

# 2016 Buffalo Annual Experimental Philosophy Conference



**Friday, September 9 & Saturday, September 10**  
**SUNY Buffalo Department of Philosophy**  
**College of Arts and Sciences**

# Schedule of Talks

## Day One – Friday, September 9th

Registration and coffee @ 8:30 a.m.

### Room A:

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9:00 – 9:55 a.m.	<b>New Ideas Workshop:</b> Mallory Parker (Purdue), “Moral Responsibility and Excuse-Extensionism”
10:00 – 10:55 a.m.	Michael Hannon (Queen’s University), “Intuition, Reflective Judgment, and the Limits of Experimental Philosophy”
11:00 – 11:55 a.m.	Shlomo Cohen, Roi Zultan (Ben-Gurion University), Shaul Shalvi (Amsterdam), & Ori Regev (Ben- Gurion University) “An Experimental Approach to Comparing the Moral Severity of Deception”
12:00 – 1:55 p.m.	<b>Lunch</b>
2:00 – 2:55 p.m.	Hanna Kim (WJC), “Thick and Thin Notions of Desert: What Kind of Desert Is Involved in Folk Attributions of Moral Responsibility?”
3:00 – 3:55 p.m.	Roxana Kreimer, Gerardo Primero (NU Quilmes), & Federico Sánchez (Buenos Aires), “The Impact of Authority Figures in our Beliefs: Experimental Studies on the ‘Author’s Bias’”
4:00 – 4:55 p.m.	Philip Robbins & Paul Litton (Missouri), “Crime, Punishment, and Causation: The Effect of Etiological Information on the Perception of Moral Agency”
5:00 – 5:25 p.m.	<b>Break</b>
5:30 – 7:00 p.m.	<b>Hors d’oeuvres reception and poster session</b>

### Room B:

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10:00 – 10:55 a.m.	Markus Kneer (Pittsburgh), “Mental State Ascription and Legal Culpability”
11:00 – 11:55 a.m.	Jincai Li, Longgen Liu (Shanghai Jiao Tong), & Jesse Snedeker (Harvard), “Behind the Names: Theorizing about Reference in the Era of Experimental Philosophy”
12:00 – 1:55 p.m.	<b>Lunch</b>
2:00 – 2:55 p.m.	Robin Scaife, Tom Stafford, Andreas Bunge, & Jules Holroyd (Sheffield), “The Effects of Moral Interactions on Implicit Bias”
3:00 – 3:55 p.m.	Angelo Turri (Independent Scholar) & John Turri (Waterloo), “Lying, Fast and Slow”
4:00 – 4:55 p.m.	Jonathan Livengood (Illinois) & Justin Sytsma (Victoria), “Actual Causation and Compositionality”
5:00 – 5:25 p.m.	<b>Break</b>
5:30 – 7:00 p.m.	<b>Hors d’oeuvres reception and poster session</b>

**Poster Session**  
**Day One – Friday, September 9th**  
**5:30 – 7:00 p.m.**

**Poster Presentations:**

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John Beverley (Buffalo), “Exploring Burden and Knobe Effects on Judgments of Moral Responsibility in Tissue Donation Cases”

Hoi-yee Chan and Shaun Nichols (Arizona), “Causal Sourcehood and Moral Responsibility”

Tomasz Herok (Lancaster), “If Philosophers Use Intuitions as Evidence, Why Are Their Claims So Counterintuitive?”

Maximilian Popiel (Denver), “A Systematic Review of Studies Using Gettier Cases”

Madeline Reinecke, Zachary Horne (Illinois), & Andrei Cimpian (NYU), “People’s (Inconsistent) Attitudes About Foundational Moral Beliefs”

Rick Sendleback (Edinburgh), “X-Phi’s Empirical Findings Revisited: The Fundamental Flaw in the Empirical Data”

## Schedule of Talks

### Day Two – Saturday, September 10th

Registration and coffee @ 8:30 a.m.

#### **Room A:**

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9:00 – 9:55 a.m.	Michael Croce (Edinburgh) & Paul Poenicke (Buffalo), “Testing What’s at Stake: Defending Stakes Effects for Testimony”
10:00 – 10:55 a.m.	David Moss (Leicester) & Lance Bush (Cornell), “Qualitative Studies in Metaethics: Variability, Inconsistency and Indeterminacy”
11:00 – 11:55 a.m.	Eugen Fischer & Paul E. Engelhardt (University of East Anglia), “Intuitions, Stereotypes, and the Hidden Workings of Salience”
12:00 – 1:55 p.m.	<b>Lunch</b>
2:00 – 2:55 p.m.	David Colaco (Pittsburgh), Markus Kneer (Pittsburgh), Josh Alexander (Siena), & Edouard Machery (Pittsburgh), “On Second Thought: A Refutation of the Reflective Judgment Defense”
3:00 – 3:55 p.m.	Michael Shaffer (St. Cloud) & James Beebe (Buffalo), “The Probabilities of Might and Would Counterfactuals”
4:00 – 4:30 p.m.	<b>Break</b>
4:30 – 6:30 p.m.	<b>Keynote Address:</b> Helen De Cruz (Oxford Brookes University), “Experimental Philosophy of Religion”

#### **Room B:**

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9:00 – 9:55 a.m.	Mahi Hardalupas, Evan Pence, & Morgan Thompson (Pittsburgh), “On Delusion and the Ascription of Belief”
10:00 – 10:55 a.m.	Tom Wysocki (WUSTL), “Normality: A Two-Faced Concept”
11:00 – 11:55 a.m.	Chad Gonnerman (Southern Indiana), Kaija Mortensen (Randolph College), & Jacob Robbins, “Ordinary Concept of Knowledge How”
12:00 – 1:55 p.m.	<b>Lunch</b>
2:00 – 2:55 p.m.	Maria Botero & Donna Desforges (Sam Houston State), “The Folk Are the Experts or The Irrelevance of Philosophers to Animal Ethics Committees”
3:00 – 3:55 p.m.	Jeffrey Maynes (St. Lawrence), “On the Stakes of Experimental Philosophy”
4:00 – 4:30 p.m.	<b>Break</b>
4:30 – 6:30 p.m.	<b>Keynote Address:</b> Helen De Cruz (Oxford Brookes University), “Experimental Philosophy of Religion”

**8pm, Conference reception at the home of James Beebe ([799 Auburn Ave., Buffalo, NY 14222](https://www.google.com/maps/place/799+Auburn+Ave.,+Buffalo,+NY+14222), 716-954-6106)**

## Paper Abstracts

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- 1) **Maria Botero** (Sam Houston State) and **Donna Desforges** (Sam Houston State), “The Folk Are the Experts or The Irrelevance of Philosophers to Animal Ethics Committees”

*Abstract:* As stated in the guidelines provided by the Animal Welfare Act (AWA) and the National Institutes of Health’s Guide for Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, in order to receive federal funds, research institutions need to create animal care committees. These committees must include a veterinarian who attends to the needs of the animals, an expert in the scientific use of animals in labs, a person without such expertise, and a community member unaffiliated with the research institution who can represent the views of the community. There is no mention of a philosopher or of anyone familiar with the ethics of animal experimentation as part of these committees.

There are several reasons that may explain this exclusion. First, as Marks (2013) argues, the philosophical arguments regarding the use of animal experimentation have reached a stalemate where no progress seems to be made...Second, when attempting to determine whether it is permissible to use animals in experimental research, Animal Ethics Committees (AEC) are not interested in the most common questions explored by philosophers...Moreover, it is interesting to notice that one of the requirements for the formation of an AEC is that it includes someone from the community; the argument behind this is that the member will embody the values of the general population. This entails that philosophers are not necessary for an AEC while members of the community, the folk, are desirable members of an AEC and their moral intuitions are ideal in this kind of deliberations.

For this reason we decided to investigate the way folk moral intuitions work in cases of animal experimentation. We wanted to explore whether the folk consider any of the elements used by philosophers in their deliberations of the use of animals in research. As argued earlier, the philosophical debate whether animals should be used in experiments has not made progress and philosophical questions are not discussed in AEC. We wanted to know whether, through the moral intuitions of the folk, these philosophical arguments may play a role in the deliberations that take place in AEC.

- 2) **Shlomo Cohen** (Ben-Gurion University), **Roi Zultan** (Ben-Gurion University), **Shaul Shalvi** (Amsterdam), and **Ori Regev** (Ben-Gurion University), “An Experimental Approach to Comparing the Moral Severity of Deception”

*Abstract:* Deception is (roughly) the intentional causation of false beliefs in the other. One of the central questions debated in the ethics of deception involves the moral ranking of different types of deception, based on the form (venue) of communication employed. The three distinct and collectively exhaustive venues of deception are: lying (asserting falsehoods), falsely implicating (communicating truths that in a given context will predictably cause false beliefs), and nonlinguistic deception (which can take many shapes, e.g. gestures, nonverbal sounds, rearrangement of the physical space, etc., but specifically—and this relates to our study—can be achieved through action whose interpretation can create false beliefs). We can arguably identify two major positions in this debate. The first is that lying is morally worse than the other venues of deception...We can refer to this position as the Classical View. Justifications for the Classical View include the idea that others only have a right to the truth vis-à-vis what one asserts, that lying to a person's face is more disrespectful and shameless, that lying entails a greater loss of credibility as communicator, and more. The second major position is that it makes no difference morally how one deceives...The idea is that what determines moral wrongness is some function of intention and consequences, so that if the intent to deceive is the same and the result—the false belief created—is the same, moral evaluation should be similar. We can refer to this position as the Equivalence Thesis.

While the philosophical debate on the moral gradation of the venues of deception is raging, we believe that acquiring empirical data on people's attitudes and reactions to deception in the three different venues can be relevant to the normative discussion (as discussed below). We have therefore devised a strategy game to test this question experimentally...

Interestingly, the results did not show statistically significant differences between the three experimental conditions, neither among deceivers (consultants) nor among deceived (investors). This outcome is in line with the Equivalence Thesis and not with the Classical View. Clearly, normative conclusions cannot be deduced from

empirical findings; the contribution is more subtle. What then is the normative significance of our empirical findings for the debate on the moral gradation of the venues of deception? We believe our findings contribute in two ways. The more straightforward lesson can be gained from the equivalence among the investors; this indicates that trust in informers is not significantly different among the three venues...The second lesson involves the equivalence in the rate of deceiving among the consultants. The lesson from this is arguably the following. We believe that folk morality is an indispensable starting point for moral thinking. Hence, as long as normative analysis yields opposing views, none clearly superior to the other, we believe that folk morality retains an important status of default plausibility. That people do not experience one mode of deceiving as more problematic than another therefore offers relevant support to the Equivalence Thesis.

3) **David Colaco** (Pittsburgh), **Markus Kneer** (Pittsburgh), **Josh Alexander** (Siena), and **Edouard Machery** (Pittsburgh), “On Second Thought: A Refutation of the Reflective Judgment Defense”

*Abstract:* According to textbook metaphilosophy, intuitions are central to philosophical inquiry. They frequently feature in the role of either explanandum or explanans of philosophical theories, and are taken to constitute the central source of evidence for and against such theories. The orthodoxy recently came under pressure due to findings reported by experimental philosophers...

Advocates of the intuition-driven methodology have countered this so-called ‘restrictionist challenge’ predominantly on two grounds: According to the expertise defense, folk intuitions are of little import because the philosophically uninitiated employ crude conceptual schemata, are unfamiliar with the relevant theoretical background and/or lack the necessary cognitive skillset.

The reflective judgment defense is less elitist in spirit and principally instead finds fault with features of the deliberation process invoked in the sampling of folk judgments. Philosophers’ intuitions are the product of careful, nuanced and conceptually rigorous reflection. Folk judgments, by contrast, are swift shots from the hip which lack the necessary deliberative care; as such they are easily distorted by irrelevant considerations and thus frequently miss their mark. Intuitions of this sort are deemed unfit to serve as input for responsible philosophical inquiry and can thus, the argument goes, be safely ignored.

The defenses are alike in the sense that neither find fault in the experimental findings per se; rather, each undermines the findings’ relevance to traditional philosophical projects. The expertise defense has recently come under attack both on conceptual and empirical grounds. Following in the spirit of these criticisms, the project presented here is designed to shed light on the reflective judgment defense, as its underlying empirical assumptions have been insufficiently explored. The argument is spelled out in more detail in section 2. In sections 3-7 we report results from five experiments with over 2500 participants, in which we attempted to encourage careful deliberation by means of standard practices from social psychology and experimental economics: time delay, financial incentives, the requirement to justify the chosen responses and priming of analytic Type II cognition. None of the manipulations produced results that differed significantly from the minimal study design standardly employed in experimental philosophy studies (the control condition).

4) **Michael Croce** (Edinburgh) and **Paul Poenicke** (Buffalo), “Testing What’s at Stake: Defending Stakes Effects for Testimony”

*Abstract:* This paper investigates whether practical interests affect knowledge attributions in cases of testimony. Our aim is to demonstrate that reductionism and non-reductionism fail to provide a plausible account of testimony that is sensitive to variance of practical interests. Section 1 offers a conceptual argument against the classical views of testimony. Section 2 analyses three cases from the experimental philosophy literature and explain why the results from studies that used these vignettes support our argument against both reductionism and non-reductionism. Section 3 considers what is needed to develop a more robust defense of our thesis in terms of future experimental study.



- 5) **Eugen Fischer** (University of East Anglia) and **Paul E. Engelhardt** (University of East Anglia), “Intuitions, Stereotypes, and the Hidden Workings of Salience”

*Abstract:* This paper presents work that pioneers the use of psycholinguistic methods and the pursuit of new diagnostic aims in experimental philosophy’s ‘Sources Project’ (Pust 2012).

This research program, also known as ‘cognitive epistemology’ (Fischer 2014), develops and tests psychological explanations of intuitions, which help assess their evidentiary value. The best developed approach constructs ‘GRECI explanations’ (Fischer et al. 2015) which trace intuitions back to cognitive processes which are generally reliable but predictably engender cognitive illusions, under specific circumstances. E.g., a prominent research-line traces intuitive knowledge-attributions to a ‘mind-reading’ competency, which is argued to be generally reliable (Boyd & Nagel 2014) though subject to specific biases, including an egocentrism bias (Alexander et al. 2015), focal bias (Gerken & Beebe 2016), and ‘anti-inferential bias’ (Turri 2015). The ultimate ambition is to develop ‘epistemic profiles’ of cognitive processes which, roughly speaking, tell us under what conditions we may trust the intuitions the processes generate, and under what conditions we should not (Weinberg 2015).

Our research joins the endeavour of developing GRECI explanations, but breaks new ground by shifting the focus from domain-specific competencies (like mind-reading) to domain-general language processes which may shape philosophical thought on any topic. The motivation is straightforward: Many philosophically relevant intuitions are prompted by verbal descriptions of possible cases, considered in thought experiments or argument. The intuitive judgments at issue are automatically inferred from such descriptions. Most of them are judgments about what else is also true of or in the cases described. Spontaneous inferences to such conclusions can benefit not only from domain-specific processes but also from automatic cognitive processes that routinely go on in language comprehension and help us extract a maximum of information from witness reports, stories, etc. The perhaps most important of these processes is stereotype-driven amplification (Levinson 2000).

This talk will first present key psycholinguistic findings about this process and build up towards a GRECI explanation of the intuitive judgments it generates. We will then, second, philosophically deploy this explanation in exploring how it facilitates a new ‘diagnostic’ solution to a particular, classical, problem of philosophy. Our sample problem will be a classical paradox from the philosophy of perception, known as ‘argument from hallucination’. Third, we will present three empirical studies we have undertaken to test the philosophically productive explanation proposed

- 6) **Chad Gonnerman** (Southern Indiana), **Kaija Mortensen** (Randolph College), and **Jacob Robbins**, “Ordinary Concept of Knowledge How”

*Abstract:* Some epistemologists appear to maintain that the folk can serve as a source of dialectical advantage in debates between intellectualists and anti-intellectualists about the nature of knowledge how. The common assumption seems to be that the philosophical account of knowledge how that best accords with the folk concept of knowledge how has a dialectical advantage over its competitors such that it enjoys a strong (though defeasible) presumption in its favor. Work in experimental philosophy on the folk concept has thus far been rather conflicted, with some reporting results suggesting that the concept is intellectualist and others that it is anti-intellectual. In this report, we present results in line with the claim that the folk concept is in fact a cluster concept, embodying both intellectualist and anti-intellectualist factors. This suggests that the folk are unlikely to serve as an uncomplicated source of dialectical support for either intellectualism or anti-intellectualism.

- 7) **Michael Hannon** (Queen’s University), “Intuition, Reflective Judgment, and the Limits of Experimental Philosophy”

*Abstract:* Philosophers incline towards one of two opposite extremes when it comes to experimental philosophy. On the one hand, experimental philosophers are often puzzled as to why anyone could fail to find philosophical significance in the questions addressed by their research. On the other hand, many armchair philosophers are puzzled as to why experimental philosophers think their work sheds light on traditional philosophical problems. I will argue there’s truth on both sides...

While some experimental studies have confirmed armchair predictions about what ‘the folk’ will find intuitive, this body of empirical work has largely contrasted what armchair philosophers have assumed, thereby challenging

the idea that people think about these issues in anything like the way philosophers have claimed. For example, some evidence suggests that non-philosophers do not attribute knowledge, free will, and deontic modals in the ways that philosophers have expected. As a result, an accomplishment often touted for experimental philosophy is its potential to discredit widely held philosophical views, thereby putting in question the standard methods of doing philosophy.

The aim of my paper is to pose a constructive challenge to experimental attacks on traditional philosophical views. However, it would obscure the dialectic to call my target ‘experimental philosophy’. This movement has diverse ambitions and it should therefore be characterized in a broad way. Following Rose and Danks (2013)...we should focus on particular studies, proposals, or uses of empirical data.

In keeping with this suggestion, my examination will take the form of a case study of two experimental attacks on traditional philosophical views...According to the first study, many people do not have the intuitions that are presumed to be necessary to motivate philosophical skepticism...(Nichols et al. 2003). According to the second study, folk moral judgments do not conform to the widely assumed principle that ‘ought’ implies ‘can’...(Chituc et al. 2016). Both of these studies challenge a traditional and widely accepted view in philosophy.

I will question the philosophical significance of these survey-based results. More specifically, I will argue the intuitions tested in the first study do not play an important evidential role in motivating philosophical skepticism, and the intuitions tested in the second study are not part of the evidence for the principle that ‘ought implies can’. In other words, the data reported in these studies are irrelevant to the traditional philosophical views they purportedly undermine.

Unlike many critics of experimental philosophy, however, I do not completely reject the conception of philosophy according to which the intuitions play important argumentative roles. I defend a moderate view according to which the philosophical relevance of intuitions varies from topic to topic. I will also make concrete suggestions to aid experimentalists in their efforts to study philosophically relevant judgments empirically. Ultimately, my analysis tries to better understand the scope, significance, and limitations of both experimental and traditional philosophical methods.

8) **Mahi Hardalupas** (Pittsburgh), **Evan Pence** (Pittsburgh), and **Morgan Thompson** (Pittsburgh), “On Delusion and the Ascription of Belief”

*Abstract:* David Rose, Wesley Buckwalter, and John Turri (2014) argue and present evidence that delusional attitudes of the sort asserted by Capgras patients are judged to be stereotypical beliefs. Further, they provide some evidence that when participants are given scenarios typical of Capgras patients, cases where asserted delusional attitudes conflict with their behavioral patterns towards the object of their delusional attitudes, belief ascription functions according to the content of the asserted delusion attitude and not the conflicting behavioral pattern.

In our study, we perform a replication and extension of the early findings in their paper. Our main hypothesis was that Rose, Buckwalter, and Turri present the best case scenario for belief ascription on the basis of asserted delusional attitudes and that their principal finding may not hold if subjected to more stringent tests. To test this, we consider subject responses to vignettes structurally analogous to Rose et al.’s, but differing along several dimensions, including gender, type of behavioral intimacy conflicting with the asserted belief, and type of relationship described in the vignettes (i.e., romantic partners or friends).

9) **Hanna Kim** (Washington & Jefferson College), “Thick and Thin Notions of Desert: What Kind of Desert Is Involved in Folk Attributions of Moral Responsibility?”

*Abstract:* Desert is a topic about which much has been written. Despite the abundance of writing on the topic, theorists have insufficiently clearly distinguished between two varieties of desert – i.e., moral desert, which is involved in judgments about when one deserves blame, and punitive desert, which is involved in judgments about when one deserves punishment. Also, theorists have insufficiently considered the possibility of two notions of desert: thick and thin, where a thick notion of desert is relatively loaded with conceptual commitments and requirements in a way that a thin notion is not. In the case of moral desert, there is a straightforward disagreement between those who think that the notion of desert is thick...and those who think that the notion of desert is thin...

Furthermore, there is currently no empirical evidence about whether the kind of desert involved in folk attributions of moral responsibility is thick or thin; nor is there empirical evidence about whether the kind of desert involved in folk attributions of punishability is thick or thin. So, the question, “What kind of desert is



involved in folk attributions of punishability and moral responsibility?”, then is what chiefly motivates the following study. My claim is that it is important to distinguish punitive from moral desert and thick from thin notions of desert, because I hypothesize that while the kind of desert involved in folk attributions of moral responsibility is thick, the kind of desert involved in folk attributions of punishability is thin. That is what the following study purports to show.

What hangs on the results of this study? First, the results of this study straightforwardly determine the success of Vargas’s influential revisionist account of moral responsibility. If...the notion of desert involved in folk attributions of moral responsibility turns out to be thick, this would ultimately challenge Vargas’s revisionist project.

Second, the results of this study have implications for a debate about punitive desert between “desert-based retributivists” (Berman (2008), Davis (1972), Kleinig (1973), Moore (1993)), who think it is always intrinsically good to punish people who deserve punishment and that there is always some non-instrumental reason to punish people who deserve punishment, and their opponents (Hanna (2013)). If...the notion of desert involved in folk attributions of punishability turns out to be thin, this would appear to undermine desert-based retributivism.

The present four-experiment study then aims to investigate three questions. (1) Is the notion of desert involved in folk attributions of punishability thick or thin? (2) Is the notion of desert involved in folk attributions of moral responsibility thick or thin? And (3) how central or essential is punitive and moral desert to our ordinary ascriptions of punishment and blame, respectively? Because the thick notion of desert is determined by three factors...the study was divided into...three experiments...The idea was to see whether morality, knowledge, and benefits each had an effect on people’s punitive and moral desert judgments. This would in turn indicate whether the folk notion of punitive and moral desert is thick or thin.

#### 10) **Markus Kneer** (Pittsburgh), “Mental State Ascription and Legal Culpability”

*Abstract:* A coherent practice of mens rea ascription in criminal law presupposes a concept of mens rea which is insensitive to the moral valence of an action’s outcome. For instance, an assessment of whether an agent harmed another person intentionally should be unaffected by the severity of harm done. Ascriptions of intentionality made by laymen, however, are subject to a strong outcome bias. As demonstrated by the Knobe effect, a knowingly incurred negative side-effect is standardly judged intentional, whereas a positive side-effect is not. We report the first empirical investigation into intentionality ascriptions made by professional judges. Experiment 1 demonstrates that the concept of professional French judges is strongly sensitive to the moral valence of the outcome. Experiment 2 establishes that the worse the outcome, the higher the propensity to attribute intentionality. The data is of considerable general importance, as it shows the concept of intentionality employed by professional judges to be inconsistent with the concept of mens rea supposedly at the foundation of criminal law.

#### 11) **Roxana Kreimer** (NU Quilmes), **Gerardo Primero** (NU Quilmes), and **Federico Sánchez** (Buenos Aires), “The Impact of Authority Figures in our Beliefs: Experimental Studies on the ‘Author’s Bias’”

*Abstract:* We’ve explored how our judgements and political ideas as fair or unfair tend to be biased by the opinions of prestigious figures. In the first study, subjects were randomly assigned to two groups, and they were asked to put a score of agreement (1-10) to several statements. In one group (“anonymous condition”) subjects didn’t know the author of the statement, while in the other group (“author condition”) the statement was attributed to a prestigious person. We’ve found that the statements attributed to prestigious persons received higher scores than the anonymous statements. In the second study, a similar procedure was employed, and we’ve found that subjects assigned lower scores to the statements that were attributed to politicians that they were unwilling to vote. In the third study, we’ve explored people’s opinions about two controversial events in Argentina that were interpreted in different ways by politicians of the governing party and of the opposition party, and we’ve found that most subjects agreed with the views adopted by their preferred party, even if they had little to do with politics. In the fourth study, subjects were randomly assigned to two groups (one group received previous information about the bias, while the other group didn’t receive that information), and we’ve found that when people were aware of this “author’s bias”, its influence decreased. The implications of this bias in relation to people’s judgements about justice will be analysed.

12) **Jincai Li** (Shanghai Jiao Tong), **Longgen Liu** (Shanghai Jiao Tong), and **Jesse Snedeker** (Harvard), “Behind the Names: Theorizing about Reference in the Era of Experimental Philosophy”

*Abstract:* At birth, we are all given a name, which often, but not always, follows us through our life. When people use your name, they typically refer to you. But what is the linkage that ties a name to a person and allows it to refer? This question about reference, or referential mechanism, is critical for philosophers studying language, linguists investigating meaning, and psychologists interested in how children acquire names...

Kripke’s intuitions about the Gödel case have been widely accepted by most philosophers. Indeed, intuitions of this kind are taken to play a pivotal role in philosophy, and for questions about meaning and reference they should since these are properties of the conscious mind. The common practice has been that theories that are consistent with intuitions are generally accepted while those that are inconsistent with intuitions are disregarded. In the case of theorizing about reference, most Anglo-American philosophers agreed with Kripke and the descriptivist view seemed to have lost ground.

However, the dominance of Kripkean intuitions was questioned by a 2004 study by Machery and colleagues. They gave stories like the Gödel case to ordinary college undergraduates in U.S. and China, and have made two interesting discoveries... First, there are considerable variations in people’s semantic intuitions. While some people tend to have Russell’s descriptivist intuitions, others tend to have Kripke’s intuitions. Second, semantic intuitions seem to vary by culture systematically, as Chinese largely endorsed Russell’s descriptivism but Americans generally agreed with Kripke. Such findings suggest there might be two different implicit theories of reference held by different people or perhaps by the same person at different times and that possession of these theories might vary across cultures.

Following Machery et al. (2004), dozens of papers have emerged... These studies, however, mostly stopped at reporting their statistically significant experimental findings; few explored the causes or the developmental trajectory of the systematic differences. As such, questions about where the intra-cultural and cross-cultural differences, if there really are, come from in development, and how different groups of people come to have different intuitions about names remain open...

- 1) What is the origin and development of the observed cross-cultural differences?
- 2) Are the cross-cultural differences task dependent?

The present study aims to address these questions by taking a developmental approach. We adapted a truth-value judgement task for use with young children. The TVJ task has been commonly used by developmental psychologist and psycholinguists to understand children’s interpretation of sentences (Crain 1991, Gordon 1998).

13) **Jonathan Livengood** (Illinois) and **Justin Sytsma** (Victoria), “Actual Causation and Compositionality”

*Abstract:* In this paper, we identify a structural constraint—which we call the compositionality constraint—that is implicitly endorsed by all purely structural accounts of actual causation coming out of the graphical modeling tradition today. Roughly, the compositionality constraint says that if  $c$  is an actual cause of  $e$ , then either  $c$  causes  $e$  directly or every intermediary  $d$  by which  $c$  indirectly causes  $e$  is itself an actual effect of  $c$  and an actual cause of  $e$ . We then show that the causal attributions ordinary people make sometimes violate the compositionality constraint.

The compositionality constraint is (arguably) quite intuitive if one is operating with a purely descriptive concept of causation. However, many researchers take their work to be targeting the ordinary concept of causation, and they frequently call on pretheoretic intuitions about cases to adjudicate between competing theories. Several prominent researchers working on actual causation within the graphical causal modeling tradition are committed to what we have termed the folk attribution desideratum (FAD), according to which theories are confirmed to the extent that the deliverances of the theory with respect to specific cases agrees with the reports of untutored individuals with respect to those same cases. But following the FAD is difficult for anyone trying to capture a purely descriptive concept of causation, since a growing body of evidence suggests that ordinary causal attributions are influenced by a variety of normative considerations.

One possible explanation of the finding that normative considerations influence causal attributions is that the ordinary concept of causation is quite different from the concept (or concepts) that philosophers have sought to analyze. For example, the ordinary concept of causation might be inherently normative, rather than being purely

descriptive. Elsewhere (Sytsma, Livengood, and Rose, 2012; Livengood, Sytsma, and Rose, MS), we have conjectured that the ordinary concept of actual causation is inherently normative in the following sense: when thinking about agents or entities that could be thought of as agents or readily connected to agents, people do not distinguish between causal attributions and attributions of (broadly moral) responsibility. On the basis of this responsibility view, we predict that the compositionality constraint fails to hold for folk causal attributions across a range of cases... We tested our prediction that ordinary causal attributions violate the compositionality constraint for three scenarios. The results suggest that we are correct: folk causal attributions do not respect the compositionality constraint. Our results provide a new line of evidence for the claim that purely structural accounts of actual causation fail to satisfy the FAD and that the ordinary concept of causation diverges significantly from the target most philosophers have had in their sights.

#### 14) **Jeffrey Maynes** (St. Lawrence), “On the Stakes of Experimental Philosophy”

*Abstract:* Prominent critics and champions of Experimental Philosophy (X-Phi) alike have tied its philosophical significance to the philosophical significance of intuition. In this essay, I develop an interpretation of X-Phi which does not require an intuition-driven understanding of traditional philosophy and the arguments challenged by results in X-Phi. X-Phi’s role on this account is primarily dialectical. Its aim is to test the universality of claims which are merely assumed to be true, exploring the limits of our assumptions and showing when a proposition is more controversial than is widely believed.

#### 15) **David Moss** (Leicester) and **Lance Bush** (Cornell), “Qualitative Studies in Metaethics: Variability, Inconsistency and Indeterminacy”

*Abstract:* Empirical research into folk objectivism and relativism has faced significant challenges. Beebe (forthcoming) offers a series of powerful criticisms of the surveys which have been employed thus far, including Goodwin and Darley (2008, 2012), Nichols et al (2004), Sarkissian et al (2011) and Beebe and Sackris (2016).

These surveys, variously, conflate normative and metaethical questions, as well as epistemological, semantic and metaphysical questions, fail to test for plausible metaethical positions such as non-cognitivism, or fail to rule out the influence of a host of other possible confusions on individuals’ judgements. Further doubt is cast on the results of even the best of these surveys, given that large numbers of respondents putatively judged facts about the physical world, such as about exercise and global warming, to also be non-objective. Moreover, Bush (2016) has challenged the whole ‘disagreement paradigm’ which these surveys rely on.

The difficulty in finding appropriate probes to investigate folk metaethics may reflect limitations to the use of survey methodology, in general, to research folk metaethics. Moss (under review) argues that surveys struggle to ensure the comprehension of subjects (and comprehension by researchers of what subjects mean by their responses) and to account for the potential complexity of individuals’ metaethical commitments. Using short, multiple choice questions, it is exceedingly difficult to pose questions which are not amenable to being misunderstood by untrained respondents and without substantial follow-up questioning, it is hard to confirm their understanding.

Our presentation focuses on describing an alternative methodology, semi-structured qualitative interviews (Moss, under review), c.f. (Kauppinen 2011, p109; Beebe, forthcoming, p18). Our pilot study, trialling this method, produced a number of interesting findings...

To follow up on these pilot results, we intend to describe in this presentation the results of two more structured follow-up studies, employing interviews with respondents in one UK and one US university. In these interviews we present subjects with a series of questions taken verbatim from existing surveys, with extensive follow-up to try to confirm how respondents understand the questions and how they intend their responses. We also pose more open-ended questions intended to elicit descriptions of respondents metaethical stances in their own words...

Thus we hope that our findings will help inform some questions about comprehension, or lack thereof, of metaethical probes in existing surveys, as well as provide rich new data, in the form of extensive statements in their own words of how the folk think about metaethics and morality.

## 16) **Mallory Parker** (Purdue), “Moral Responsibility and Excuse-Extensionism”

*Abstract:* In *Against Moral Responsibility*, Bruce N. Waller argues against what he calls “excuse extensionism.” Excuse-extensionism is an approach to moral responsibility abolition which “denies moral responsibility from within the basic assumptions of the moral responsibility system” (Waller 208). What this approach does is to extend to all persons the excuses normally given to children, the incompetent, and others deemed incapable of participating in the moral domain. For instance, in an attempt to argue for skepticism about moral responsibility, I might describe a moral transgressor along with the environmental factors that shaped their actions, arguing that they could not have done otherwise. What I do here is offer the environmental factor as an excuse from holding them morally responsible. I might provide as an example an individual who robbed someone at the ATM, then describe how they were constrained to perform that action by some combination of poverty, upbringing, and surrounding role models in order to argue that it makes little sense to hold them morally responsible for their actions.

My proposed experiment is the result of noticing that excuse-extensionism can be rather hit or miss in a philosophical dialogue. With a given interlocutor, a particular kind of example may or may not arouse a willingness to extend the excuse and forego attributing moral responsibility. Since this approach is employed frequently in philosophical debates concerning skepticism about moral responsibility, it would be fitting to examine the intuitions underlying responses to excuse-extensionism. Doing so could give us an idea of whether excuse extensionism serves as a reliable type of argument in discussions of moral responsibility skepticism, or whether intuitions differ widely and in morally irrelevant ways such that it is useless to employ them as a tool for settling the debate.

## 17) **Philip Robbins** (Missouri) and **Paul Litton** (Missouri), “Crime, Punishment, and Causation: The Effect of Etiological Information on the Perception of Moral Agency”

*Abstract:* A criminal offender’s conduct or aggressive disposition might be causally explained on different levels. At least in theory we could have the power to explain his conduct and traits physiologically, by reference to his genes or his brain chemistry and structure. Alternatively, we might explain his wrongdoing as caused by his experiences, including his upbringing; perhaps he suffered extreme physical and mental abuse throughout his life. Criminal defense attorneys have presented both kinds of causal explanations — physiological and environmental — in hope of securing a more lenient sentence...

Accordingly, empirical researchers have investigated the extent to which such causal explanations matter to ordinary intuitions about appropriate punishment... Empirical research into ordinary intuitions on the relationship among causal explanations, blameworthiness, and appropriate punishment could have practical importance for criminal lawyers as well as courts assessing the obligations of counsel.

Such empirical research is relevant to philosophical inquiry as well. Philosophers working on questions about free will and moral responsibility appeal to ordinary intuitions to support their arguments... But first we should have more than an armchair sense of the candidates for incompatibilist beachheads... If genetic explanations do not mitigate blame or responsibility, then compatibilists need not worry about such cases; but if ordinary intuitions find environmental causes of wrongdoing to mitigate blameworthiness or responsibility, then compatibilists should offer a compatibilist justification or an error theory. Again, we must first investigate the actual content of ordinary intuitions about such cases.

We have found surprising many of the results yielded so far by empirical research into the effects of different causal explanations on ordinary intuitions about blameworthiness and appropriate punishment. In short, some research suggests that ordinary intuitions find physiological causal explanations more mitigating, with respect to punishment, than environmental ones...

Our studies continue the investigation into factors relevant to the assignment of blame and punishment. The central question is the following: In cases where the offender is known to suffer from psychopathy or a similar psychiatric disorder, are our ordinary judgments of blame and responsibility affected by what we know about the causal origin of the disorder (e.g., genetics versus an environmental cause, such as childhood abuse)? Our studies differ in important ways from previous ones...

Our hypothesis is that ordinary attributions of blame and punishment are reduced to a greater extent by environmental causal explanations, such as childhood suffering, than by genetic explanations. Because past research has produced mixed results, our hypothesis is based on a different source. In light of Dyadic Morality

Theory (Gray & Wegner, 2009, 2011; Gray, Young, & Waytz, 2012), we hypothesize that attributions of blame and punishment are reduced when the target of the attribution is perceived as a victim of harm.

18) **Robin Scaife** (Sheffield), **Tom Stafford** (Sheffield), **Andreas Bunge** (Sheffield), and **Jules Holroyd** (Sheffield), “The Effects of Moral Interactions on Implicit Bias”

*Abstract:* Scholars have argued people shouldn’t be blamed for implicit biases: such treatment provokes hostility and undermines motivation to change. This view appears also to inform the practice of those who provide implicit bias training, which is typically delivered in an exculpatory tone. But the claim that blame provokes backlash has not been previously investigated in relation to implicit bias, and so lacks empirical support. In fact, earlier studies have indicated moral confrontations may mitigate the expression of bias. Building on these findings, we developed a paradigm for evaluating the impact of moral feedback, including blame, on participants’ implicit bias scores, moods and behavioural intentions. Participants were given scripted ‘feedback’ informing them that their performance on a previous task indicated either nothing meaningful or negative implicit attitudes towards black people. Participants who received the latter feedback were then engaged in a moral interaction which blamed them for having and manifesting these implicit attitudes. Contra the assumptions made about the harms of blaming, our results indicate blame did not make participants resistant to reducing their implicit bias, nor did it negatively affect their implicit bias (producing a non-significant decrease in implicit bias). In fact those in the blame condition had a significantly greater intention to change their future behaviour than the control group. These results indicate that receiving a communication of disapprobation for the manifestation of bias has potential benefits and no costs. The common practice of delivering implicit bias training in an exculpatory tone is not supported by considerations of efficacy.

19) **Michael Shaffer** (St. Cloud) and **James Beebe** (Buffalo), “The Probabilities of Might and Would Counterfactuals”

*Abstract:* Lewis (1973a and 1973b) argued that there is a duality between might and would counterfactuals, such that the negation of ‘If p were true, q would not be true’ is equivalent to ‘If p were true, q might be true.’ Lewis also defended a view about the probabilities of counterfactuals that—when combined the thesis of might and would duality—leads to the implausible consequence that the probability of ‘If p were true, q might be true’ will be quite high if the probability of q conditional on p is high but low if the probability of q on p is low. We maintain that the probabilities of might counterfactuals like this should be both high and independent of the conditional probabilities in question (as long as the probability is greater than zero). In the first part of our paper, we show the thesis of might/would duality together with Lewis’ views about the probabilities of counterfactuals does indeed have the counterintuitive consequence in question. In the second part of the paper, we report the results of a series of empirical studies that show that the intuitions of ordinary individuals about would counterfactuals accord both with our preferred perspective and the perspective implied by Lewis’ combination of views. However, our results also reveal the surprising extent to which the intuitions of ordinary individuals about might counterfactuals fail to correspond very well to either our preferred perspective or the Lewisian view. We conclude with some reflections on how ‘might’ might actually function in ordinary discourse and the circumstances in which one should trust or reject folk intuitions.

20) **Angelo Turri** (Independent Scholar) and **John Turri** (Waterloo), “Lying, Fast and Slow”

*Abstract:* Researchers have debated whether there is a relationship between a statement’s truth-value and whether it counts as a lie. We report five behavioral experiments that address this issue. In each case, we found evidence of a relationship. A statement’s truth-value affects how quickly people judge whether it is a lie (Experiment 1). When people consider the matter carefully and are told that they might need to justify their answer, they are more likely to categorize a statement as a lie when it is false than when it is true; many people justify their answers by citing the statement’s truth-value or how things seemed from the speaker’s perspective (Experiment 2). When given options that inhibit perspective-taking, people tend to not categorize deceptively motivated statements as lies when they are true, even though they still categorize them as lies when they are false (Experiment 3). Categorizing a speaker as “lying” leads people to strongly infer that the speaker’s statement is false (Experiment 4). People are more likely to spontaneously categorize a statement as a lie when it is false than when it is true



(Experiment 5). We discuss four different interpretations of relevant findings to date, including overlooked developmental findings. At present, the best supported interpretation might be that the ordinary concept of lying is a prototype concept, with falsity being a centrally important element of the prototypical lie.

## 21) **Tom Wysocki** (Washington University in St. Louis), “Normality: A Two-Faced Concept”

*Abstract:* Each issue of *Men’s Health*, a magazine on men’s lifestyle, contains a small box tilted “am I normal?” with a question from a reader who worries that something about him is abnormal. For instance, when Tim from Austin watches a movie, he “ends up rooting for the villain” (December 2014, p. 30), Pedro from Des Moines “feels proud” when his body “produces a large amount of substance, such as [...] earwax” (August 2014, p. 21), and after he overeats, Hector from Minneapolis feels like he has a hangover (November 2014, p. 26). The question is followed by a response from a scientist...At the bottom of the box, there are two possible answers, “normal” and “weird,” and each month, regardless of the question, the concerned person always receives the same answer: Tim, Pedro, Hector—and, for that matter, any other reader whose letter whose letter found its way to the column—can stop worrying, for science says that they are normal.

Further considering *Men’s Health’s* normality box may prove instructive. First, the questions sometimes are about behaviors that can’t be evaluated in moral terms (Hector’s hangover-like feeling), and sometimes about behaviors that can be so evaluated (Tim’s sympathy for the villain). Second, the scientist answering the questions usually says that the behavior is frequent, or gives an evolutionary explanation for the behavior, and then concludes that it’s normal. Thus, she offers a purely descriptive reason for why the behavior may count as normal. But sometimes the scientist also argues that there’s nothing wrong with the behavior, for instance, by stressing that the behavior doesn’t harm anyone. Thus, the reason is normative. Third, “normal” is the desired response, one that the readers want to hear. It’s bad to be weird; it’s good to be normal. A question then arises: do normality judgments depend simultaneously on how frequent a phenomenon is and on how good it is, or do they depend only on one of these two features? The aim of this paper is to answer this question. Doing it matters for Tim, Pedro, and Hector: given how often people seem to judge some behavior wrong because they deem it abnormal, answering this question should help explain these cases of laypersons’ moral reasoning.

First, I formulate two competing hypotheses about normality judgments. On the dual-nature hypothesis, the judgments are influenced both by the frequency and the normative evaluation of the object of judgment. On the single-nature hypothesis, the judgments are influenced only by one feature: either by the object’s frequency, or its goodness. Then, I present two experimental results suggesting that the dual-nature hypothesis is true. Subsequently, I argue that these results warrant a stronger thesis: the term normality isn’t ambiguous between the normative and the statistical meaning, but there’s one concept whose applications are sensitive to both dimensions. Finally, I show how the dual-nature hypothesis helps interpret some philosophical theories: Hitchcock and Knobe’s account of causal judgments (2009) and Egré and Cova’s (2015) account of the semantics of many.



## Poster Abstracts

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### 1) **John Beverley** (Buffalo), “Exploring Burden and Knobe Effects on Judgments of Moral Responsibility in Tissue Donation Cases”

*Abstract:* Do biological relations ground responsibilities between biological fathers and their offspring? Few think biological relations ground either necessary or sufficient conditions for responsibility. Nevertheless, many think biological relations ground responsibility at least partially. Various scenarios, such as cases concerning the responsibilities of sperm donors, have been used to argue in favor of biological relations as partially grounding responsibilities. In this paper, I seek to undermine the temptation to explain sperm donor scenarios via biological relations by appealing to an overlooked feature of such scenarios. More specifically, I argue that sperm donor scenarios may be better explained by considering the unique abilities of agents involved. Appealing to unique ability does not eliminate the possibility of biological relations providing some explanation for perceived responsibilities on the part of biological fathers. However, since it is unclear exactly why biological relations are supposed to ground responsibility in the first place, and rather clear why unique ability grounds responsibility in those scenarios where it is exhibited, the burden of proof seems shifted to those advocating biological relations as grounds of responsibility to provide an explanation. Since this seems unlikely, I conclude it is best to avoid appealing to biological relations as providing grounds for responsibility.

### 2) **Hoi-ye Chan** (Arizona) and **Shaun Nichols** (Arizona), “Causal Sourcehood and Moral Responsibility”

*Abstract:* Compatibilists and incompatibilists alike tend to share the assumption that an agent is morally responsible for an action only if he is a proper causal source of that action. However, different practitioners in the free will debate disagree about the conditions that constitute a responsibility-enabling causal sourcehood. This paper aims to resolve some of these disagreements with a series of new experimental philosophy studies on folk intuitions.

Accounts of responsibility-enabling causal sourcehood are usually developed either to support source incompatibilism, which states that responsibility-enabling causal sourcehood is incompatible with determinism, or to refute source incompatibilism. There are two common incompatibilist accounts of responsibility-enabling causal sourcehood, which can be formulated as follows:

CS1: A person is morally responsible for his action only if he is the ultimate causal source of that action.

CS2: A person is morally responsible for an action only if that action is not caused by a source over which he has no control.

Part I of this paper focuses on McKenna’s (2008) objection to the use of CS1 as an incompatibilist principle...According to McKenna, the ordinary notion of ultimacy is compatibilist. If McKenna is right, then those who advance CS1 as incompatibilist principle have an extra burden to prove that moral responsibility requires a special, incompatibilist notion of ultimate sourcehood. However, Study 1 shows that the ordinary notion of ultimate sourcehood is incompatibilist. Our participants were significantly more likely to consider an agent to be the ultimate source of his action if a scenario is stipulated to be indeterministic (75%) rather than deterministic (40%).

Part II of this paper focuses on Deery and Nahmias’s (forthcoming) recent challenge to CS2, which has been most forcefully argued for with the Manipulation Argument (e.g. Pereboom, 2011, 2014; Mele, 2006)...Deery and Nahmias (forthcoming) recently develop a compatibilist account of causal sourcehood that represents the latest, most promising softline response. Their account can be formulated as follows:

CS3: A person is less morally responsible for an action if his compatibilist agential structure is not the causal source of that action. In particular,  $X=x$  is the causal source of  $Y=y$  iff  $X$  bears the strongest causal invariance relation to  $Y$  among all the prior causal variables (including  $X$ ) that bear such relationships to the action.

According to Deery and Nahmias, CS3 is a better explanation than CS2 for the intuition that manipulation undermines the moral responsibility of a person—a manipulated agent does not bear the strongest causal invariance relation to his action. Moreover, CS3 does not preclude a determined agent from being morally

responsible. If CS3 is not an ad hoc principle (as Deery and Nahmias accuse CS2 to be), then it can reliably predict how judgments of moral responsibility are made in general. However, Study 2 and Study 3 show that CS3 lacks this general predictive power. Specifically, while our participants were slightly less likely to judge someone as responsible when her compatibilist agential structure did not bear the strongest causal invariance relation to her morally negative action, they were just as likely or even more likely to judge someone as responsible when her agential structure did not bear the strongest causal invariance relation to her morally positive or morally neutral action.

### 3) **Tomasz Herok** (Lancaster), “If Philosophers Use Intuitions as Evidence, Why Are Their Claims So Counterintuitive?”

*Abstract:* A surge of interest in philosophical methodology has been observed in recent years. This is partly, or perhaps mainly, explained by the rise of experimental philosophy, a new movement that advocates using empirical methods of psychology to study the nature of intuitive judgments. Why do experimental philosophers think it's important to investigate those judgments in particular? Joshua Alexander, a leading advocate of the movement, puts it this way:

Philosophical intuitions play a significant role in contemporary philosophy. Philosophical intuitions provide data to be explained by our philosophical theories, evidence that may be adduced in arguments for their truth, and reasons that may be appealed to for believing them to be true. In this way, the role and corresponding epistemic status of intuitional evidence in philosophy is similar to the role and corresponding epistemic status of perceptual evidence in science. (Alexander 2012, 11)

Variations of this claim have been endorsed by many philosophers, some of them not particularly sympathetic to the experimental philosophy project (Kornblith 1998, Goldman 2007, Pust 2000, Bealer 1996, Brown 2004, Gutting 1998, Sosa 2009, Stich 2009, Wheatherson 2003, Fedyk 2009, Grundmann 2007, Chudnoff 2013, Hales 2012, Malmgren 2011, Talbot 2009).

However, the dogma has recently been attacked by some dissenters (Cappelen 2012, Molyneux 2009, 2014, Ichikawa 2015, Deutsch 2015). They argue that philosophers don't use intuitions as evidence at all and the widespread misconception that they do owes much of its popularity to the popularity of experimental philosophy. In Cappelen's words, experimental philosophy attacks a practice that doesn't exist.

I believe both sides of this debate are wrong, as both rely on an assumption that is false. To explain it, I think it's helpful to pay some attention to a number of philosophical theories that don't seem to fare terribly well in terms of accounting for intuitions, to put it mildly...

The problem I want to raise is rather straightforward: if philosophers typically use intuitions as evidence for the claims they make, why are those claims so often so conspicuously counterintuitive? The theories I bring up seem to neither account for (at least some) intuitions, nor to be intended to do so. They simply clash with our intuitions in quite a stark way.

There are five responses, or rather five types of responses, to this challenge. First, one can deny that the cases I mention are typical. Secondly, one can argue that they are actually not counterintuitive when properly understood. Thirdly, one can argue that philosophers only use intuitions of a certain kind as evidence. Fourthly, one can argue that some intuitions have to be sacrificed in the process of seeking reflective equilibrium. Finally, one can concede that intuitions are not used as evidence in philosophy at all. I think all forms of those five responses presented so far are problematic. I also think there is a sixth solution, which I believe to be correct.

### 4) **Maximilian Popiel** (Denver), “A Systematic Review of Studies Using Gettier Cases”

*Abstract:* Recently, experimental epistemologists have taken testing Gettier cases empirically. However their results have been conflicting, and there seems to be a myriad of different techniques employed by the studies. For instance, there does not appear to be a consensus about the use of comprehension questions, nor attention paid to the reading level of the thought experiments. Besides these, other empirical issues remain, such as infrequent reporting of effect size, lack of reliability analysis, potential for participant fatigue. The present study will be a systematic review of empirical studies using the Gettier-type thought experiments with focus of the review improving empirical rigor in experimental use of thought experiments to reduce the number of unreplicable findings.

One of the better known papers in this area is Weinberg, Nichols, and Stich's 2001 paper Normativity and Epistemic Intuitions. They tested various group differences such as socioeconomic status (SES) and cross-cultural differences and found that certain groups were more likely to attribute knowledge. However the paper has been criticized for small sample size (especially among their Indian Sub-Continent and Southeast Asian groups) and their results have not been replicated (Seyedsayamdost, 2015; Kim & Yuan, 2014).

In addition to these cross-cultural group differences on Gettier intuitions, there are also conflicting reports about whether there is a gender effect in epistemic intuitions in general. In a review of studies testing gender differences in philosophical intuitions, at least 3 studies were identified using Gettier-type thought experiments to assess a gender difference, with conflicting evidence about a gender effect. The review itself presented a Gettier case to students and while there was a difference between how men and women responded, the difference was not statistically significant (Adeberg, Thompson, & Nahmias 2014).

However, one point which seems largely absent from the debate is whether participants actually understand the thought experiments properly. This concern is highlighted by the fact that many of the cross-cultural studies give these thought experiments to individuals for whom English may not be a first language. To remedy this, some studies employ the use of comprehension questions asking a basic fact about an important the respective Gettier case. Unfortunately, few of these studies seem to report how many participants are actually excluded by answering these questions incorrectly, so their efficacy is unclear. That said, even a single, binary comprehension question would increase data quality over none. Given the difficulty with reproducing results in this field, their use seems warranted.

5) **Madeline Reinecke** (Illinois), **Zachary Horne** (Illinois), and **Andrei Cimpian** (NYU), "People's (Inconsistent) Attitudes About Foundational Moral Beliefs"

*Abstract:* The idea that morality depends on God is an intuitive and widely held lay belief. Does this belief affect people's intuitions about foundational moral claims (e.g., it's morally wrong to kill someone just for fun)? Here, we discuss data suggesting that, regardless of religiosity, people's intuitions about basic moral claims are affected by considering God's omnipotence. People seem to think that alteration of foundational moral truths is impossible—that is, it is impossible for moral wrongs to ever be right and moral rights to ever be wrong. Yet, people also endorse that God could change the truth-values of the same propositions. These results suggest that considering God's omnipotence may affect intuitions about even uncontroversial moral propositions.

6) **Rick Sendleback** (Edinburgh), "X-Phi's Empirical Findings Revisited: The Fundamental Flaw in the Empirical Data"

*Abstract:* The so called negative programme of experimental moral philosophy puts forward, essentially, two mutually dependent arguments. The first, can be casted in terms of an inductive argument; the second can be seen as a theoretical generalisation of the inductive base.

In this paper, I focus on the empirical argument. The empirical argument maintains that most intuitions elicited by thought-experiments are unreliable as evidence. In particular, I will analyse the underlying empirical findings, which support this argument. Especially the methods, used to collect, analyse, and interpret this data will be critically scrutinised.

I argue that due to the common use of the Likert Scale (Data Collection), dichotomisation of the data (Data Pre-Processing), and Cohen's or similar effect size measures (Data Interpretation) the purported consequences of experimental thought-experiments do not stand up to close scrutiny. The empirical argument rests upon deeply distorted foundation. Each stage of the three stages of the empirical research cycle makes questionable assumptions regarding the collected data (moral intuitions).

I discuss two possible solutions to this empirical problems, neither of them succeed. The first solution would be to skip the dichotomisation of the collected data, and consequentially would necessitate a new method of interpretation, adequate to the level of measurement. This solution, however, does not account for the implications the use of the Likert Scale has. According to the Likert Scale, intuition vary in strength, and each intuition, independently of its strength, counts equally in moral reasoning; this is not in accord with the method of reflective equilibrium. The second, more promising solution would require abolishing approximately two-third of the collected data, by restricting the data analysis to the domain's two extreme points of the dependent variable

intuition (strongly agree, strongly disagree) and would take into account the previously mentioned problem. This approach, however, would result in a massive data-loss, and thus would virtually render all empirical findings statistically insignificant.

I conclude that without a satisfactory solution to the two empirical worries raised, the argumentative force of the negative programme experimental moral philosophy should be greatly discounted. Therefore, moral philosophers, and philosophers in other fields, which use the method of cases and intuitions, since it is likely that this argument can be generalised over the entire negative programme of experimental philosophy, should wait before they completely abandon the use of intuitions. The negative programme of experimental moral philosophy, could, however, respond to this challenge raised in this article, by repeating their experiments with a higher number of participants in order to increase the power of their experiments. The solution, however, is time intensive and costly. As long as neither the empirical challenge is met, or the research re-conducted, the argumentative force of the negative programme remains dubious.