How Philosophers use Intuition and 'Intuition'

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1. Whither the Philosophy of Intuition?

Herman Cappelen's *Philosophy Without Intuitions* ('PWI') is a novel study in philosophical sociology—or, as Cappelen at one point suggests, "intellectual anthropology" (96).[1] Its target is the thesis that intuition is central, in the descriptive sense that *contemporary analytic philosophers rely on intuitions for evidence*—or, more generally, positive epistemic status. Cappelen labels the target thesis **Centrality**.

If Centrality is true, then especially urgent are two questions in the rapidly growing field that is the philosophy of intuition:

> **[Q1]** What are intuitions?
>
> **[Q2]** Can intuitions serve as evidence?

There are of course others, but in chapter one Cappelen singles out these two as **The Burning Questions** about intuition. He then summarizes the overall upshot of PWI as follows:

> In this book I argue that Centrality, on any reasonable interpretation, is false. If you share that view, the Burning Questions will no longer burn. There's no urgency in figuring out what intuitions are and what epistemic status they have. (18)

The result is, among other things, a call to abandon both "methodological rationalism" (which, roughly speaking, celebrates the role of intuitions in philosophical inquiry) and "experimental philosophy" (which seeks to empirically investigate intuitions appealed to in philosophy), as well

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[1] All undated references are to Cappelen (2012).

as many other popular positions in between. For Cappelen deems them all equally bankrupt in their mistaken endorsement of Centrality.[2]

Is this the end of the philosophy of intuition?

2. Cappelen's Dilemma

Cappelen's strategy is to criticize what he takes to be the two main, if not sole, routes to Centrality. The first, the "Argument from 'Intuition'-talk" (AIT), appeals to *overt* 'intuition'-talk by philosophers:

> **[AIT]** Philosophers' use of 'intuition'-terminology provides good reason to believe Centrality.

The second, the "Argument from Philosophical Practice" (APP), appeals to *covert* reliance on intuition in philosophical practice (i.e., the way philosophy is done):

> **[APP]** Philosophical practice—for example, the use of thought experiments—provides good reason to believe Centrality.

Cappelen criticizes both routes. But his objection to AIT is particularly important, for as he is quick to acknowledge (24), his criticism of APP in the second part of PWI relies on deflationary claims about 'intuition'-talk made in the process of criticizing AIT in the first part (see, e.g., 144n9, 167n19, 174, and 184n29). So I will mostly focus on the first part, though towards the end I will also engage Cappelen's skepticism about the role of intuitions in thought experiments.

Early on, Cappelen concedes that philosophers do "undeniably" engage in quite a bit of 'intuition'-talk (5, 18).[3] His opposition to AIT lies elsewhere, against the idea that such talk is "Centrality-supporting"—that is, Cappelen argues that *such talk does not plausibly denote any kind of mental state or event philosophers rely on for positive epistemic status* (11, 12, 18, 47).

As I understand it, Cappelen's master argument takes the form of a dilemma whose first

[2] "Once Centrality is rejected, both methodological rationalism and experimental philosophy can be left behind" (19; in §6.2 the implication is claimed to extend to several other metaphilosophical positions). At the same time, Cappelen emphasizes that PWI does not challenge the idea that intuitions might serve as an epistemically-neutral default or "a creative starting point" (230). As indicated below, I do not share Cappelen's primarily sociological perspective on the philosophy of intuition. Centrality might be sufficient to motivate the Burning Questions, but it is not necessary. There can be much "urgency in figuring out what intuitions are and what epistemic status they have", even if Centrality is false.

[3] Interest in philosophers' 'intuition'-talk goes back at least to Stocks (1936, §1).

premise is:

> **[C1]** When philosophers use 'intuition'-terminology, either:
> *Horn 1*: they are using the terms "with [their] ordinary English meaning[s]" (29); or
> *Horn 2*: they are using "special technical" terms (41).

Cappelen's paradigms of technical terminology (or technical use of terminology[4]) include two economists' terms, 'indirect utility function' and 'Pigou effect'; no doubt there are many others, including, perhaps, metaphysicians' use of 'trope', insofar as the specific phenomena it denotes is not already denoted by (i.e., does not belong to the extension of) ordinary use of the term in English.

The problem, according to Cappelen, is that:

> **[C2]** On neither interpretation of philosophers' use of 'intuition'-terminology does it provide good reason to believe Centrality.

On one hand, says Cappelen, ordinary use of 'intuition'-terminology denotes a lot of irrelevant or epistemically inapposite rubbish. Cappelen openly considers several possible denotations of ordinary use (or uses); but rather than homing in on one in particular and examining whether it, or perhaps a refined version of it, at the expense of others, might be relevant to the assessment of Centrality, his strategy is to observe a few ways in which ordinary use of 'intuition'-terminology fails to denote anything that might secure Centrality. For instance, he observes: ordinary 'intuition'-talk sometimes denotes "some kind of quick, spontaneous, and relatively unreflective judgment" (38; Cappelen labels this 'Snap'), or "an incomplete answer meant for easy consumption" (38; Cappelen labels this 'Easy'), or something unspecific and wholly generic, like a belief putatively supported by "*some*…evidence (of some kind)" (44; here, Cappelen uses the label 'generic evidential'). Moreover, Cappelen adds, the function of such talk is often simply to hedge, that is, to weaken the speaker's commitment to the content in question (36). And sometimes such talk is argumentatively superfluous, hence eliminable (63-4; Cappelen refers to this reinterpretation strategy as 'Simple Removal'). Cappelen claims that in none of these cases

[4] Cappelen treats these as equivalent (cf. 27n1). The expressions 'ordinary' and 'technical' go unexplicated, although we are told that ordinary (or "day-to-day"; 50) use of a term is linked to "what ordinary speakers consider the core usage" of the term (27), and that a technical term/use is "introduced" (50) and a four-point test is offered for "successful" technical terminology (52); six characteristics of "defective" technical terminology are also suggested (59).

does ordinary use of the relevant terms denote a kind of mental state or event philosophers rely on for positive epistemic status (see ch. 4, esp. §4.6). Though this assessment of ordinary use is not beyond dispute, I propose to grant it here (if only for the sake of argument).

On the other hand, Cappelen argues (49-60), it is problematic to invoke special technical use of 'intuition'-terminology. For, almost without exception, philosophers' use of these terms does not meet certain tests for successful technical terminology, making it potentially semantically defective—"strictly speaking, meaningless". The only exceptions are the use of 'intuition'-terminology by members of specific philosophical subcommunities (for example, those who anchor their use in Kant's use of '*Anschaaung*', often translated as 'intuition', in the First Critique and the *Logic*)—however, this means that such meaningful use cannot reasonably be attributed to the broader philosophical community and, in particular, to the instances of 'intuition'-talk at issue in Centrality. So, special technical use of 'intuition'-terminology does not support Centrality. I propose to grant this assessment of special technical terminology (again, if only for the sake of argument).

Therefore, Cappelen concludes:

> **[C3]** Philosophers' use of 'intuition'-terminology does not provide good reason to believe Centrality: AIT fails.

In my view this argument fails at step one, where I think it presents a false dilemma. To be clear, my intention is not to vindicate all or even most 'intuition'-talk, by philosophers or by non-philosophers. But I will argue that there is much space in between mere ordinary usage and special technical usage, and that the proponent of Centrality may reasonably view herself as attentive to this space when she maintains that 'intuition'-terminology, on certain occasions of use by philosophers, denotes some intellectual (i.e., non-sensory) state or event relied on for positive epistemic status.[5]

The in-between character of certain of philosophers' use of 'intuition'-terminology is not unique. To the contrary, in my view the space between mere ordinary usage and special technical usage is crucial to understanding much good philosophy, which is neither *ordinary language* philosophy nor *special technical* philosophy, but something more interesting—and more

[5] I imagine that some will try to interpret what follows as a defense of one or another of the above Horns (or a refined version thereof). Although I am not fundamentally opposed to such interpretation, so long as its taxonomy of uses includes the subcategory *discriminative use* (discussed in §3), I do believe it threatens to obscure or miss an important lesson about philosophy more generally, as described next.

difficult—than both (as Aristotle in particular emphasized in his theory of homonomy[6]). In fact, this space may be the key to avoiding Cappelen's surprising neo-positivist suggestion, anticipated in a note, that

> a much wider range of philosophical terms[, beyond 'intuition'-terminology, including prominent terms] like 'justification', 'belief', 'causation', 'evidence', 'person', and many, many other terms fall into this category [viz., the semantically defective]. (60n10)

It would seem that more than just Centrality—whether we tend to rely on intuitions—and the Burning Questions—regarding what intuitions are and whether they have positive epistemic status—hang in the balance: what is at issue is philosophy, its subject matter, and philosophical questions themselves. However, I will mostly leave these larger issues in the background, focusing on the specific case of intuition and 'intuition'-talk, the target of Cappelen's dilemma and the primary topic of PWI. Our task will be to understand how philosophers use 'intuition'-terminology, and also how they use intuition.

3. A Discriminative Use of 'Intuition'-terminology

3.1 Discrimination

The central idea pursued in this section is that there is a *discriminative use* of 'intuition'-terminology. By this, I mean that there is a specific use of 'intuition' and cognate terms that, while rooted in natural language, is more discriminating (i.e., it has a narrower extension) than what is found in casual ordinary discourse, but which is not merely "special technical"—though it might be put to a theoretical purpose.[7] In effect, even if the relevant use is somehow inappropriate or odd (e.g., "deviant", not "core", not "central"; cf. 27, 42) from the perspective of ordinary discourse, it is in a sense already out there, not invented by contemporary philosophers but latent

[6] Although Aristotle's metaphysical notion of homonomy might be used to provide a theoretical framework within which to couch and explain the central idea, I will remain neutral between this and alternative frameworks. (See esp. Shields (1999, §§1.6-7) on *seductive associated homonomy*, which in my view aptly characterizes much good philosophy.) Aristotle aside, what I will (in §3) call 'discrimination' arguably is a central component of standard, routine philosophical practice.

[7] While Cappelen sometimes uses "theoretical use" and "special technical use" interchangeably (see, e.g., 50), it is not clear that technical terms are co-extensive with theoretical terms. A possible example is the non-technical term 'pond', which features centrally in limnological theories.

in natural language, although it may require extensive investigation, by theorists of intuition, to reflectively disentangle and discern.[8]

It might help to illustrate with an example that does not involve 'intuition'-terminology. Take 'ambiguous', which in ordinary speech is applied to a wide variety of things, including *evidence*, *events*, *objects*, *years*, *feelings, places*, *people*, and even *life*. Moreover, on those occasions when it is applied to words or sentences, ordinary use—or, if you prefer, the ordinary user of the ordinary use—of 'ambiguous' does not always distinguish between a variety of distinct but intimately related phenomena, such as underspecification, indeterminacy, indefiniteness, vagueness, multiplicity of meaning, context-sensitivity, unclarity, imprecision, uncertainty, and so forth. It is not that ordinary use of 'ambiguous' is ambiguous (in the philosophers' and linguists' sense); rather, ordinary use effectively casts a wide net, with quite general application. Contemporary philosophers and linguists who make claims about ambiguity plainly are typically not using the term in this general—and, from their perspective, undisciplined—way. Does this mean that they are using a special technical term? No: although they are using 'ambiguous' in a way that is more discriminating than what is found in ordinary discourse, it would be wrong to describe them as using a technical term, if this is meant to rule out a *narrowing* or *sharpening* of ordinary use that picks up on, and privileges, one theoretically-interesting phenomenon out of the bunch, and which thereby denotes *something that is already denoted, albeit not solely, on some occasions of ordinary use of the term in English*. In this respect, 'ambiguous' is importantly different from 'indirect utility function' and 'Pigou effect' (and also differs from metaphysicians' use of 'trope', mentioned above). Philosophers' and linguists' use of 'ambiguous' evidences recognition—as opposed to introduction—of a use that is latent in natural language: in this sense, at least, it is not technical. But, again, it is not ordinary. It is *discriminative*.

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[8] In calling the relevant use 'discriminative' I do not intend to suggest that ordinary use fails to discriminate, but rather that the relevant use discriminates where the ordinary use does not. We are all familiar with the possibility of (1) a theoretically important distinction that goes unmarked by ordinary use of a given term, or of (2) accretions of meanings and implications in ordinary use of a term that need not attach to every possible use of it (as can sometimes be reflectively demonstrated in a principled manner; see, e.g., Grice 1961, §§2-4). Another possibility is (3) Carnapian explication, whereby an ordinary notion that holds theoretical interest is explicitly refined in such a way that preserves its theoretically important features while eliminating its alleged imperfections (see Carnap 1950/1962, ch. 1); if the resulting use is sufficiently rooted in natural language, connected but not reducible to ordinary use, it qualifies as a discriminative use (it is not clear that all Carnapian explications do or must satisfy these further conditions). I will assume that each of these three phenomena may on certain occasions underwrite a distinct use of the term in question, on one plausible way of individuating uses and terms. (This assumption is neutral on whether distinct uses underwrite distinct meanings, to accommodate Cappelen's semantic minimalism and skepticism about "lexical semantics" (30), as well as other views that might deny any straightforward connection.) Cappelen does not discuss these three possibilities.

Perhaps another example is the term 'experience' as it figures in contemporary debate in philosophy of perception. Ordinary use countenances such statements as "Traveling abroad is a valuable experience" and "I had the experience of swimming at Hanakapi'ai Falls", where the term designates most anything one does or undergoes. Plainly, philosophers of perception are not using the term 'experience' in this general way (as, e.g., J. M. Hinton (1973, Part I) observed). But they are also not using a special technical term.[9] Rather, I submit, they must be viewed as employing a *discriminative* use of 'experience', which denotes just one of the several types of thing one does or undergoes. While such use picks up on a (perhaps deviant, non-core, or non-central) strand of natural language, it is more discriminating than casual ordinary discourse insofar as it refers to something quite specific, of particular philosophical interest, viz., *experience*.

This is how I suggest the proponent of Centrality should think of the relevant use, by philosophers, of 'intuition'-terminology. Not just 'intuitive', 'intuitively', and 'seem', which Cappelen discusses, but also a host of other expressions that Cappelen does not explicitly discuss, but certain uses of which proponents of Centrality may deem pertinent. Here is a partial list:[10]

'intuition'	'seem'	'see'	'clear(ly)'	'irresistible'
'intuit(ing)'	'appear'	'perceive'	'obvious(ly)'	'attractive'
'intuitive(ly)'	'sound'	'grasp'	'self-evident(ly)'	'unattractive'
'unintuitive'	'look'	'feel'	'natural(ly)'	'absurd'
'counterintuitive'	'strike'	'realize'	'what we would say'	…

[9] Philosophers' use of 'experience' lacks Cappelen's four marks of successful technical terminology (52) and possesses Cappelen's six characteristics of defective technical terminology (59): there is widespread disagreement among philosophers of perception (e.g., intentionalists, naïve realists, sense-data theorists, adverbialists, doxasticists, epiphenomenalists, nonconceptualists, conceptualists, singularists, existentialists, enactivists, etc.) about experience and its definition, its core paradigms, its theoretical role, and even its very existence (Byrne 2009). This shows that, by Cappelen's own lights, my notion of discriminative use cannot be straightforwardly subsumed within (what he calls) technical use.

[10] Let me offer some examples (not discussed in PWI) of these expressions in action, to which the reader may wish to return at the end of this section, in light of the discussion that follows: "Is it not **clear** that *a*'s whiteness is not determined by *a*'s relationship with a transcendent entity? …[C]onsider *a* without the Form of Whiteness. It seems **obvious** that *a* might still be white" (Armstrong 1980, 68). "It seems just **obvious** that [Mary] will learn something about the world" (Jackson 1982, 130). (Cappelen himself notes the potential relevance of 'obvious' (76-7), though he interprets it using further 'intuition'-terminology: "recognize as true".) "To speak of fallible knowledge, of knowledge despite uneliminated possibilities of error, just ***sounds*** contradictory" (Lewis 1996, 549 italics in original). "But while [a] quasi-contractual [view of talk exchanges] may apply to some cases, …one **feels** that the talker who is irrelevant or obscure has primarily let down not his audience but himself" (Grice 1975, 48-9). "Each hypothesis of the form '*n* seconds after noon is the last noonish second' **strikes** me as absurd" (Sorensen 2001, 18; cf. 58).

Although we could choose to focus on any of these terms (or combinations thereof), in order to indicate the type of discriminative use to which proponents of Centrality might appeal, I will briefly discuss one in particular: the term 'seem', which features prominently in PWI. Several other expressions, including the verb 'intuit', which I will eventually suggest may be especially useful when seeking to locate and understand the relevant, discriminative use of 'intuition'-terminology, will enter the discussion subsequently.

3.2 'Seem' in Post-WWII Philosophy

As Cappelen observes, the term 'seem' plays an important role in contemporary discussion of intuition. It has also played an important role in post-WWII philosophy of perception, where the term itself received sustained attention in the work of Roderick Chisholm and Frank Jackson (among others, but I will focus on Chisholm and Jackson).[11]

Beginning with his 1957 monograph *Perceiving*, in a chapter titled "Three Uses of Appear Words", Chisholm distinguished three possible uses of the term 'seem', not ruling out that there could be more:

> (i) On the **epistemic** use (1957, 44), a speaker expresses a putatively-evidence-based belief or tendency to belief (as in certain instances of "The ship seems to be moving" or "It seems to me that General de Gaulle was successful"). Chisholm notes that this use of 'seem' may function to indicate that one believes tentatively or with caution, as when the speaker "*hedges*, giving [herself] an out" (1982, 139 emphasis added; cf. 1989, 21).
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> (ii) On the **comparative** use (1957, 45), a speaker makes a comparison between appearance and reality, conveying (roughly) that things now seem the way they normally seem when things really are that way (as in certain instances of "The railroad tracks seem to converge" or "She seems just the way her uncle did 15 years ago").
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> (iii) On the **noncomparative** use (1957, 48-49)—or, as Jackson would later call it in *Perception* (1977), the "phenomenological" or "phenomenal" use—a speaker neither hedges nor compares, but rather describes how she is *appeared-to*, or, perhaps better, how things are *presented* to her—visually, auditorily, etc.—as being (as in certain

[11] Chisholm discusses "'appear', 'seem', 'look', 'sound', 'feel', 'smell', and the like" (1957, 43). Jackson (1977, 30ff.) focuses on "'look' (and 'appear')". Others who worked on these terms include Austin, Ewing, Firth, Grice, Price, Quinton, Sellars, and Vesey. Breckenridge (2007, ch. 2) provides a helpful recent overview of work on 'look'.

instances of "This seems white to me"; or, as an enlightened Müller-Lyër subject might say, "Though I don't believe the two lines have unequal lengths, it sure does seem that they do"; or "Initially the two patches didn't seem to be different colors, but then I looked more closely and it quite clearly seemed they were").

Chisholm (e.g., 1957, ch. 3; cf. 1989, 20-5) and later Jackson (1977, see esp. 33-48), who endorsed Chisholm's tripartite division, each argued at length that these three uses are distinct; and, moreover, that the noncomparative use holds special philosophical interest, and not simply because it is nonreductively invoked in the definition of the comparative.[12] For Chisholm, who returned to the noncomparative use in *Theory of Knowledge* (1966, 1977, 1989) and again in *The Foundations of Knowing* (1982), in the course of articulating and defending his epistemology, it denotes a conscious state or event—how one is appeared-to—that may play a substantial epistemic role.

Chisholm and Jackson both focused on the sensory case, in which one is *sensorily* appeared-to. However, nothing in their discussions of the noncomparative use of 'seem' implies that the term could not be so-used to pick out *non-sensory* states or events, to describe how one is *intellectually* appeared-to, or, better, how things are *presented* to one as being, when one *reflects* on them—as it sometimes is, by philosophers, in certain instances of "That seems contingent"; or, as an enlightened physicalist could say, "Though I don't believe that zombies are metaphysically possible, it sure does seem that they are"; or "Initially the theorem didn't seem true or seem false, but then I reflected more carefully and it quite clearly seemed true".[13] It is just such a use that contemporary theorists of intuition—including A.C. Ewing, Saul Kripke, George Bealer, Laurence Bonjour, Ernest Sosa, Joel Pust, Michael Huemer, Elijah Chudnoff, and many others—have drawn upon when using the term 'seem' to designate their target mental state, intuition.[14]

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[12] These arguments have not, to my knowledge, been defeated. A popular objection to the idea that there is a discrete, noncomparative use was (and perhaps still is) that in ordinary language a speaker cannot use 'seem' without therein making some comparison or expressing a putatively-evidence-based belief or tendency to belief. Notice that such a claim about ordinary use, even if true, is perfectly compatible with there being a *discriminative* use of 'seem', rooted in natural language but not identical to ordinary use, that lacks the indicated addition (again, see, e.g., Grice 1961, §§2-4). I do not know how Cappelen would object to such a discriminative use, since he does not discuss it in PWI.

[13] The literature on intuition contains a host of further possible examples, none of which feature in PWI. See, e.g., Ewing's inference example (1941, 8-9), Gödel's axiom example (1964, 271), Bealer's sheep and De Morgan's Law examples (1992, 100-3), Bonjour's color exclusion and transitivity examples (1998, §4.2), Huemer's straight line example (2005, 100), Sosa's conflicting considerations example (2007, 47), and Chudnoff's diameter example (2011, 636ff.). Additional examples are discussed below; see also the examples in my (forthcoming, esp. §§2-3).

[14] This list is restricted to those who focus on 'seem'. Others have focused on 'appear' (e.g., Kagan 2001, 46n1, 49n3, and 52), 'see' (e.g., Conee 1998), and other bits of 'intuition'-terminology.

Indeed, these theorists, many of whose discussions are well-known and influential, have on several occasions referenced the Chisholm-Jackson treatment of 'seem' (see, e.g., Bealer 1992, 101 and Huemer 2001, 90-1n39), which is thus critical to understanding subsequent work in philosophy of intuition (on intellectual appearances), not just in philosophy of perception (on sensory appearances).

3.3 Relevance to PWI

Surprisingly, Chisholm's and Jackson's work on 'seem' goes unmentioned in PWI. Cappelen's own treatment of 'seem' focuses almost exclusively on what he calls the "generic evidential use" and its hedging role, which looks to be equivalent to what Chisholm labeled the "epistemic" use, which likewise plays a hedging role.[15] Cappelen does not, however, consider the comparative and noncomparative uses of 'seem'. Yet the noncomparative use in particular looks to be quite relevant in the present context, for three interrelated reasons:

> *First*: The noncomparative use is uncovered by Chisholm and Jackson through an investigation that exemplifies the type of reflective disentanglement and discernment described above, whereby investigators peer into natural language and, rather than slavishly following ordinary discourse, and rather than attempting to introduce (implicitly or explicitly) a special technical use "quarantine[d] from other usage" (28), they light upon a specific non-technical, non-ordinary use of some term.
>
> *Second*: Regardless of whether the noncomparative use they uncover is deemed deviant, non-core, or non-central from the perspective of ordinary discourse, it may hold substantial philosophical interest: as Chisholm in particular goes on to argue, it plausibly denotes a psychologically and epistemically significant kind of mental state or event, how one is appeared-to, that is plausibly relied on for positive epistemic status (e.g., fallible, *prima facie* justification; we will consider several examples below).

[15] The equivalence is suggested by Cappelen's preferred gloss or paraphrase in terms of "*some*…evidence (of some kind)" (44). It is also suggested by his choice of examples, which include: "Recession seems to put people in the mood for condoms"; "It seems to me that Fred and others are nuts and totally out of touch with reality"; "The sun seems to be dimming". These are the kinds of examples Chisholm and Jackson give for the epistemic use, and can be usefully contrasted with those examples proponents of a noncomparative use of 'seem' have used when identifying their preferred use (see above).

Third: The noncomparative use they uncover is a use of a term—'seem'—that is already on our list of 'intuition'-talk, and, as noted above, such use has informed influential contemporary discussions of intuition.

Consequently, post-WWII philosophical work on 'seem' should inspire confidence in proponents of Centrality wishing to reject Cappelen's dilemma in the way I am recommending.

To be clear, Chisholm's and Jackson's basic idea that there may be a noncomparative use, or some other discriminative use distinct from (i-ii), stands independently of their overall *theory* of such use and its designatum; it holds interest regardless of the *details* of their view. Likewise, the idea that the Chisholm-Jackson noncomparative use, or some other discriminative use distinct from (i-ii), may denote a non-sensory, intellectual state stands independently of any particular *theory* of that use and its designatum. Such a theory will contain extra, substantive claims—it will add further *details*, which are not always compulsory—about what is denoted by the relevant use in the non-sensory, intellectual case. But while the theorists above disagree about the correct theory regarding the nature and epistemic status of whatever it is that the relevant discriminative use of the relevant bit of 'intuition'-terminology denotes,[16] they are united in thinking (with Chisholm and Jackson) that there is *some* such discriminative use. They further agree that the phenomenon it picks out is *some* intellectual state or event with *some* epistemic significance. Here as elsewhere, the phenomena theorized-about—a use, a mental state or event, and its epistemic status—are not beholden to any particular theory about them.

Is there any reason to think that there is *not* some such discriminative use of 'seem', or of any of the other expressions on our list? If there is, it is not one found in PWI, which shows no recognition of such use, or of midcentury work on appear words.

Obviously, more could be said about the relevant use and its designatum, and later (in §5.1) I will make a suggestion about where one might look for guidance (*spoiler*: non-linguistically, to carefully chosen familiar examples; linguistically, to the progressive form of the

[16] On Bealer's view, what the relevant discriminative use of 'seem' denotes is a *sui generis* propositional attitude, a seeming (which could be "physical" or "rational"), one type of which (the so-called rational type) is a basic source of fallible, *prima facie* evidence. On Sosa's (2007, ch. 3) view, what is denoted is an *attraction to assent*; Sosa also holds that such attractions are epistemically significant, even if not in the way that standard "basis-dependent" foundationalists (like Bealer) claim. There are of course other views. For instance, I have argued (forthcoming) that, contra Bealer and Sosa, intuitions are properly understood as presentations (which 'seem'-talk may be sometimes but not always used to convey). I also disagree with the treatments given by Bonjour, Chudnoff, Ewing, Huemer, and Pust. But again, the relevant use stands independently of any theory—mine or theirs. One reason why we can ignore the details of various views is that, because the relevant use is discriminative, not technical, we need not look to any such theories to grasp the term or to ascertain its meaning (as might be required if the term was technical, hence defined through, say, stipulation or Ramsification).

verb). But that twist of the screw is not needed to see the basic problem with the master argument. PWI does not consider any discriminative uses, noncomparative or otherwise, of any of the relevant expressions.[17] Consequently, it does not offer reasons that prevent proponents of Centrality from rationally endorsing AIT, insofar as they hold that there is a non-ordinary, non-technical *discriminative* use of 'intuition'-terminology by which philosophers denote a certain type of non-sensory state, viz., intuition, which they rely on for positive epistemic status.

(A point of clarification: While I have been writing as though a discriminativist response to Cappelen's dilemma depends on there being a single state or event denoted by a single relevant discriminative use, it should be clear there need not be only one such use (cf. 46-47), and there need not be only one such state or event. For example, it might be held that there is a *family* of distinct states or events (e.g., sui generis seemings, attractions to assent, presentations, inclinations to believe, and noninferential assentings—or, perhaps, some subset of these), and that all of the members of this family are legitimately regarded as intuitions, which are denoted by one *or more* discriminative uses of 'intuition'-terminology, distinct from (i-ii). Although I myself do not accept this or any other "family resemblance" theory of intuition, it remains fully compatible with the position articulated here.)

To summarize, we are not forced to endorse either horn of Cappelen's dilemma. Philosophers can use 'intuition'-terminology in a discriminative, Centrality-friendly way, where such use treads a middle path in between mere ordinary use and special technical use of 'intuition'-terminology. I have provided several examples, sprinkled above and below, in the text and in notes (I do not include more examples simply for lack of space). In the remainder of my comments I would like to develop this point. I will first explore a possible example of such Centrality-friendly use, and potentially of its ubiquity (§4); I will then respond to two challenges, arising from Cappelen's skepticism about the phenomenology of intuition (§5.1) and about the role of intuitions in thought experiments (§5.2).

4. Kripke and the 'Intuition'-virus

Cappelen (71-5) recognizes the interest of Kripke's seminal monograph *Naming and Necessity* to assessment of Centrality. In the written text (and, I assume, in the influential earlier spoken lectures on which it is based), Kripke engages in quite a bit of 'intuition'-talk. A quick

[17] Cappelen seems to consider something in the vicinity in a brief footnote (47n33) that discusses the attempt "to pick out a subset of seemings". But the note focuses on the modifiers 'intellectual' and 'rational', arguing that we don't have an "independent grasp of the relevant senses" of these modifiers. The note does not recognize the possibility of a discriminative use of the term 'seem' itself.

perusal uncovers many instances of 'intuitive', 'intuition', 'what we would say', 'obviously', 'clearly, 'self-evident', and of course 'seem'. Here are two examples:

> On the view in question…since the man who discovered the incompleteness of arithmetic is in fact Schmidt, we, when we talk about 'Gödel', are in fact always referring to Schmidt. But it **seems** to me that we are not. We simply are not.[18] (1980, 84)

> [I]t is supposed to be a contingent property of the state that it is a mental state at all, let alone that it is something as specific as a pain. …[T]his…seems to me **self-evidently absurd**. (1980, 147)

Cappelen admits that Kripke engages in 'intuition'-talk. But he maintains that "there is no evidence that he [Kripke] treats being intuitive as carrying evidential weight" (73n15).[19] Perhaps we should let Kripke speak for himself:

> Of course, some philosophers think that something's having **intuitive** content is very inconclusive evidence in favor of it. I think it is **very heavy evidence** in favor of anything, myself. I really don't know, in a way, what more conclusive **evidence** one can have about anything, ultimately speaking. (1980, 42)

Now, it might be found tempting to interpret mention of the particular case of "something's having intuitive content" as restricting Kripke's endorsement of intuition's status as "very heavy evidence" merely to assessments of whether something has content, that is, whether it is meaningful.[20] But Kripke immediately follows with the general claim that intuitiveness is "very

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[18] Some commentators (e.g., Deutsch 2009, 2010) have overlooked Kripke's 'intuition'-talk in this passage.

[19] On Cappelen's interpretation of Kripke's 'intuition'-talk in *Naming and Necessity*, "one of the greatest works of twentieth-century philosophy" (71), "Kripke is a paradigm of an unreflective user of 'intuition'-vocabulary" (72), where an unreflective user's use is "borderline defective" (60). I believe that Kripke's use of 'seem' and 'self-evidently absurd' in the above passages cannot be charitably interpreted as defective or, barring that, as expressing a *mere* pretheoretical attitude, as Cappelen also suggests (72 ff.), Kripke's favorable remarks about "schoolchildren" and "the ordinary man" notwithstanding: surely, pace Cappelen, Kripke does not endorse/reject the claims in question—or any other claims—*simply* because, *without any additional qualification* (e.g., one invoking intuitions), such people would endorse/reject them, or they happen to be/not 'pretheoretic' (74n17). Nor can Kripke's use be charitably interpreted as hedging: notice, in the Gödel passage, his unqualified, emphatic assertion in the ensuing sentence (compare: ?? "p, I think. p."). Likewise for Kripke's use of "self-evidently absurd". At any rate, the main point is that, pace Cappelen, Kripke relies on intuition as evidence and is not an "unreflective user of 'intuition'-vocabulary".

[20] This is the interpretation advanced by Deutsch (2010 451n2; cf. 2009). Cappelen cites Deutsch's interpretation approvingly (73n16; cf. 19), even though it entails, pace Cappelen, that Kripke *does* endorse

heavy evidence in favor of *anything*". And the text elsewhere makes clear that Kripke's endorsement of intuition is not restricted merely to the detection of meaningfulness—as shown, for example, in his appeal to what seems "self-evidently absurd". Although it is notoriously difficult to articulate with any precision the positive general theses (if any) which Kripke endorses in *Naming and Necessity*, it is uncontroversial that he very often considers what *intuitions* we have or what is *counterintuitive* or what we *see* or how things *seem* or *what we would say*; and it is clear, I think, that he treats these also as epistemically significant: the weight he places on them is difficult to comprehend if we do not interpret his remarks about the connection between evidence and the intuitive as having fairly general application (cf. Hughes 2004, 110 and 113). Consider also this passage from the Preface:

> My main remark, then, is that we have a direct **intuition** of the rigidity of names, exhibited in our understanding of the truth conditions of particular sentences. In addition, '**what we would say**' [about thought experiments] gives indirect **evidence** of rigidity. (1980, 14)

The implication seems to be that, for Kripke, while an intuition regarding the correct description of a scenario (i.e., what we would say about the scenario) "gives indirect evidence", a "direct intuition" (presumably, an intuition regarding who/what is referred to, when, as in the Gödel passage) gives *direct* evidence.

Taken together, these passages from Lecture I and the Preface, respectively, make it very difficult to deny the following thesis:

> **[K]** Kripke sometimes employs a Centrality-friendly use of 'intuition'-talk, meant to denote something he relies on for positive epistemic status (indeed, "very heavy evidence").

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a substantial link between evidence and the intuitive, albeit in a specified set of cases (regarding meaningfulness). Additionally, Deutsch (2010, 453; cf. 2009, 451) emphasizes that on his interpretation, Kripke relies on intuition throughout *Naming and Necessity*: "I take it as given that, if we [Kripke and his followers] know that 'Gödel' does not refer to Schmidt in the Gödel-case, we know this via intuition." Deutsch regards such reliance as *non-evidential*, apparently because he assumes (*ibid*) that if intuition were playing an evidential role, Kripke would have to be making *inferences* from facts about his intuitions, which Kripke is not. But, as discussed below, this assumption is mistaken. At any rate, evidence does not exhaust the range of the epistemic, and so Deutsch's position on the role of intuition in knowledge remains compatible with Centrality.

Thesis K is not the thesis that *all* of Kripke's Centrality-friendly uses of 'intuition'-terminology are noncomparative (recall the family resemblance option). Nor does it claim that *all* of his uses are Centrality-friendly. The latter variety is simply a natural consequence of there being multiple uses of such vocabulary, besides the relevant discriminative use; and it does not impugn Kripke's use of 'intuition'-talk on some occasions to denote something he clearly relies on for positive epistemic status, and which he explicitly calls to our attention in the foregoing passages.[21]

In recommending thesis K, am I proposing that Kripke's arguments in *Naming and Necessity* include as a *premise* some psychological claim about what is intuitive or what intuitions he has (or we have), or that Kripke somehow *infers* his beliefs and views from his intuitions?[22] No: that question reflects a serious and unfortunately prevalent misconception about what is involved in relying on intuitions for positive epistemic status. There is such a thing as a *non-inferential epistemic basis*, as witnessed in (for example) contemporary discussion of the epistemology of perceptual experience. The basic idea is simple. Just as we need not think of ourselves as inferring beliefs about our immediate environment from psychologistic premises about our experiences in order to think of ourselves as relying on our experiences for positive epistemic status, we need not view Kripke or anyone else as making inferences from psychologistic premises about their intuitions in order to think of them as relying on intuitions for positive epistemic status.[23]

Why might Kripke's overt reliance on intuitions in *Naming and Necessity* be important? Remember that we are engaged in philosophical sociology. In this spirit, Cappelen speculates that "a plausible case can be made that Kripke's extensive use of 'intuition'-terminology in that book [*Naming and Necessity*] influenced a generation of philosophers" (71). Earlier in PWI, Cappelen advances the hypothesis that philosophers' 'intuition'-talk "is a kind of intellectual/verbal virus (or tick) that started spreading about thirty to forty years ago" (50). He summarizes (in ch. 1):

> [P]hilosophers started to use expressions such as 'Intuitively, BLAH' a lot. …[But] the usage itself is not motivated by (or anchored in) any substantive philosophical commitments or views about intuitions or philosophical methodology—it's simply a verbal tick without any interesting philosophical foundation. (23)

[21] Borrowing Cappelen's expressions, it does "move and influence" and have a "recognizable effect" on Kripke's philosophical practice, and hence is "effective", not "idle" (115 and 119-20).

[22] See, e.g., Deutsch (2010). In a related vein, Cappelen (114, 174) wrongly assumes that proponents of Centrality who focus on, or view intuitions as, a certain type of psychological state (e.g., inclination to belief) are thereby committed to "psychologizing the evidence".

[23] Nor must a proponent of Centrality view the propositions that are the contents of one's intuitions as "special and glowing" (173), as Cappelen suggests, no more than in the case of perceptual experience.

As we have seen, however, Kripke, an extremely prominent, influential philosopher writing at the specified time, and so presumably one of the chief disseminators of the 'intuition'-virus, if such there be, did harbor "substantive philosophical commitments or views about intuitions", viz. Centrality-friendly views, which he made explicit in the opening pages of *Naming and Necessity*, and which informed his use of 'intuition'-terminology throughout.

Perhaps 'intuition'-talk can be described as having gone viral. But Kripke's text would appear to provide evidence that any such virus is not "simply verbal", but is, if anything, Centrality-supporting.[24]

5. Intuition Features

The discriminativist defense of Centrality I am recommending faces at least two types of challenge. The first questions whether there plausibly exists a mental state or event (or family thereof) of the right kind for the relevant discriminative use(s) of 'intuition'-terminology to successfully pick out. The second questions whether, even if there is any such mental state or event (or family thereof), it is one that contemporary analytic philosophers ever take themselves to rely on for positive epistemic status. While the foregoing discussion of Kripke's 'intuition'-talk and its potential influence on subsequent philosophy goes some distance towards meeting both challenges, I do not think proponents of Centrality should hang their hats on the particulars of Kripke-exegesis and speculation about subsequent statistical trends. So I will now suggest how one might tackle these challenges at a more general level.

I will focus on two specific challenges, one of each type. I choose to focus on the two that I do, not simply because they are important in their own right, but because they seem largely to motivate and sustain the anti-intuition—and anti-*a priori*—worldview animating PWI. For this reason alone I feel they merit attention.

Cappelen highlights three features that he takes to be "characteristic" of appeals to intuition (112-13):

> **F1: Special phenomenology.** Intuition "has a characteristic phenomenology."
>
> **F2: Rock.** Intuition "has a special epistemic status…Intuiti[ons] justify, but they need no justification."

[24] Perhaps similar points can be made for other putative disseminators, such as Noam Chomsky and John Rawls. In his hugely influential paper from the same period, "The Meaning of 'Meaning'", Hilary Putnam uses a host of 'intuition'-terminology and explicitly draws a connection between intuitions and "data" (1975, 193).

> **F3: Conceptual justification.** "[A] judgment…is intuitive only if it is justified solely by the subjects' linguistic or conceptual competence".

I will set aside F3, which I think is not to the point, insofar as the stated conditional lands wide of the mark (in part for reasons given below). The challenges I want to consider focus on F1 and F2, starting with F1.

5.1 Intuition as a Conscious State or Event

Basically all proponents of intuition (and Centrality) agree that what is denoted, intuition, is not just any intellectual (i.e., non-sensory) state or event, but one that is or can be *conscious*—"a genuine kind of conscious episode", in Bealer's phrase. This is more or less presupposed in the Chisholm-Jackson-style noncomparative use of 'intuition'-talk, reserved as it is for an element of our *conscious* lives. (Likewise for many other possible discriminative uses.)

In PWI, Cappelen expresses deep skepticism about this shared (presup-)position:

> [B]y introspection I cannot, even with the best of will, discern a *special feeling* that accompanies my contemplation of the naïve comprehension axiom, Gettier cases and other alleged paradigms of the intuitive. …I would recognize this a failure in myself…but...[a]ll we have is anecdotal evidence that some intuition-theorists have these *special feelings* when they contemplate certain propositions. (117, emphasis added)

In my view, these remarks as it were overreach. To claim that what is denoted by the relevant discriminative use is or can be *conscious* is not yet to claim that what is denoted is a "special feeling". This is not simply because most theorists of intuition would firmly denounce the proposal that intuitions are a kind of *feeling* (e.g., a sensation or emotion).[25] The idea that the phenomenology is somehow *special* (or "characteristic"), in the sense that it is unshared by any other mental state or event, is a further thesis, and it is not relevant when assessing the basic idea that philosophers rely on a conscious intellectual (i.e., non-sensory) state or event for positive epistemic status. Cappelen's introspective efforts are misguided.

That said, I don't want to overreach in the other direction. So let me make a suggestion about how those who, like Cappelen, claim not to "get" it might approach this idea. The suggestion may help also with the attempt to understand philosophers' 'intuition'-talk.

[25] Such a *theory* would be fairly described as marginal or even radical from the perspective of mainstream philosophy of intuition—and for good reason (Ewing 1941, 13-16).

There is a sense in which an instance of the schema

x has the intuition that p

can be true even if *x* is not, at that moment, actually intuiting that p—perhaps because *x* is currently asleep, swimming, or otherwise engaged. For instance, one may truly say of one's colleague that she has the intuition that it cannot be the case that both p and not-p, and that is why she rejects dialetheism, even when one's colleague is, at that moment, absorbed in a novel, poem, or theatrical performance. In such a case, one's colleague might be disposed to think that contradictions cannot be true, but she is not right then and there intuiting this; as we say, it does not at that moment consciously *strike* her that contradictions cannot be true: the intuition is absent.

I trust that this example is easy enough to understand and follow: it describes a kind of situation that is utterly common, one that we easily "get". Of course, it is not a theory: it is not the end of inquiry, but rather the beginning.[26] The example simply serves as a *pointer* to a familiar conscious state or event, which the colleague does not right then and there enjoy, but which she has enjoyed at some other time, and might again, and which she relies on for positive epistemic status in her rejection of dialetheism. As the example suggests, there need not be anything mysterious about the basic idea that some uses, by philosophers, of 'intuition'-terminology pick out a conscious intellectual state or event relied on for positive epistemic status.

The example also highlights an interesting aspect of 'intuition'-talk. In describing the example, I employed the continuous or progressive form of the verb, 'intuiting', to point to the (absence of the) conscious state or event in question. We might also look to the progressive forms of other 'intuition'-terminology: for instance, one's colleague is not at that moment *having* the intuition that it cannot be the case that both p and not-p; it is not right then *seeming* (or *appearing*) to her, or *striking* her, that this is so. Such progressives are useful insofar as they report what J.O. Urmson (1952), writing on psychological verbs, called a mental "happening" or "goings on", and which he contrasted with expressions whose function is merely to hedge or to convey qualifications.[27] Cappelen highlights the latter function when he takes up the adjective

[26] For example, an adequate theory of intuition would provide a positive characterization that illuminates the kind of mental state it is. Achieving such a characterization requires reflection on a healthy variety of illustrations and examples, as well as a critical examination of alternative views. Although I cannot undertake this project here, some efforts in this direction can be found in §§2-4, 7 of my (forthcoming).

[27] Cappelen (36) cites Urmson's article in passing (via Mandy Simons' reference) as anticipating the notion of a generic evidential. But the citation is misleading, as Urmson's discussion tells *against* Cappelen's treatment of 'intuition'-talk as applied to the verb 'to intuit'. Urmson observes that some verbs can be used

‘intuitive’, adverb ‘intuitively’ (in §§2.1-2), and, derivatively (in §2.3), the noun ‘intuition’. But he does not offer any account of the verb ‘intuit’ nor mention its progressive form. Similarly, the progressive forms of ‘seem’ (and other ‘appear’-words) and ‘strike’ go unmentioned. Yet, as the example indicates, and as Urmson’s contrast suggests, the progressives may serve as instructive guides: although perhaps somehow deviant, non-core, or non-central from the perspective of ordinary use (‘intuiting’ is rarely found in ordinary speech), they might hold significance insofar as they serve to illuminate the relevant, discriminative use of ‘intuition’-terminology.

Independently, there may be reason to be skeptical of Cappelen’s attempt to privilege ordinary use of the adjective and adverb when seeking to locate and understand the relevant use, by philosophers, of ‘intuition’-terminology. In many cases ordinary use of an adjective and adverb may convey something substantially different from the cognate verb, and it is the verb, rather than the adjective or adverb, that anchors or adheres to the noun. For example, the verb ‘sense’ and the noun ‘sense’ are tightly coupled, while the adjective ‘sensitive’ and adverb ‘sensitively’, though originally tied to the noun and verb,[28] seem to have undergone substantial semantic drift. Such difference among cognates is not entirely uncommon; though in some cases it will be subtle and, as a result, take care to unmask. The implication is that if our goal is to understand philosophers’ use of ‘intuition’-terminology, and if, as I have argued, such use is best viewed as a non-technical, non-ordinary use that might be illuminated by the progressive form of ‘intuit’ (which, again, does not in the same way have a place in ordinary speech) and cognate verbs, then ordinary usage of ‘intuitive’ and ‘intuitively’ may mislead, rather than enlighten. From the perspective of a proponent of Centrality, the potentially misleading character of ordinary use of the adjectival and adverbial forms might be seen as one of the primary lessons of Cappelen’s discussion of a wide range of irrelevant uses of ‘intuitive’ and ‘intuitively’, gleaned from the internet and popular magazines.[29]

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in the present continuous or progressive form (e.g., “Smith is imagining that p”, “Smith is perceiving that p”), and that these are importantly different from “parenthetical verbs”, which cannot be so used (e.g., ? “Smith is believing that p”). Parenthetical verbs are sometimes evidentials and may function as hedges or convey qualifications of the sort emphasized by Cappelen (as when, e.g., one’s belief is *unreflective*, or one’s thought is *meant for easy consumption*, or one’s opinion enjoys *some evidence of some kind*: recall ‘Snap’, ‘Easy’, and ‘generic evidential’ from §2). But non-parenthetical verbs, used in the progressive form, according to Urmson, “report a contemporary *happening*” and “describe some *goings on*” (1952, 480 and 496 emphasis added). Insofar as the verb ‘intuit’ can be used in the present continuous or progressive form (e.g., “Smith is intuiting that p”), it qualifies as a non-parenthetical verb in Urmson’s sense.

[28] According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the term ‘sensitive’ primarily designated what pertains to the act of sensing at least through the eighteenth century. This is not so today.

[29] Imagine the reaction of a proponent of a Centrality-like claim about experience to an examination that privileges adjectival or adverbial cognates of ‘experience’ and corresponding Google search results (40ff.).

5.2 Intuition and Argument

I want now to turn to a second challenge, arising out of F2 ('Rock'). It might be thought that, whether or not there is a relevant, discriminative use of 'intuition'-terminology, it could not help to secure Centrality. As we all know, philosophers offer *arguments* for their positions, that is, using Cappelen's gloss, they provide "considerations that in some way lend support to their conclusions" (165n18). This might be thought to indicate that, contrary to what is suggested by proponents of Centrality, they do not take themselves to rely on intuition—something that would satisfy Rock**,** and hence be in no need of argument. Rather, the thought continues, they take themselves to rely on those very arguments.

It is tempting to respond to this that in many cases the *premises* in philosophical arguments are based on intuition.[30] Cappelen anticipates this suggestion, maintaining instead that philosophers typically regard their premises as based on ordinary observation and other a posteriori epistemic sources, or as simply part of the "common ground" of the philosophical conversation.[31] This is a bold hypothesis, which does not obviously square with various features (e.g., non-conservativeness, modality, etc.) of many responses to thought experiments, wherein such premises are often grounded. But, at any rate, the issue on which I want to focus is not about interaction between intuitions regarding premises and the arguments those premises help compose (viz., the intuition that p and an argument for a distinct proposition q that has p as a premise), but rather about putative conflict between relying on the intuition that p and relying on an argument for the *selfsame* p. Might this particular conflict indicate that philosophers do not rely on intuitions after all?

Cappelen considers (in ch. 8) the answer that a claim, p, can be based on intuition and thus have positive epistemic status "*even though some philosopher in some paper happens to present an argument for p*" (162). In reply, Cappelen writes:

> I am assuming that if in a context *C*, someone presents a set of premises…from which a conclusion *p* follows, and indicates full commitment to the premises and the validity of the inference, then, other things being equal, we should take that argument [rather than *p*'s being based on an intuition] to be what justifies *p* in *C*. (*ibid*)

[30] There is also the Centrality-friendly position, not discussed in PWI but defended by Ewing (1941, 8ff.), Bonjour (1998, §1.1), and Dogramici (2013), that premises aside, all *inferences* are based on intuitions.

[31] For example, Cappelen makes the remarkable claim that the response to Goldman's fake barn case that Henry does not know that there is a barn is "presented as being pre-theoretically in the common ground between Goldman and his readers" (172).

However, the assumed conditional is problematic: even when all else is equal, the intuition that *p* and an argument for the selfsame *p* need not be competitors even in one and the same context. The presence of considerations that in some way lend support to *p* generates no presumption that the author is not relying—also or instead—on an intuition that *p*.

To illustrate, consider the following set-up (here I will focus, as Cappelen does, on philosophical thought experiments in written texts): an author describes an example, about which she has the intuition that p, which she relies on for at least some positive epistemic status (e.g., as making her fallibly, *prima facie* justified in accepting p, or as making her epistemically rational in taking p seriously—unlike, say, not-p, which is unintuitive or counterintuitive); she might also present an argument or set of considerations that play one of the following roles:

> *Buttressing*: the considerations aim to *provide further, independent support for p*. In such a case, the argument "buttresses" the intuition without thereby rendering it epistemically ineffective.
>
> *Capturing*: the considerations aim to *capture, diagnose, or explain why we have the intuition that we do* (e.g., by identifying the relevant features of the example, features to which our intuition is allegedly responsive or attuned). In such a case, the argument "explains" the intuition without thereby rendering it epistemically ineffective.
>
> *Guiding*: the considerations aim to *help those readers who did not initially have this intuition come to do so* (perhaps by making explicit the relevant features of the example). In such a case, the argument "guides" the intuition without thereby rendering it epistemically ineffective.

Such interaction between argument and intuition is friendly, even complementary; it is certainly not competitive or mutually excluding. And it is arguably present in several of the cases Cappelen examines (when discussing APP in Part II). I will not consider them in detail here, but in my view we find some such friendly interaction in, for example, Lehrer's Truetemp example, Gettier's refutation of JTB,[32] Kripke's thought experiments in *Naming and Necessity*, Goldman's treatment of the fake barn case, and Chalmers' zombie argument against materialism.

[32] Gettier employs 'intuition'-terminology prior to offering additional considerations: "it is equally **clear** that Smith does not know that (e) [The man who will get the job has ten coins in his pocket] is true; for…" (quoted by Cappelen, 195n3). Two comments. First, Cappelen provides no reason to deny that the

Buttressing, capturing, and guiding are roles that an argument for p might play in relation to an intuition that p. We should also consider various roles that an intuition that p might play in relation to an argument that p. To illustrate using the set-up described above, suppose that while our intuiter relies on her intuition that p for at least some positive epistemic status, she does not immediately fully endorse p; instead, her intuition might play one of the following roles:

> *Prompting*: the intuition indicates an initial answer or option that requires further examination and critical evaluation, thereby prompting further reflection and argument.
>
> *Problematizing*: the intuition produces or reveals a conflict—whether a mere tension or genuine puzzle or even paradox (perhaps depending on other attitudes of the intuiter)—to be resolved or explained through further reflection and argument.[33]

Once again, such interaction is friendly and complementary, not competitive. And it is arguably present in several of the cases Cappelen discusses: for instance, intuition can be viewed as *prompting* in Thomson's violinist example[34] and again in Thomson's discussion of the Trolley Problem; it can be seen as *problematizing* in Williams' torture cases and in Cohen's discussion of lottery cases.

The last serves as a useful illustration of the general strategy, which we might call a **reconciliation strategy**, that I am advancing. Cappelen maintains that we should not interpret Cohen and others "who rely on so-called lottery cases [as] appeal[ing] to intuitions when they do so" (164). For, he writes:

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considerations that follow 'for' are capturing or buttressing; in fact, Cappelen himself says that they "*explain* why" Smith lacks knowledge. Second, Cappelen is not the only commentator that has overlooked Gettier's 'intuition'-talk in this passage (e.g., Deutsch 2010). And pace Cappelen's assertion that the first papers in response to Gettier's paper also "don't appeal to intuition" (195n3), 'clearly', 'surely', 'see', and other 'intuition'-talk pervades the early literature (see, e.g., Sosa 1964, 1; Saunders and Champawat 1964, 9; Goldman 1967, 366). I lack the space to discuss each example mentioned in the main text.

[33] Sainsbury (1995/2009, 1) suggests that all paradoxes arise from "**appearances** [that] deceive" and goes on to invoke the metaphor of "camouflage", which concerns how a thing *looks* (used noncomparatively).

[34] Cappelen writes: "[Thomson] doesn't think that anything specific or clearly articulable follows…We are supposed to get a sense that *something* has gone wrong, but at this point in the article, exactly *what* has gone wrong is underdetermined. That is settled by a wide range of further complex arguments" (152). This passage points to a further misconception about intuition operative in PWI, namely, that intuitions, or their contents, must be "specific or clearly articulable" and reliance on intuition for positive epistemic status is incompatible with a question's being "settled by a wide range of further complex arguments". Compare perceptual experience: most philosophers of perception maintain that experience, or its content, need not be specific or clearly articulable (as shown, e.g., by Chisholm's famous speckled hen example), and that experience does not always give conclusive reason; this is compatible with relying on experience for positive epistemic status.

> [T]he moment the [lottery] cases are presented, they are *questioned*, they are not *endorsed*, and they give rise to *puzzlement*. (165)

But this is wholly compatible with reliance on intuition for positive epistemic status, in its role as a problematizer; and it is compatible with viewing subsequent reflection and argument as, in part, playing a capturing or explanatory role. The hypothesis that intuition and argument are intended to play such roles receives support from Cohen's text, where he maintains that "a satisfying resolution" to the paradox must identify or explain

> why the paradox arises—…why we have the **intuitions** that saddle us with the paradox. (Quoted in PWI, 167n19)

This is naturally read as suggesting that intuitions generate the paradox, and subsequent reflection and argument seeks to capture which features of lottery cases those intuitions are responsive to (perhaps misleadingly, perhaps not).

It might be objected that we have no reason to take seriously Cohen's 'intuition'-talk in this passage (cf. 167n19), so a reconciliation strategy is simply unmotivated in this case. A similar skepticism might be expressed about the cases I described above as involving friendly interaction or the examples of philosophers' 'intuition'-talk I have quoted at various points above. Now, I myself find it natural to interpret the authors of these particular instances of 'intuition'-terminology as using the expressions in question to denote a kind of mental state or event they rely on for positive epistemic status. And Cappelen's "reinterpretation strategies" do not in my view offer charitable readings of these passages (a few reasons have been indicated at various points above). At the same time, I fully acknowledge that, in general, interpretation of a written instance of 'intuition'-terminology is fated to inconclusiveness (cf. §6.4). While one might seek a neutral procedure for verification, a sensible policy is not to operationalize what cannot be operationalized, and not to reinterpret what does not need reinterpreting. A discriminative use of 'intuition'-talk *removes the need for reinterpretation*; once it is acknowledged, a demand for proof (or additional "diagnostics")—in the case of Cohen's text or any other—becomes like little more than idle skepticism.

I have offered one illustration of a reconciliation strategy and sketched a taxonomy that, I hope, clarifies a few features of the complex activity that is reasoning about thought experiments. The core thought is that intuitions and arguments often interact in friendly ways, and viewing

philosophers as relying on intuitions about cases for positive epistemic status need not, as Cappelen (189-90) implies, conflict with the idea that "Reflection on cases is a hyper-rational, epistemically hyper-demanding context" in which philosophers exercise a "tendency to question everything".

6. Burning On

Let me conclude by placing the foregoing ideas in relation to the two Burning Questions—regarding what intuitions are and whether they have positive epistemic status—that Cappelen considers and rejects in chapter one.

> First, like most other questions in or about philosophy, both questions should be read as employing a non-ordinary, non-technical, *discriminative* use of the relevant term—in this case, 'intuition', possibly anchored in the progressive form of the verb 'intuit'. In particular, I have argued that neither question can be properly understood in the absence of careful attention to (for example) the kinds of distinctions uncovered by Chisholm and Jackson in their seminal work on appear words, and to the features of the progressive form of psychological verbs examined by Urmson and others—work that goes unremarked in PWI.
>
> Second, both questions are prompted by Kripke's *Naming and Necessity* and its subsequent influence on contemporary philosophy. Kripke engages in overt 'intuition'-talk and explicitly endorses a tight connection between intuition and evidence (recall thesis K). The question presses: is he—and are the many he has influenced—right to do so?
>
> Third, both questions are prompted by reflecting, not just on others' texts, but on a familiar element of our own conscious lives. I have tried to point to that element by drawing attention to its absence (at one time) in someone who (at some other time) enjoys it, and subsequently relies on it—its status as "special" or mundane aside. Once it has been pointed out, as such, a philosopher may naturally be led to wonder, from the first-person perspective: what is this element of *my* conscious life, and does it provide *me* with positive epistemic status?

Fourth, both questions are prompted by the use of thought experiments in philosophy. Cappelen is certainly right to reject the widespread assumption that intuitions about philosophical thought experiments have the simple function of confirming or disconfirming a claim or theory by issuing a straightforward and decisive verdict. But the reason we ought to reject this caricature is not that philosophers who work with thought experiments do not rely on intuitions, as Cappelen suggests, but rather that intuitions are far more versatile, playing many more roles, than such caricatures—and PWI—allow.[35] Here again we encounter the Burning Questions: what are these intuitions, and do they have positive epistemic status?

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[35] Moreover, proponents of intuition have long emphasized the importance of *inference* and *dialectic*, in addition to intuition, to philosophical investigation (see, e.g., Descartes' *Regulae*).

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