

Roy Sorenson, "The Practical Dogmatist"
Friday 9:00-10:30 AM

You receive a packet containing what you justifiably believe to be misleading evidence. You know that if you read the contents, then you will justifiably change your mind and regard your previous reservations as founded on misleading evidence. Should you open the packet or burn it?

On the one hand, the principle of total evidence instructs you not to ignore evidence. On the other hand, you think a maximally informed well-wisher would hope you will burn the letter.

Admittedly, your hypothetical, more widely informed, future self would disagree about what advice would be given by the maximally informed well-wisher. Does this potential disagreement cancel the force of the well-wisher argument?

The dilemma is not based on the premise that you are anticipating a period of irrationality (as with Ulysses and the Sirens) or that you anticipate that your desires will change in an undesirable way (as when the young idealist donates his fortune now, before his older self acquires narrower interests) or that you will lose any evidence. You foresee uninterrupted rationality and a potential disagreement between your temporal parts as to who has the misleading evidence.

The dilemma involves practical rationality because you are deliberating about which of your potential selves should be actualized. There are connections with Saul Kripke's problem of dogmatism because of the dogmatist's counsel that we should discard misleading evidence.

In addition to stimulating rival solutions, the dilemma stimulates rival dissolutions. These dissolutions attack presuppositions of the puzzle, casting it as an impossible situation.

The practical implications of the solutions and the dissolutions are each counter-intuitive. Every resolution leaves a bit of the hook still in your mouth. Nevertheless, I shall defend the presuppositions and conclude with a recommendation: Burn the packet.

Jack Lyons, "Cognitive Processes for Epistemologists"
Friday 11:00-12:30 PM

Individuating cognitive processes is important epistemological work. This is most obvious in connection with the well known generality problem for reliabilism. I don't believe that solving the problem of process individuation constitutes a solution to the generality problem, although I do think it goes a substantial way toward solving that problem. I also think that this solution solves a number of other problems, and not only for reliabilists. In this paper, I develop a psychological criterion of process individuation. On the basis of some plausible, general, empirical assumptions, I argue that if we turn the matter of process type individuation over to cognitive psychology, what we get back is pretty much exactly what we were looking for: a principled way of assigning a unique process type to each belief token, which appears to get the cases intuitively right as well. Toward the end, I apply this theory to the case of hallucination, where it has interesting results, leading us to a halfway position between the traditional view and a disjunctivist view.

Maria Aarnio, "Is Evidence about One's Own Doxastic States Inert?"
Friday 2:00-3:30 PM

A lot of epistemologists have recently argued that evidence about the doxastic states of another subject who shares my evidence can give me both evidence about my evidence, and evidence about first-order matters that the evidence bears on. So, for instance, learning that my friend is

very confident that P can give me evidence that my evidence supports P, and evidence that P is true. But assuming that my own states are not perfectly luminous to me, could learning what I think about a matter have the same kind of evidential import? For instance, could learning that I am confident that P give me more evidence about whether P? It is tempting to say “no”: evidence about my own doxastic states is inert in a way that evidence about the states of others is not. I argue that this is wrong: evidence about my own states is not inert in the way that many think it is. Asking what I think about a matter can be a perfectly legitimate way of gaining more evidence about it.

Jim Pryor, "Deliberating, Concluding, and Entailing" Keynote Address
Friday 4:00-5:30 PM

We will be considering the three topics of my title or as we might also call them, reasoning, rationally responding, and logic. In many philosophers' minds these are loosely but firmly connected. Too firmly. It's not easy to identify a rigorous thesis they definitely accept and I definitely reject. But I will be urging these three notions are farther apart and explanatorily more independent than is usually assumed. Most notably, I'll be opposing "Closure Principles" for reasonable belief (in ways that I think don't depend on the details of how such principles are formulated). Some of what I'll be saying may remind you of Harman's *Change in View*. That association is in places appropriate. But I'll make no attempt to separate where I see myself as defending Harman, where extending, and where diverging. It will be more effective to make the case from scratch in my own terms.

Evan Fales, "Turtle Epistemology"
Saturday 9:00-10:30 AM

In his *Justification without Awareness*, Mike Bergmann undertakes to prepare the ground for his Proper-Function form of externalism by arguing that no version of internalism escapes a dilemma: viz., that what Bergmann calls weak-awareness internalisms jettison the primary objection to externalism, namely the requirement that a subject be aware of what justifies a belief, whereas strong-awareness internalisms are disabled by a vicious regress (styled after the well-known ones formulated by Sellars and the early Bonjour). In particular (in Chapter 2, “No Escape”), Bergmann targets a weak-awareness internalist (Fumerton) and two strong-awareness internalists (the later Bonjour and myself). In this paper, I (belatedly) defend strong-awareness internalism by arguing that Bergmann’s dilemma gets no purchase on the position, properly understood. The regress is not vicious, because strong awareness, correctly understood, contains within itself both the conceptual and the judgment-forming resources to settle the question whether one is aware that one is aware (and further iterations). There’s no need to escape: we haven’t been captured.

Gary Ebbs, "Epistemic Entitlement at the Limits of Doubt"
Saturday 11:00-12:30 PM

I assume that truth is a goal of inquiry, and that to pursue it we can do no better than to rely on already established beliefs and inferences, and apply our best methods for reevaluating particular beliefs and inferences and arriving at new ones. I understand these assumptions in a way that discredits the initially appealing idea that some of our statements, such as *it is not the case that snow*

is both white and not white, are analytic, or true-in-virtue-of-meaning, in a methodological sense that guarantees we could not reject the sentences that express such statements without thereby changing the meanings or references of some of the words those sentences contain. Even if we reject this initially appealing idea, however, we must still acknowledge that some of the statements we accept, including the statement that *it is not the case that snow is both white and not white*, are such that we cannot now coherently suppose them to be false, where the “cannot” comes to this: if we try to specify a way in which they may be false, we find we are unable to do so. My central question is: *In what sense, if any, is it epistemically reasonable for us to accept such statements, and thereby to hold the corresponding beliefs?* I motivate and clarify this question, raised from a first-person, deliberative point of view, sketch three constraints on a satisfactory answer to it, and show that two tempting and representative attempts to construct substantive theoretical answers to the question fail to satisfy the constraints. To satisfy the constraints, I argue, we need a different approach. We need to *elucidate* the special role in our inquiries of beliefs that we cannot coherently suppose to be false. I end by sketching an elucidation of this epistemological role that satisfies my three constraints and thereby answers my central question.

Aaron Bronfman, "Rationality in Hindsight"

Saturday 2:00-3:30 PM

This paper argues that when an expectation about the future turns out to be incorrect, this is some evidence that it was not rational to have that expectation in the first place. Although treating how the future goes as evidence in this way might appear to be a form of hindsight bias, it is grounded in a plausible general approach to hypothesis testing. In general, when we are uncertain which of two hypotheses is true, we can gain relevant evidence by testing their predictions. If one hypothesis predicts p with high probability and the other predicts $\sim p$ with high probability, then observing p is evidence in favor of the first hypothesis and against the second. I argue that claims about what it is rational to expect are hypotheses that make probabilistic predictions that can then be tested against experience. Observing the way things turn out therefore provides empirical evidence about the substantive requirements of epistemic rationality.

Brian Weatherson, "Margins and Errors"

Saturday 4:00-5:30 PM

Timothy Williamson has recently argued that imprecise measurement cases can generate justified true belief without knowledge. The cases he describes are very different to traditional "Gettier Cases", and so raise problems for traditional attempts to "solve the Gettier problem". I'm going to spell out and endorse Williamson's argument, and investigate what we can know using imperfect measuring devices.