whether the concepts at issue are those of the folk or of theoreticians, may fail to characterize the categories they are concepts of, the philosophical interest of our concepts thereby wanes.

- Not true that the mere *possibility of error* removes the epistemic interest of concepts as a source of information about the world

V: The Remaining Challenges

- *Reliability*
 - Goldman 2007:

If someone experiences an intuition that the protagonist in a selected Gettier example doesn't know the designated proposition, why should this intuitional experience be evidence that the [Platonic] form KNOWLEDGE is such that the imaginary protagonist's belief in this proposition doesn't "participate" in this form? What connection is there ... ?
 - The concepts we have are useful/successful
 - Cf. the Putnam-Boyd "No Miracles Argument", but for conceptual maps (accuracy) rather than theories (truth)
- *Calibration*
 - Cummins 1998: you can't calibrate intuition against anything other epistemic source (or if you can, it is redundant)

- Calibrate using old-fashioned empirical confirmation
 - Why would this render anything redundant?
- Too much internalism?
- *Variation/Instability/Clashes*
 - Direct target of e.g. Weinberg, Nichols and Stich 2001 doesn't seem to be the bundle-two conception of intuitions
 - Different mini-fictional contents hypothesis: Sosa 1998
 - Different concepts hypothesis: e.g. Jackson 1998
 - Overwhelming agreement on (e.g.) $2+2=4$
 - Infallibility is not the standard for provision of evidence/warrant
- *Lack of Naturalistic Respectability*
 - 'Intuition, after all, is a traditional hallmark of rationalism, an oft-mentioned source of a priori warrant. ... How can a priori warrant be reconciled with epistemological naturalism?' (Goldman 2007)
 - That's no *ordinary* a priori warrant
 - Compatible with empiricism
 - No appeal to a special 'faculty'
 - Continuity with the sciences
 - Scientists assume (at least implicitly) truths of e.g. logic and mathematics