

The Reality of the Intuitive

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Abstract: According to current methodological orthodoxy philosophers rely on intuitions about thought experiments to refute general claims about the nature of knowledge, freedom, thought, reference, justice, beauty, etc. Philosophers working under the banner of “negative experimental philosophy” have criticized more traditional philosophers for relying on this method. They argue that intuitions about thought experiments are influenced by factors that are irrelevant to the truth of their contents. (Cappelen 2012) and (Deutsch 2015) defend traditional philosophy against this critique by rejecting the picture of philosophical methodology it presupposes: philosophers do not really rely on intuitions. In this paper I defend methodological orthodoxy by arguing that philosophers must rely on intuitions somewhere and that they do in fact often rely on intuitions about thought experiments. I also argue in favor of a reply to the negative experimental critique that is similar to at least part of Deutsch’s own.

According to current methodological orthodoxy philosophers rely on intuitions about thought experiments to refute general claims about the nature of knowledge, freedom, thought, reference, justice, beauty, etc. Here is an illustration.

Process reliabilists about knowledge make the general claim that if one’s true belief that *p* is the result of a reliable belief-forming process then it counts as knowledge. In response Keith Lehrer developed the following thought experiment:

Suppose a person, whom we shall name Mr. Truetemp, undergoes brain surgery by an experimental surgeon who invents a small device which is both a very accurate thermometer and a computational device capable of generating thoughts. The device, call it a tempucomp, is implanted in Truetemp’s head so that the very tip of the device, no larger than the head of a pin, sits unnoticed on his scalp and acts as a sensor to transmit information about the temperature to the computational system of his brain. This device, in turn, sends a message to his brain causing him to think of the temperature recorded by the external sensor. Assume that the tempucomp is very reliable, and so his thoughts are correct temperature thoughts. All told, this is a reliable belief-forming process. Now imagine, finally, that he has no idea that the tempucomp has been inserted in his brain, is only slightly puzzled about why he thinks so obsessively about the temperature, but never checks a thermometer to determine whether these thoughts about the temperature are correct. He accepts them unreflectively, another effect of the tempucomp. Thus, he thinks and accepts that the temperature is 104 degrees. It is. Does he know that it is? (Lehrer 1990, pgs 163 - 164).

Intuitively, the answer is no. Mr. Truetemp is a counterexample to the process reliabilist’s general claim about the nature of knowledge. That is: process reliabilism about knowledge implies that Mr. Truetemp knows that the temperature is 104 degrees, but intuitively he does not, so process reliabilism about knowledge is false. The method works!

Philosophers working under the banner of “negative experimental philosophy” have criticized more traditional philosophers for relying on the method just illustrated. They argue that intuitions about thought experiments--e.g. the intuition that Mr. Truetemp does not know that the temperature is 104 degrees--are influenced by factors--e.g. order of presentation--that are irrel-

evant to the truth of their contents--e.g. the proposition Mr. Truetemp does not know that the temperature is 104 degrees (Swain et al 2008). Max Deutsch's main ambition in *The Myth Of The Intuitive* is to defend philosophical methodology against the criticisms leveled by negative experimental philosophers. But his strategy is not to defend the method of relying on intuitions about thought experiments. Rather, his strategy is to deny that this is really part of philosophical methodology. Current methodological orthodoxy is mistaken--it subscribes to a *myth*.¹

So what about Lehrer's refutation of process reliabilism about knowledge? Deutsch rightly points out that we should distinguish between two things. There is the mental state of intuiting that Mr. Truetemp does not know that the temperature is 104 degrees. And there is the content intuited to the effect that Mr. Truetemp does not know that the temperature is 104 degrees. The mental state is something that you are in after reading Lehrer's description. The content is a proposition inconsistent with process reliabilism about knowledge. According to Deutsch, Lehrer relied on the proposition that Mr. Truetemp does not know that the temperature is 104 degrees in arguing against process reliabilism about knowledge. But Lehrer did *not* rely on the mental state of intuiting that Mr. Truetemp does not know that the temperature is 104 degrees.

More generally Deutsch distinguishes between the following two theses (Deutsch 2015, pg 36):

(EC1) Many philosophical arguments treat the fact that certain contents are intuit[ed] as evidence for those very contents.²

(EC2) Many philosophical arguments treat the contents of certain intuitions as evidence for or against other contents (e.g., the contents of more general principles).

Methodological orthodoxy subscribes to and the negative experimental philosophers' critique of philosophical methodology presupposes (EC1). But, Deutsch argues, (EC1) is false and (EC2) provides a sufficient understanding of what happens in typical uses of thought experiments, such as Lehrer's use of the Mr. Truetemp thought experiment to refute process reliabilism about knowledge.

That is Deutsch's agenda. Here is mine. Though the distinction between (EC1) and (EC2) is a good one, it is not enough to attain clarity on philosophical methodology. What is it to "treat the fact that certain contents are intuited as evidence for those very contents"? Here are two different understandings:

(Premises) Many philosophical arguments treat the fact that certain contents are intuited as premises.

¹ (Cappelen 2012) defends a similar view. I believe many of the points I make in this paper apply to Cappelen's discussion, but I will focus on Deutsch's book and leave the task of making explicit just how they apply for another occasion.

² Deutsch's actual formulation of (EC1) is: Many philosophical arguments treat the fact that certain contents are intuitive as evidence for those very contents. He uses "are intuitive" to mean are intuited. I think the relationship between being intuitive, as this is usually understood, and being intuited is somewhat complicated, but irrelevant to the present discussion, so I will simply replace "are intuitive" with "are intuited" throughout.

(Justifiers) Many philosophical arguments treat certain contents as premises because of the fact that those contents are intuited.

Deutsch rejects both. I accept (Justifiers). I defend it in the first section below. Further, which intuited contents are we really interested in? We can leave this open or we can focus on contents that are verdicts about thought experiments. So we should distinguish between (Justifiers) and the following:

(Verdict Justifiers) Many philosophical arguments treat certain contents that are verdicts about thought experiments as premises because of the fact that those contents are intuited.

(Verdict Justifiers) implies (Justifiers), but (Justifiers) does not imply (Verdict Justifiers). Deutsch is mostly concerned with (Verdict Justifiers). He argues that it is the only plausible target of negative experimental philosophy, since the experiments conducted in that tradition have focused on intuitions about thought experiments (Deutsch 2015, pgs 61, 95). I am more concerned to defend (Justifiers), but in the second section below I will criticize Deutsch's arguments against (Verdict Justifiers). I think they fail for illuminating reasons. Indeed, once we see why they fail then a reply to negative experimental philosophy similar to at least part of Deutsch's own also comes into view. I briefly discuss this in the third section below.

Intuitions As Justifiers

(EC1), the claim that many philosophical arguments treat the fact that certain contents are intuited as evidence for those very contents, is an empirical claim about philosophical methodology. It is a claim about what philosophers actually do. The way to test it, then, is to examine philosophical practice. This is what Deutsch does. He considers two paradigm cases. The first is Gettier's 10 Coins counterexample to the view that knowledge is justified true belief. The second is Kripke's Gödel counterexample to descriptivist theories of names. Here is what he claims to find:

Not once does either say that he is treating the intuit[ed]nes of his counterexample as evidence for the counterexample's truth. In fact, the question of (evidence for) the truth of the counterexamples, to the extent that it occurs to Gettier and Kripke, does not seem to strike them as something that might seriously be disputed. The original presentations rather make it appear as though each argument is simply the rejection of a generalization of the form "All Fs are Gs" on the basis of a counterexample of the form "There is an F that is not a G." So why believe, as perhaps some xphiles do, that the best representation of the arguments' form requires such a premise? (Deutsch 2015, pg 45).

This is one of the major arguments in the book. In this section I give reasons to doubt it has the force Deutsch claims for it.

It will be worth making the structure of Deutsch's argument more explicit. First we have to say what the counterexamples are. According to Deutsch they have the form "There is an F that is not a G." So:

Gettier's Counterexample (GC): There is someone--Smith in the 10 Coins story--who has a justified true belief that p but does not know that p.

Kripke's Counterexample (KC): There is a name and an object--"Gödel" and Schmidt in the Gödel story--such that the object satisfies the definite descriptions users of the name associate with it but the name does not refer to the object.

I'll refer to these propositions as GC and KC from now on. Gettier appeals to GC in an argument against the view that knowledge is justified true belief. Kripke appeals to KC in an argument against the descriptivist theory of names. Deutsch's first premise is an observation about these arguments:

Premise (1): Gettier appeals to GC, but not the proposition that GC is intuited, as a premise in his argument. Kripke appeals to KC, but not the proposition that KC is intuited, as a premise.

One might dispute this first premise. Both Gettier and Kripke do use terms such as "clearly" and "seems" that can plausibly be interpreted as indicating the intuitive grounds of their claims. But even if so I do not think this implies that they are adding claims about those grounds as premises to their argument. And I think Deutsch's reasoning fails in a more interesting way downstream from Premise (1).

Ultimately Deutsch wants to reject (EC1). So his final conclusion is:

Final Conclusion: It is not the case that many philosophical arguments treat the fact that certain contents are intuited as evidence for those very contents.

In the argument quoted, however, Deutsch only states his interim conclusion:

Interim Conclusion: It is not the case that Gettier's and Kripke's arguments treat the fact that GC and KC are intuited as evidence for GC and KC.

In order to get from Premise (1) to the Interim Conclusion and from the Interim Conclusion to the Final Conclusion we need two more premises:

Premise (2) If a philosopher does not invoke the claim that a certain content is intuited as a premise in an argument, then the argument does not treat the fact that that content is intuited as evidence for that very content.

Premise (3) Gettier's and Kripke's arguments are paradigmatic in that one can generalize claims about them to claims about many philosophical arguments.

Premise (2) takes us from Premise (1) to the Interim Conclusion and Premise (3) takes us from the Interim Conclusion to the Final Conclusion. I am not going to dispute Premise (3) here. It is clearly not intended to imply that Gettier's and Kripke's argument are paradigmatic of all philosophical arguments, just many, and in particular the many that are targets of negative experimental critique.

The problem with Deutsch's argument is that Premise (2), the Interim Conclusion, and the Final Conclusion are all ambiguous. I will just focus on Premise (2) and the Final Conclusion, as it is routine to extend the points I make to the Interim Conclusion.

Premise (2) is ambiguous between:

Premise (2a) If a philosopher does not invoke the claim that a certain content is intuited as a premise in an argument, then the argument does not treat the fact that that content is intuited as a premise.

Premise (2b) If a philosopher does not invoke the claim that a certain content is intuited as a premise in an argument, then the argument does not treat that content as a premise because of the fact that it is intuited.

The Final Conclusion is ambiguous between:

(Not-Premises) It is not the case that many philosophical arguments treat the fact that certain contents are intuited as premises.

(Not-Justifiers) It is not the case that many philosophical arguments treat certain contents as premises because of the fact that those contents are intuited.

Premise (2a) is trivial. So if that is what Deutsch has in mind, then Premise (2) is true, but it will only support (Not-Premises). Premise (2b) is false. So if that is what Deutsch has in mind, then Premise (2) is false, and it will not support anything.

To see that Premise (2b) is false consider an empirical analogue:

Empirical Analogue: If a scientist does not invoke the claim that a certain content is observed as a premise in an argument, then the argument does not treat that content as a premise because of the fact that it is observed.

Pretty much every case of a scientist experimentally disconfirming a theory is itself also a disconfirmation of--indeed a counterexample to--Empirical Analogue. If Empirical Analogue is false, then so is Premise (2b). The point is clear: arguments do not always incorporate premises about the evidence for their premises. If they did, they'd never end.

We are in the vicinity of what Deutsch calls the "evidence-for-the-evidence" question. Deutsch imagines the dialectic this way (Deutsch 2015, pg 56). His opponents concede that Gettier appeals to GC not the state of intuiting GC as evidence and that Kripke appeals to KC not the state of intuiting KC as evidence. Then they ask: but how does Gettier know GC and how does Kripke know KC? What is their evidence for the evidence? I think this is misleading. I do not think that Deutsch has shown that Gettier and Kripke fail to appeal to states of intuiting GC or KC as evidence. They just do not mention such states in premises. Nonetheless, if Deutsch's response to the "evidence-for-the-evidence" question were successful, it would have consequences for my discussion. So far I have only argued that Deutsch has not shown that Gettier and Kripke fail to appeal to states of intuiting as evidence. But I have not myself shown that they do. Why do I think they do? Well, if they didn't, then how would they know GC or KC? I'd describe this as the "evidence-for-the-premises" question rather than as the "evidence-for-

the-evidence” question. But that doesn’t really matter. If Deutsch has an answer to one, then he has an answer to the other.

So what is his answer to the question of how Gettier and we know GC and Kripke and we know KC? Here it is:

The answer is instead that further arguments play this role. To stick with the 10 Coins Case, the answer to the question of how we know it is a genuine counterexample is that we know this by assessing arguments for the truth of the claim that it is. If there is a good argument for the conclusion that the 10 Coins Case is a genuine counterexample, then, by knowing the argument, we know its conclusion (Deutsch 2015, pg 57).

The natural next step in the dialectic is obvious. How do we know the premises in those arguments? Deutsch calls this “evidence-for-the-evidence-for-the-evidence” question (Deutsch 2015, 57). So there is a regress worry. For reasons I’ll get into below Deutsch calls it the “relocation problem” and it plagues him throughout the book (Deutsch 2015, pgs 61 - 63, 122 - 127).

It is worth spelling out exactly what the worry is supposed to be. Deutsch doesn’t, and I think this is the reason his treatment of it is so cursory. First, I introduce a few definitions:

One’s belief that p is non-inferentially justified =_{df} one’s belief that p is justified independently of one’s having inferred it from other beliefs

One’s belief that p is inferentially justified =_{df} one’s belief that p is justified because of one’s having inferred it from other beliefs

The reasoning supporting one’s justified belief that p =_{df} a sequence of sets of beliefs such that the first member just contains one’s belief that p, and for every member if that member contains inferentially justified beliefs, then the member after contains all the premise beliefs from which they are inferred.

Second, I spell out a variant on the traditional epistemic regress argument for foundationalism:

- (1) Typical thought experiment beliefs--e.g. GC and KC--are justified.
- (2) If one’s thought experiment belief is justified, then the reasoning supporting it either:
 - (a) terminates in a set containing non-inferentially, intuitively justified beliefs
 - (b) terminates in a set containing just non-inferentially, non-intuitively justified beliefs
 - (c) terminates in a set containing unjustified beliefs
 - (d) goes in a circle by containing a set including the belief itself
 - (e) goes on forever with distinct sets of inferentially justified beliefs
- (3) No justified belief can be the result of reasoning that terminates in a set containing unjustified beliefs.
- (4) No justified belief can be the result of reasoning that goes in a circle by containing a set including the belief itself.
- (5) No justified belief can be the result of reasoning that goes on forever with distinct sets of inferentially justified beliefs.
- (6) Typical thought experiment beliefs are the result of reasoning that terminates in a set containing non-inferentially, intuitively justified beliefs or just non-inferentially, non-intuitively justified beliefs.

- (7) No justified thought experiment belief is the result of reasoning that terminates in a set containing just non-inferentially, non-intuitively justified beliefs.
- (8) So typical thought experiment beliefs are the result of reasoning that terminates in a set containing non-inferentially, intuitively justified beliefs.

Notice that the conclusion of the argument, (8), does not tell us whether thought experiment beliefs themselves are non-inferentially, intuitively justified beliefs or whether they are inferentially justified on the basis of other non-inferentially, intuitively justified belief. So the argument supports (Justifiers). It does not support the more specific claim (Verdict Justifiers).

If (Justifiers) is true, but (Verdict Justifiers) is false, then philosophers do not rely on states of intuiting verdicts about thought experiments even though they do rely on states of intuiting other contents. The role of intuitions in philosophy has been relocated relative to where negative experimental philosophers have assumed it was. This is why Deutsch calls the worry under consideration the “relocation problem.” If I am correct about Deutsch’s argument discussed above, then he also has not shown that philosophers fail to rely on states of intuiting verdicts about thought experiments. So far the issue remains open. But Deutsch gives another argument that, if successful, would refute (Verdict Justifiers). I consider it in the next section.

Before proceeding, however, I want explain why spelling out the regress worry as I have done is worthwhile. Deutsch makes three sorts of reply to it (Deutsch 2015, pgs 61 - 63, 122 - 127). First, he argues that relocating the role of intuitions in philosophy is sufficient to undermine the negative experimental critique. Second, he argues that even if the regress worry shows that there must be non-inferentially justified beliefs, it does not show that they must be justified on the basis of intuition. Third, he argues that the question of whether there must be non-inferentially justified belief is one for general epistemologists not philosophical methodologists. I set the first reply aside. The second two are mistaken.

Once the regress worry is laid out clearly one can just see that it does support concluding that there must be non-inferentially, intuitively justified beliefs and that it is an argument about philosophical knowledge in particular, not knowledge in general. These differences turn on premise (7) and its role in the argument. Suppose foundationalism is true and there are non-inferentially, perceptually justified beliefs. That would not address the regress worry under consideration. The basic idea is that the justification we have for our thought experiment beliefs couldn’t ultimately bottom out in the justification we have by perception. If not intuitions about thought experiments themselves, then we must appeal to intuitions about other philosophical claims. These are typically about the necessary, normative, abstract, and general features of reality. In order to reply to the regress worry Deutsch would have to take up the empiricist project and show how these sorts of claims can be justified on the basis of perception (See Chudnoff 2013 for reasons to doubt the viability of this project).

What about coherentism--denying (4) or the structural presuppositions about reasoning that enable the argument to get off the ground--and infinitism--denying (5)? There is another key feature of the current regress argument: it is about doxastic justification not propositional justification. One might have some justification for believing that *p* and believe that *p* but not believe that *p* on the basis of that justification. This belief that *p* is propositionally justified, but not doxastically justified. Doxastic justification requires both having justification for a belief and basing one’s belief on that justification—e.g. by making an inference. Maybe coherentism and infinitism are workable for propositional justification. But once we consider beliefs we have and the bases on which we have them, these seem like much less workable positions to me, though of course I haven’t said anything conclusive about the matter here.

Intuitions As Verdict Justifiers

In this section I consider another one of Deutsch's main arguments in the book. This one specifically targets (Verdict Justifiers), the claim that many philosophical arguments treat certain contents that are verdicts about thought experiments as premises because of the fact that those contents are intuited. Once again Deutsch argues by first establishing his claim for paradigm philosophical arguments and then generalizing to many--the many that negative experimental philosophers target. He considers quite a few, but I will focus on his discussion of Lehrer's Truetemp argument since I have already quoted a significant portion of Lehrer's text and Deutsch's discussion of Lehrer is itself paradigmatic of his discussion of other philosophical arguments.

Let's put Lehrer's thought experiment belief in the same form as we put Gettier's and Kripke's:

Lehrer's Counterexample (LC): There is someone--Mr. Truetemp in the tempucomp story--who has a reliably formed true belief that does not amount to knowledge.

According to methodological orthodoxy Lehrer and we know LC because it is the content of an intuition. According to Deutsch this isn't so. The reason he gives is that Lehrer goes on to argue for LC. Here is part of the relevant passage he quotes:

He [Mr. Truetemp] has no idea whether he or his thoughts about temperature are reliable. What he accepts, that the temperature is 104 degrees, is correct but he does not know that his thought is correct...He has no idea why the thought occurred to him or that such thoughts are almost always correct. He does not, consequently, know that the temperature is 104 degrees when that thought occurs to him....(Lehrer 1990, pg 187).

In this passage Lehrer at least motivates LC. According to Deutsch the motivation takes the form of *reasoning* in favor of LC, the main reason being that, "he [Mr. Truetemp] has no idea why the thought [that the temperature is 104 degrees] occurred to him or that such thoughts are almost always correct" (Deutsch 2015, pg 112). Deutsch concedes that Lehrer and we might intuit LC, but he thinks the presence of Lehrer's motivating discussion shows that it is reasoning rather than the state of intuiting that constitutes our evidence or justification for believing LC.

Here is how we might render Deutsch's argument against (Verdict Justifiers):

- (1) Lehrer's motivating discussion in favor of LC constitutes a bit of reasoning supporting belief in LC.
- (2) If Lehrer gives reasons for believing LC, then Lehrer is not treating LC as a premise in his argument because of the fact that he intuits LC.
- (3) So Lehrer is not treating LC as a premise in his argument because of the fact that he intuits LC.
- (4) Lehrer's argument is paradigmatic in that one can generalize claims about it to claims about many philosophical arguments.
- (5) It is not the case that many philosophical arguments treat certain contents that are verdicts about thought experiments as premises because of the fact that those contents are intuited.

The conclusion, (5), is the negation of (Verdict Justifiers). Let's concede (4); it seems plausible enough. (3) follows from (1) and (2). Those are the main premises in the argument. (1) is an interpretation of Lehrer's text. According to it Lehrer reasons in favor of LC. Reasoning here should be interpreted according to the definition given above: a bit of reasoning supporting a belief is an inferential justification for that belief. (2) leaves open that Lehrer does intuit LC, but it rules out the view that it is because of this intuition that he treats LC as a premise. The intuition is epistemically idle.

One might challenge (2). One might argue that Lehrer's treatment of LC as a premise is epistemically overdetermined: he has the reasoning and he has the intuition. But I am going to set this sort of challenge aside. In my view premise (1) is false. It is a mistaken interpretation of Lehrer's text. Not all motivations for a claim constitute reasoning in favor of that claim. And Lehrer's does not. One sign of this is that if Lehrer were giving an inferential justification for believing LC it wouldn't be a good one. Deutsch recognizes this and writes, "the question is not whether Lehrer's arguments for his judgment about the case are good arguments" (Deutsch 2015, 113). But when it comes to interpreting someone of course that question is relevant. Why would Lehrer give an obviously bad argument? If we find ourselves attributing one to him, charity requires us to step back and ask what else might be going on.

Consider the following three scenarios.

[Gestalt Shift] I show you the following picture:



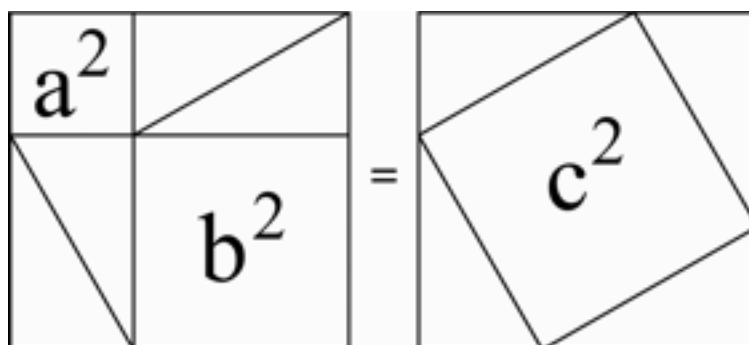
I claim that you can see both a young woman and an old woman in it. You say you just see the old woman. So I say: the old woman's nose is the young woman's jaw line and the old woman's mouth is a necklace on the young woman, etc. This helps you to see the young woman.

[Turner's Temeraire] We are in the National Gallery looking at Turner's painting *The Fighting Temeraire*. I say the painting evokes profound pathos for the ship. You say you just don't see it. Then I quote Ruskin:

The painting of the "Téméraire" was received with a general feeling of sympathy. No abusive voice, as far as I remember, was ever raised against it. And the feeling was just; for of all pictures of subjects not visibly involving human pain, this is, I believe, the most pathetic that was ever painted. The utmost pensiveness which can ordinarily be given to a landscape depends on adjuncts of ruin: but no ruin was ever so affecting as this gliding of the vessel to her grave. A ruin cannot be, for whatever memories may be connected with it, and whatever witness it may have borne to the courage or the glory of men, it never seems to have offered itself to their danger, and associated itself with their acts, as a ship of battle can. The mere facts of motion, and obedience to human guidance, double the interest of the vessel: nor less her organized perfectness, giving her the look, and partly the character of a living creature, that may indeed be maimed in limb, or decrepit in frame, but must either live or die, and cannot be added to nor diminished from heaped up and dragged down as a building can. And this particular ship, crowned in the Trafalgar hour of trial with chief victory prevailing over the fatal vessel that had given Nelson death surely, if ever anything without a soul deserved honour or affection, we owed them here. Those sails that strained so full bent into the battle that broad bow that struck the surf aside, enlarging silently in steadfast haste, full front to the shot resistless and without reply those triple ports whose choirs of flame rang forth in their courses, into the fierce revenging monotone, which, when it died away, left no answering voice to rise any more upon the sea against the strength of England those sides that were wet with the long runlets of English life-blood, like press-planks at vintage, gleaming goodly crimson down to the cast and clash of the washing foam those pale masts that stayed themselves up against the war-ruin, shaking out their ensigns through the thunder, till sail and ensign drooped steep in the death-stilled pause of Andalusian air, burning with its witness-cloud of human souls at rest, surely, for these some sacred care might have been left in our thoughts some quiet space amidst the lapse of English waters? (Cook & Wedderburn 1903)

This helps you to see the pathos in the painting.

[The Pythagorean Theorem] I say that the following is a visual proof of the Pythagorean Theorem:



You say you just don't see it. So I say that the big squares are obviously equal and $a^2 + b^2$ is the big square minus the four little triangles, as is c^2 . This helps you to see the visual proof.

In none of these cases have I given, or quoted, good arguments for the claims I make-- that you can see a young woman in the picture, that Turner's painting evokes profound pathos for the Temeraire, that the diagram is a visual proof of the Pythagorean Theorem. Instead I said, or quoted, things that helped you to see these truths for yourself. This is very clear in the first case. The whole point is to get you to see the young woman. I think this is also plausible in the second case. Ruskin speaks with authority. You might just concede the point by yielding to his authority. But I do not think that is his ambition in the text. What he wants to do is get you to see what he sees in Turner's painting. Arguably that is just what art criticism is for.³ The last case is the most difficult for my view since one could expand what I say into a cogent argument. Here I think one must rely on first person reflection. There is a difference between being convinced by reasoning and being convinced by seeing something for yourself. I think the visual proof has that striking quality associated with seeing something for yourself.⁴

What I want to suggest here is that Lehrer's text should be interpreted along the lines of [Gestalt Shift], [Turner's Temeraire], and [The Pythagorean Theorem].⁵ He does not just describe Mr. Truetemp, state his verdict about the case, and leave it at that. He says some additional stuff. The stuff doesn't constitute a good argument for his verdict however. Rather, it helps us to see what he sees about Mr. Truetemp. That is, it helps us to have the intuition Lehrer has. Just as with Ruskin, one could accept the verdict on Lehrer's authority. And perhaps as with the Pythagorean Theorem, one could accept the verdict on the basis of an argument--though in this case it would be a bad one. But neither captures the real epistemic situation. We do not rely on Lehrer's authority. And we do not have weak justification from a bad argument for believing Lehrer's verdict. Rather, we have strong justification deriving from an intuition that allows us to see the truth of Lehrer's verdict for ourselves. Premise (1) in Deutsch's argument is false.

Negative Experimental Philosophy

Deutsch represents the negative experimental critique of traditional philosophy as follows (Deutsch 2015, pg 19):

- (1) An argument in analytic philosophy, call it argument A, treats what is true in a thought experiment or hypothetical case as a premise and treats intuitions about this putative premise, p, as essential evidence for p's truth.
- (2) However, intuitions about p display truth-irrelevant variability.
- (3) Hence, we are entitled neither to p, nor, consequently, to taking argument A as a sound argument for A's conclusion.

Deutsch's reply to this argument is to deny step (1). I've been criticizing his grounds for denying step (1). I think that philosophers must and do base many of their philosophical beliefs on intuitions. But I am not particularly moved by the negative experimental critique of this practice. One of my reasons is close to something else Deutsch says.

³ See (Sibley 1959, 1965) for illuminating discussions of this conception of art criticism.

⁴ See (Chudnoff 2013) for more discussion on this point. There I give many examples of intuitions being motivated by rather than displaced by considerations. See also (Koksvik 2013).

⁵ In (Bengson 2014)'s helpful terminology I am suggesting that Lehrer's discussion plays a guiding role in relation to intuition.

With respect to step (3) in the negative experimental critique Deutsch later writes (Deutsch 2015, pg 143):

But the question is: how is the discovered diversity in judgment supposed to show this? If all there were to say in defense of a judgement about a case is that it is intuitive, or intuitive to the experts, then diversity in judgments about a case along truth-irrelevant lines would be a big problem...But if a judgment about a case is made for reasons, if the judgment can be given argumentative support, then why should diversity in judgments about the case, when those reasons and that support is not clearly in play, or registered by the judges, matter in the slightest?

Consider the following variant on the last sentence:

But if a judgment about a case is motivated, if the judgment can be motivated by various considerations, then why should diversity in judgments about the case, when those considerations and that motivation is not clearly in play, or registered by the judges, matter in the slightest?

Deutsch's picture is that judgments about cases are based on reasons. My picture is that judgments about cases are based on intuitions, where those intuitions are often motivated by considerations--e.g. considerations that draw comparisons with other cases, that point toward certain details, that elaborate on the implications of saying one thing rather than another about the case, etc. The two pictures provide frameworks for replies to negative experimental philosophy that are similar. According to Deutsch the negative experimental critique is blunted by the fact that its proponents fail to account for the reasons philosophers give for their judgments about cases. According to me the negative experimental critique is blunted by the fact that its proponents fail to account for the motivations philosophers give for their intuitions about cases. So, though I think my picture does a better job at portraying the epistemology of philosophy, Deutsch and I are not so far apart in our views about the distortions of philosophical method that lend credibility to experimental critiques of that method.

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