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ARTICLE

Thomas Reid on Signs and Language

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Abstract

Thomas Reid's philosophy of mind, epistemology, and philosophy of language all rely on his account of signs and signification. On Reid's view, some entities play a role of indicating other entities to our minds. In some cases, our sensitivity to this indication is learned through experience, whereas in others, the sensitivity is built in to our natural constitutions. Unlike representation, which was presumed to depend on resemblances and necessary connections, signification is the sort of relationship that can occur without any intrinsic ties between the sign and the thing signified. Of particular interest is the priority Reid gives to *natural* signs (in contrast with *artificial* signs, that is, those signs instituted by humans). Reid deploys his robust account of natural signs in a way that allows him to sidestep some skeptical worries common in the early modern period, as well as in grounding "artificial" human languages like English or Cantonese on a more basic human capacity for communication, that is, itself, the result of our sensitivity to natural signs of other people's minds.

INTRODUCTION

Although philosophical discussion of signs is not at all uncommon among early modern figures, Thomas Reid's account of signs and signification plays a relatively more prominent role in his philosophy than can be said for many of his contemporaries, especially the views he presents in his *Inquiry into the Human Mind on the Principles of Common Sense* (IHM).[1] For our purposes, it will be helpful to think of signs as, roughly, indicators of other things, that is, entities where being aware of them leads (or can lead) you to think about, or believe in, some other entity. Although he also treats signs in connection with language and communication, The decision to deeply integrate signs into his philosophy of mind and epistemology allows Reid to offer an account of the human mind that is able to address the skeptical worries that emerged from works by, for example, Berkeley and Hume and that plague the views of virtually all modern philosophers.

Understanding the role signs play in Reid's thinking is crucial for developing a sophisticated understanding of how Reid views the workings of the mind, epistemology, and our capacity for communication. With respect to epistemology, Reid regards signs as integral to the way we acquire knowledge. With respect to philosophy of mind, Reid's views on signs help to explain how we are able to even possess thoughts about a variety of extra-mental objects and qualities that we would otherwise be unable to conceive of. And with respect to language, Reid views human languages as systems of artificial signs, which means that his views on signs provide us with the framework for understanding his

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treatment of speech and communication. Reid divides signs into two major types: natural and artificial. Natural signs are those entities that signify independent of any human conventions, whereas artificial signs all rely on human actions/volitions for their status as signs.[2]

Reid's Divisions of Natural Signs

Despite their key role in his work, Reid does not provide us with his own definition of "sign" or "signification". However, he does provide two necessary conditions on how we can gain knowledge from signs:

> *First, That a real connection between the sign and the thing signified be established, either by the course of nature, or by the will and appointment of men.[…]Another requisite to our knowing things by signs is, that the appearance of the sign to the mind, be followed by the conception and belief of the thing signified. Without this the sign is not understood and interpreted; and is therefore no sign to us, however fit in its own nature for that purpose. IHM 6.21 p. 177*

According to Reid, for us to gain knowledge by signs, there has to be a real connection between the sign and the thing signified, and we have to have a sensitivity to the sign that leads us to conceive of/believe in the thing signified. In the next section, we'll examine the nature of that sensitivity more closely, as the details of how we transition from a sign to thoughts of the things signified play an important role in understanding Reid's epistemology.

How should we understand this requirement of a real connection? It must be read as a rather weak condition. Reid is clear that signs (whether artificial or natural) do not require similarity with the things they signify nor is any evidence required of a necessary connection between the sign and the thing signified (cf. IHM V.3 p. 58–59). So we have to understand the connection as one like that between the word "gold" and an idea of gold, which is surely not something like a metaphysically or epistemically necessary connection. The sort of connection required for natural signs is something closer to routine co-occurrence, rather than anything like causation or an intrinsic relation of resemblance.

This feature is important because it illustrates a key difference between signification and representation (at least, as the latter was understood in the early modern period). Although representing was taken to require similarity or likeness between the representation and the thing represented, signifying had no such restriction. This makes sense, as the category signification includes arbitrary human signs (like the word "gold", or the system of red, yellow, and green lights used to signal instructions to drivers), which obviously do not require similarity, likeness, or necessary connections.

Our focus here is on natural signs, which Reid divides into three types.[3] There is no succinct schema for naming these types of natural signs that captures all and only their distinguishing features. I will call the first class "experiential signs", the second class "instinctual" signs, and the third class "magical" signs. As we will see, the term "instinctual" could apply in some sense to the third class, and despite the fact that Reid himself invokes the term "magic", one should not take these signs any less seriously than the other two classes:

> *The first class of natural signs comprehends those whose connection to the thing signified is established by nature, but discovered only by experience. IHM V.3 p. 59–60*

Experiential signs would include smoke as a sign of fire or certain clouds as signs of rain. In these cases, the sign is connected to the thing signified in a manner independent of human minds, and we must acquire a sensitivity to the signification through experience of the repeated conjunction of the sign and the thing signified. Reid describes experiential signs as comprising the whole of genuine philosophy (including the sciences). The goal of science and philosophy is to discover as many of these connections as we can and to determine the most general account of them.

> *A second class is that wherein the connection between the sign and the thing signified, is not only established by nature, but discovered to us by a natural principle, without reasoning or experience.IHM V.3 p. 59–60*

Instinctual signs include things such as facial expressions, tones of voice, and laughter. Reid terms these sorts of signs "the natural language of mankind", and they play a special role in his treatment of language. The basic idea here is that even an infant is sensitive to the connection between a smile and happiness, a frown and sadness, and the like. Unlike the experiential signs, our sensitivity to these signs is instinctual or innate. Note, however, that the things signified by these natural signs are a category of phenomena that we already have cognitive access to. Seeing a smile can lead me to conceive of happiness, but I was already able to conceive of happiness, having experienced it myself. Reid notes, however, that if we did not have this sensitivity inborn, we would not be able to acquire it. According to Reid, if we did not have an innate sensitivity to these signals of mental activities and emotions, we could not come to discover the connection.[4] Although I can already think about happiness, without this innate sensitivity, I would not be in a position to observe a correlation between your smile and any emotions you are experiencing, because I have no way to observe your emotions so as to notice the correlation.[5]

> *A third class of natural signs comprehends those which, though we never before had any notion or conception of the things signified, do suggest it, or conjure it up, as it were, by a natural kind of magic, and at once give us a conception, and create a belief of it. IHM V.3 p. 59–60*

Reid's paradigm cases of magical signs are (a) one's own sensations as signs of an enduring immaterial substance who is the subject of those sensations and (b) sensations of hardness (or other primary qualities) as signs of the quality of hardness (or other primary qualities). The key feature of this class of signs is that the things signified by them are things that we are otherwise unable to conceive of.[6] Note the contrast here with instinctual signs: I can't detect Sue's particular joy without her smile and my instinctual transition from seeing the smile to thinking of that joy, but it was not as if joy itself was otherwise beyond my ken. In fact, I could even conceive of the precise claim that Sue is experiencing joy, without the involvement of instinctual signs; I would simply lack any basis for judging it to be so. On the other hand, without magical signs of the self or of hardness, Reid thinks we would be unable to conceive of the self or the physical quality of hardness.[7] Magical signs genuinely expand our range of cognition, rather than simply adding to the particular facts and connections we can learn about in the world.

Signs in Reid's Epistemology and Philosophy of Mind

Whether or not this is how Berkeley and Hume would have wanted to be interpreted, they are seen as presenting two sorts of skeptical worries for putatively commonplace beliefs about the external, material world: one set were challenges to the rationality of believing in such a world, the other were challenges to the possibility of actually believing in (or even conceiving of) such a world.[8,9] To understand what Reid's account of signs is doing in his philosophy, it is helpful to look at how his account of signs enables him to address or sidestep these worries.

Reid's account of signs provides him with answers to both challenges. Although it is unlikely that Berkeley or Hume would find these answers compelling, if our goal is to understand Reid's system, seeing why he is satisfied with these answers is instructive.

These challenges assume that our epistemic starting point is knowledge or awareness of our own sensory states. The challenge to the realist about an external world, then, is against any proposal of how we might infer our way outside the boundaries of our own minds. No such inference will look to be rationally grounded. Crucially, Reid agrees that it is futile to try to ground a belief in the external world on some inference from a belief about one's mental life. Reid rejects the background assumption that our starting point is a belief about our own mental life, even though he accepts that sensations are psychologically prior to our belief in the external world.

Reid tells us that there are "three ways in which the mind passes from the appearance of a natural sign to the belief of the thing signified; by original principles of our constitution, by custom, and by reasoning" (IHM 6.21, p. 177). Note that reasoning is only one of three ways in which our minds can make this transition. Although Reid accepts that the mind transitions from the sensation to the belief in the external world, what he crucially denies is that this transition is an *inference* or dependent on *reasoning*. Rather, we are constituted so as to respond to sensations as a

sign of something in the world, which means that the sensation prompts us to noninferentially conceive of, and believe in, some extra-mental quality or object. Although psychologically mediated by the sensation, the belief in question is not epistemically mediated at all.[10] In fact, Reid explicitly recognizes the possibility that we could have been so constituted as to have these perceptions *without* the intermediary of sensations:

> *We might perhaps have been made of such a constitution as to have our present perceptions connected with other sensations. We might perhaps have had the perception of external objects, without either impressions upon the organs of sense, or sensations. Or lastly, The perceptions we have, might have been immediately connected with the impressions upon our organs, without any intervention of sensations. IHM, 6.21, p. 176*

Although humans are creatures whose perceptions are causally dependent on sensations, the perceptions themselves are only incidentally related to sensations.

Importantly, here, Reid has carved out a view on which we have beliefs about the external world that are not products of inference but are themselves epistemic starting points. This inference-free story applies to both instinctual signs and magical signs. So we need not ascribe to babies the robust use of reason in their formation of beliefs about emotions of others; they are simply built in such a way that seeing a smile triggers certain judgments in them.

I do not have the space here to get into the full details of Reid's epistemological story, but the noninferential status of these judgments is integral to Reid's account of why these judgments are reasonable or rational or justified.[11] Because these judgments are not the product of inference, there is no reason for him to try to defend the rationality of inferring an external world from our awareness of our own inner life. Thus, while still recognizing that our sensations are intimately involved in the production of such beliefs, Reid has no obligation to explain how we can infer an external world as a rational consequence of our sensations. This is part of what makes Reid's views markedly different from the position Descartes advances in, for example, the *Meditations on First Philosophy*.

The second sort of challenge is, in some ways, more pressing, and the way Reid's account of signs allows him to avoid it is revealing about his philosophy of mind. Now is a good time to bring in a distinction in some late scholastic theories of signification, highlighted by Walter Ott (2003):

> *I shall call an indicative* sign any sign whose significant is of necessity unavailable to perception, and which serves as an indication of that significate. I depart from the Hellenistic tradition in leaving open the question of necessary connection. A *reminiscent* sign is one whose presence conveys the mind by a causal process to something else which has been experienced in conjunction with that sign. p. 19

Q3 Ott goes on to explain that reminiscent signs require some previous exposure to the constant conjunction and indicative signs, for obvious reasons, have no such requirement. Note that Ott's distinction does not neatly cleave Reid's account of signs. For although it would clearly classify experiential signs as reminiscent, and clearly classify magical signs as indicative, instinctual signs are hard to situate on this distinction. On the quoted definition, instinctual signs would be reminiscent, because emotions are not, of necessity, unavailable to experience.[12] On the other hand, when it comes to the requirement for observed conjunctions, instinctual signs would be grouped more naturally with magical signs as indicative, rather than reminiscent.

To really understand how instinctual signs for Reid should be classified on this division, we would need to know how such signs would operate in the following case: suppose an infant has only ever experienced joy and happiness and has not yet experienced any sadness or anger. That infant then sees a frowning face. Would this frown be a sign, for that infant, of sadness or anger? If so, then instinctual signs look to be genuinely expansionary in a sense. The baby who lacks their own prior thoughts of sadness can still be led to think of sadness by way of the sign. If, on the other hand, the baby cannot interpret the frown without prior experience of sadness, then instinctual signs look more like experiential signs with an innate sensitivity. I don't know of any place where Reid addresses a case like this, and I suspect that Reid would be happy to defer to evidence (if any exists) about how such a case would play out. Because

most babies experience a decent range of emotions fairly early on, either approach will be practically adequate for the role that Reid needs these signs to play, and I can see no deep reason for Reid to prefer one option to the other.

For present purposes, it is helpful to think about this distinction in accord with the quoted definition, where only magical signs fall under the heading of "indicative signs". Indicative signs are interesting principally because they are not merely a means of connecting thoughts of which we were already capable or leading us to make judgments we would not otherwise make, but because they lead us to thoughts and judgments we would otherwise be incapable of making. They represent a genuine expansion of what thoughts are even possible for us.

This is the mechanism by which Reid can respond to the second sort of challenge. It is only part of his response, but it is a deeply important part of his response. The challenge notes that our sensory ideas are inadequate to represent putative external objects like material substances and qualities. If all the signs we had access to were reminiscent signs, this would be a real problem for a sign-based response to the worry. We could only ever think about sensations and mental qualities, regardless of which reminiscent signs we were sensitive to. If our perception of the external world did not involve sensations, we wouldn't be saddled with this sort of worry, but we are clearly sensory beings and so we need to address it somehow.[13] In order to side-step this way of getting tangled up in a veil of perception, our sensations have to be signs of things we cannot think about otherwise. And that means we need indicative signs: our sensations need to trigger in us thoughts that are about material substances or qualities. We've already seen a sketch of how Reid avoids worries that inferences from sensation to material qualities would be irrational. But here, we see how Reid tackles the concern that we are simply unable to think about material qualities. The key components of Reid's position are (a) thoughts about material objects are not (even partly) constituted by sensations, (b) sensations are signs that trigger in us thoughts/beliefs that are directed at material qualities, and (c) as discussed above, that trigger is not inferential.

I will not further discuss (c), but it is worth saying a bit more about (a) and (b). The challenge in question presupposes that we must use sensory ideas to represent external objects and qualities, which would require (at least, according to the early modern orthodoxy) that sensory ideas have some likeness or resemblance to the external qualities they represent. Instead of trying to find some weakened likeness (such as the appeal to structural parallels or patterns, instead of qualitative resemblance), Reid's approach is to concede that sensations are not fit to *represent* external objects and qualities. Instead, we have been given a constitution, as sensory perceivers, which means that certain sensations cause us to be in a mental state that is itself nonsensory, and which is a conception of and belief in, some external object/quality.

This account naturally prompts two questions. First, why should we think that sensations are indicative signs of this sort? Second, what does it mean to have a thought about these external qualities that is not even partly constituted by sensation? I will not have anything instructive to say about the first question here. The case for Reid's positive position is both involved and complex and requires us to appreciate a host of objections he offers to alternatives, in addition to various details about his method and approach. Suffice it to say that the short answer to the first question is that it best accounts for the apparent fact that we *do* have beliefs about an external world, given the accepted strictures on representation and the obvious fact of sensory involvement in the psychological production of perception.

We can say a bit more about the second question. There is a model of thought that is natural and appealing, and which underwrites the second question. On that model, we can understand any given thought or mental activity in terms of an underlying mental state. The mind in question has some set of internal or intrinsic features and those features join together like the elements of a painting to depict something (which may or may not exist) external to the mind. But in a sense, if you were to circumscribe that mind, and transport it away from any material world, the underlying mental state would remain, just as a painting can be moved around. The state is internal to the mind. Even a mental state directed at external qualities is still itself a painting inside the mind. Reid wholeheartedly rejects this account of thought and mental activity as mental *states*. Instead, mental activities are fundamentally understood as mental *relations*. There is no state wholly internal to the mind that can be circled and identified as your thought of the hardness of a table. That thought is really a relation between you and the hardness of the table. So for Reid, the sensory

feeling associated with hardness causes you to enter into this relation, but will play no part in the relation itself.[14] This is part of why Reid can acknowledge the possibility of God constructing humans so as to bypass sensation entirely and perceive tables solely in consequence of the physical impression on the nerves. So this means we need to discard the account of thought as akin to a mental painting, if we want to understand Reid's views.

Reid on Language

Reid's views on language are not systematically presented in his works.[15] Although there are many interesting aspects of his thinking about language, our focus will be Reid's argument that artificial languages (such as English, Farsi, or Cantonese) are only possible because of the existence of natural human language (e.g., an innate significance for facial expressions, tone of voice, etc.).[16] Reid lays out this division nicely in the *Inquiry*:

> *By language I understand all those signs which mankind use in order to communicate to others their thoughts and intentions, their purposes and desires. And such signs may be conceived to be of two kinds: First, such as have no meaning but what is affixed to them by compact or agreement among those who use them; these are artificial signs: Secondly, such as, previous to all compact or agreement, have a meaning which every man understands by the principles of his nature. Language, so far as it consists of artificial signs, may be called artificial*; so far as it consists of natural signs, I call it *natural*. IHM 4.2, p. 51

The "natural" language discussed by Reid here is a clear reference to his category of instinctual signs. And Reid's advocacy of these signs would be interesting in and of itself; the signs help explain, on Reid's system, how even infants can detect and respond to the emotional expressions of adults, something that would be harder to account for on simulationist accounts of our awareness of the emotional states of others, for example.[17] But more interesting than merely maintaining the existence of such signs is Reid's argument (immediately following the above passage) that this natural language of mankind is essential to the development of artificial languages:

> *Having premised these definitions, I think it is demonstrable, that if mankind had not a natural language, they could never have invented an artificial one by their reason and ingenuity. For all artificial language supposes some compact or agreement to affix a certain meaning to certain signs; therefore there must be compacts or agreements before the use of artificial signs; but there can be no compact or agreement without signs, nor without language; and therefore there must be a natural language before any artificial language can be invented: Which was to be demonstrated. IHM 4.2, p. 51*

It is easy to view Reid's target here as Locke. Locke's account of language begins with individuals developing their own articulate idiolects, routinely using particular terms as signs of particular thoughts.[18] Locke's story makes no reference to the involvement of a pre-existing system of signs that could be used by groups of speakers to coordinate on public meanings for their terms. Rather, Locke suggests that, because the goal of using language in this way is communication, there will be pressure on individuals to aim for common usage of terms, in service of that goal.

Reid's argument here suggests that there is something crucial missing from that proposed Lockean process of coordinating our meanings. Reid maintains that, absent a system of natural language, relying only on this unaided attempt to coordinate, "we should find whole nations as mute as the brutes" (IHM 4.2, p. 51). In fact, Reid suggests, this claim is unfair to the brutes, who appear to have their own natural languages.

Here is how Reid's demonstration seems to proceed:

1. Compacts/agreements are a prerequisite for the existence of artificial language
2. Communication is a prerequisite for compacts/agreements.
3. Language is a prerequisite for communication.

4. All languages are either natural or artificial.
5. So if artificial language exists, there must be some prior natural language.

I've spread Reid's two step argument across premises (1)–(3) in my presentation, in order to explicitly bring in the background considerations about communication being required for us to make compacts or form agreements, and I have added premise (4) in order to ensure that the argument really secures the existence of *natural* language, rather than merely some nonartificial language.

Although one might be suspicious of premise (3) as too strong of a claim, I think that it is relatively plausible given the sorts of things that will fall under the heading of "language" for Reid. Although it is not likely that spoken language is a prerequisite for communication, it is plausible that communication requires us to be able to take the behaviors of others as signs of what they are thinking or how they are feeling, if we are to have anything meriting the term "communication". So, instead, I think the most natural point of concern about this argument is premise (1). Note that this premise requires us to make compacts or form agreements, rather than merely to coordinate our usage. For a Lockean, the public language is a byproduct of individuals attempting to coordinate their own individual usage of terms in order to successfully communicate. If I think other people are using the word "tree" to express a certain idea (different from what I use the term to express), I will modify my use of the term to conform, because my goal in speaking is to convey to others my state of mind. Artificial languages then would be the result of our widespread attempts at coordination, not the result of compact or agreement.

This is not a sufficient line of response to Reid's position, however. Because this line of response takes for granted that I can detect what is signified by other people's use of artificial signs. But it is not clear that this situation could come about without some prior avenue of communication. Imagine two individuals who share no artificial language, attempting to cooperate in some endeavor. The first desires that the second hand her some object and so uses her term for that object. Obviously, this would be insufficient to communicate her desire. She might supplement this with pointing, but what would actually confirm for the second that she had understood would be to see the first nod or smile upon being handed the object.[19] Although one might not offer Reid's precise story about how this sort of communication transpires, we do need some explanation of how one person could be in a position to understand what other people mean when they use words, if we think they actually coordinate around that usage.

I will close this discussion with a case that raises some potential difficulties for Reid. Suppose there is an intelligent alien race, whose facial expressions and tones of voice are radically different from those of humankind. And suppose further that we are not so constituted to respond to their facial expressions or tones of voice as signs of their mental lives. We can tell that they are an intelligent species because they build spaceships and engage in complex behaviors. Could we come to learn their language or develop a common language for communicating with them? It seems plausible to me that we would be able to. But it also seems that we do not have a natural language in common with them, and thus, Reid would have to say that we could not accomplish this. Reid could either bite this bullet (if one views it as a bullet) or could appeal to some broader more basic natural language; one by which we can interpret some behaviors of intelligent beings in general, rather than specifically human behaviors. That is, Reid could maintain that we have some (very sparse) natural language in common with any intelligent beings. I have some worries that this line of reply might diminish the "natural language" requirement so much as to make it relatively trivial. I will not attempt to adjudicate the issue here, though I do think that the question of the possibility of communicating with a truly alien species bears on Reid's claim.[20]

CONCLUSION

I want to close by noting an important interplay among these types of signs. I have thus far avoided explicitly addressing whether smoke is a sign of fire, or whether it is more proper to say, for instance, that the visual sensation of smoke is a sign of the visual sensation of fire. Thus far, I have simply gone with the object-driven rather than sense-driven

descriptions and implicitly sided with the former. Now, we are in a position to clarify why that is an appropriate way to understand Reid's views, rather than a simplifying shorthand. Given that we have magical signs, which allow us to think about the world and its qualities, there is no reason why our experiential signs should be understood in terms of sensation-correlation. There will be sensory correlations, of course, but because the relevant scientific investigations are about fire and its qualities–rather than being about the sensations in us prompted by fire–the sign relations we will be working towards will be about external objects. This is enabled by the magical signs; they make external qualities and objects available as objects of thought, which we can then reason about. We do not need to try to reconstruct durable external objects and qualities from complex counterfactuals about people's sensations, on Reid's views, because we are not constructed to confuse the internal for the external. Similarly, it can be a facial expression itself that is the sign of an emotion, rather than the sensation of seeing that facial expression. So it is important to be sensitive to how much of Reid's thinking about signs is shaped by the underlying expansion of thought made possible through magical signs.

Reid is perhaps best known for his rejection of the early modern paradigm of "the way of ideas", and our understanding of Reid's positive position–which is an integral part of his case against that paradigm–depends on our understanding the role that signs play in his philosophy. Reid presents an account on which our sensations lead us to think (directly) about the external world, on which many of the judgments we form from signs are not the products of inference (and thus, need not be rationalized or justified), and on which we are naturally equipped for elementary communication with others. The three key elements of Reid's use of signs are (a) that judgments formed from signs need not be inferences (and thus, there is no call to justify an inference to the thing signified on the basis of the sign), (b) that we can be so constituted that sensations are signs of external objects and qualities, and (c) that our basic instinctual recognition of signs of the minds of others enables us to develop more robust forms of communication. Although other modern figures incorporate some views about signs into their views, Reid's account of signs is striking in the degree to which they are deeply integrated throughout his philosophy of mind, epistemology, and philosophy of language.

ENDNOTES

[1] Many commentators have drawn special attention to Reid's views on signs, including particularly Henle (1983), Jacquette (2003), and Todd (1987).

[2] While the focus in this paper is limited to the role of signs in epistemology, mind and language, it is worth noting that signs play an important role for Reid in other areas of his philosophy as well. In particular, see Kroeker (2009) for discussion of the role of signs in Reid's aesthetics and moral philosophy.

[3] Ryan Nichols (2007) gives a much more nuanced and careful look at Reid's sub-categorization of natural signs. See in particular chapter 3, section 5. Note that I adopt some, but not all of his terminological conventions here.

[4] A referee helpfully points out that we need to be careful with how we understand this claim, as one could presumably learn these connections from sources like testimony.

[5] It may be possible to circumvent this worry, as someone in this situation could monitor their own facial expressions and tone of voice when actuated by an emotion, and discover the connection that way, but even if so, Reid's account correctly captures the fact that this is not how most of us come to be aware of the mental lives of other people.

[6] There is a sense in which one might still be able to conceive of the things in question. That is as a relative conception, e.g. *the thing, whatever it is, that causes this sensation.* Reid's position is that we in fact have non-relative conceptions of those things, and magical signs play a crucial role in how we come to have those conceptions.

[7] This claim should be understood with an important qualification: God could have made humans so as to be able to entertain such thoughts without reliance on those signs; but given our actual natures, these signs are essential to our ability to entertain such thoughts.

[8] This distinction is similar to one drawn in Greco (2004), between two sorts of skeptical arguments Reid sees as empiricist commitments. See that article also for a more extensive discussion of Reid's reply to the skeptic.

[9] Both philosophers would have rejected this as a description of their position: While Berkeley maintained the material world was inconceivable and thus to be rejected, he did not view this position as being the least bit skeptical, and Hume's ultimate position, while difficult to pin down, seems to suggest that we are incapable of genuinely embracing the sort of skepticism alluded to here. It is not possible to adequately cite the breath of literature available on these topics here, but a good starting place are Downing (2013) on Berkeley and Morris and Brown (2016) on David Hume.

[10] For more extensive discussions of Reid's direct realism, see Buras (2008), Copenhaver (2000) and (Copenhaver, 2004), and Van Cleve (Cleve & James, 2004). For recent work on what exactly Reid takes the objects of perception to be, see Folescu (forthcoming).

[11] Reid's own treatment of the positive epistemic status of our first principles occurs in chapter five of the IHM and essay 4 of EIP. Some good places to start in the secondary literature on this issue include Lehrer (2011), Nichols (2007), and Wolterstorff (2001).

[12] Ott's discussion reveals a tendency for paradigm cases of Reid's instinctual signs to be classed as natural indicative signs by, e.g., Buroker (1996), but there is something very important to Reid to distinguishing instinctual and magical signs that we don't want to overlook.

[13] Buras (2009) explores Reid's view on the role of sensations as signs in perception in much greater depth than I am able to do here.

[14] It is worth noting here that some thoughts may well be "wholly internal to the mind" insofar as one's awareness of one's own sensations is a relation between one's mind and its sensations; the structure is still relational, but because the thought is directed at something mental, there is a sense in which there is something that might be termed "a mental state".

[15] For a much more comprehensive overview of Reid's views on language, see Rysiew (2015). For discussion of Reid's views in relation to speech act theory, see Schuhmann and Smith (1990).

[16] For a more extensive investigation of this argument, and its relation to contemporary linguistic views, see Turri (2011).

[17] Simulationist accounts are those on which our awareness of the emotions of others is mediated and produced by our capacity to imagine ourselves in their position. In a very different context, Smith (2002) articulates a view of sympathy along these lines. Without some supplementation, this view would have much trouble explaining how infants can respond to facial expressions.

[18] This is the subject of much of book three of Locke's Essay Concerning Human Understanding (Locke, 1979), but is laid out fairly clearly in book three's opening chapters especially.

[19] Additionally, gestures like pointing are explicitly categorized by Reid as examples of instinctual signs.

[20] Nevertheless, it also seems highly plausible that the actual course of development of human languages did involve something like Reid's instinctual signs, and so, it is not clear that this worry would be especially troubling for Reid.

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Lewis Powell's research focuses on issues in early modern philosophy of mind and language, and their relationship to contemporary philosophical debates. He has authored papers appearing in Philosopher's Imprint, Philosophical Studies, and The Philosophical Quarterly. His work has focused on the philosophical disputes between David Hume and Thomas Reid, especially as pertains to the nature of human cognition. In addition to continuing work on those themes, his current research focuses on John Locke and George Berkeley's views on the nature of language. Before arriving at the University at Buffalo, SUNY, Powell taught at Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan. Powell holds a BA in philosophy from the University of Rochester and a PhD in philosophy from the University of Southern California.

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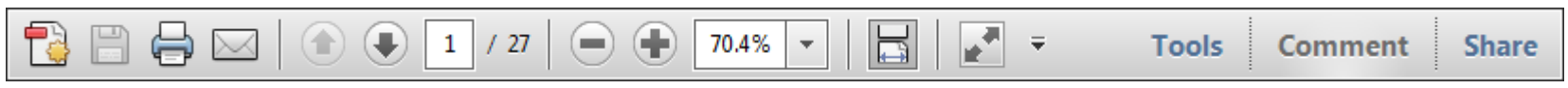
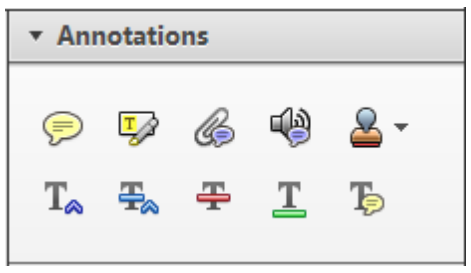
Required software to e-Annotate PDFs: Adobe Acrobat Professional or Adobe Reader (version 7.0 or above). (Note that this document uses screenshots from Adobe Reader X)
The latest version of Acrobat Reader can be downloaded for free at: http://get.adobe.com/uk/reader/

Once you have Acrobat Reader open on your computer, click on the Comment tab at the right of the toolbar:



This will open up a panel down the right side of the document. The majority of tools you will use for annotating your proof will be in the Annotations section, pictured opposite. We've picked out some of these tools below:

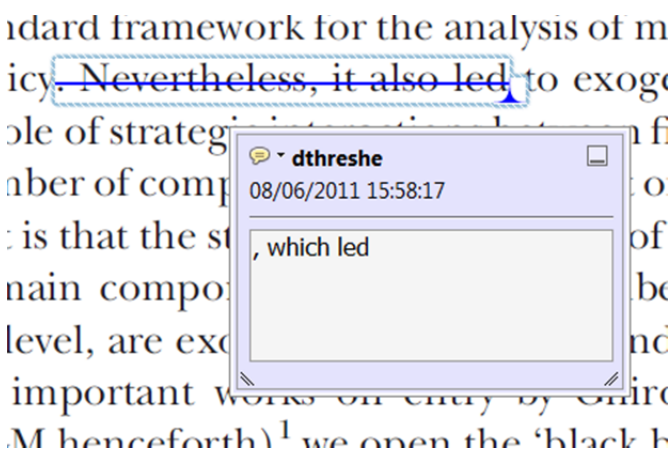


1. Replace (Ins) Tool – for replacing text.

Strikes a line through text and opens up a text box where replacement text can be entered.

How to use it

- Highlight a word or sentence.
- Click on the Replace (Ins) icon in the Annotations section.
- Type the replacement text into the blue box that appears.

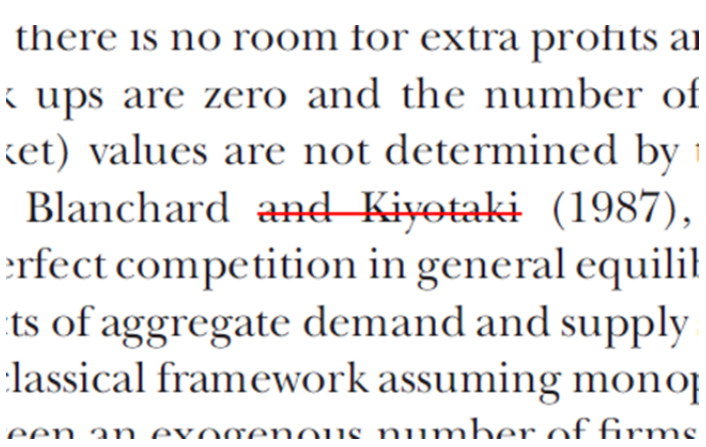


2. Strikethrough (Del) Tool – for deleting text.

Strikes a red line through text that is to be deleted.

How to use it

- Highlight a word or sentence.
- Click on the Strikethrough (Del) icon in the Annotations section.

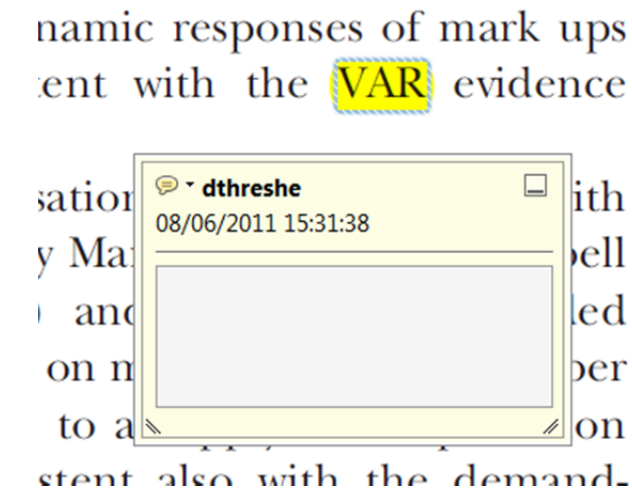


3. Add note to text Tool – for highlighting a section to be changed to bold or italic.

Highlights text in yellow and opens up a text box where comments can be entered.

How to use it

- Highlight the relevant section of text.
- Click on the Add note to text icon in the Annotations section.
- Type instruction on what should be changed regarding the text into the yellow box that appears.

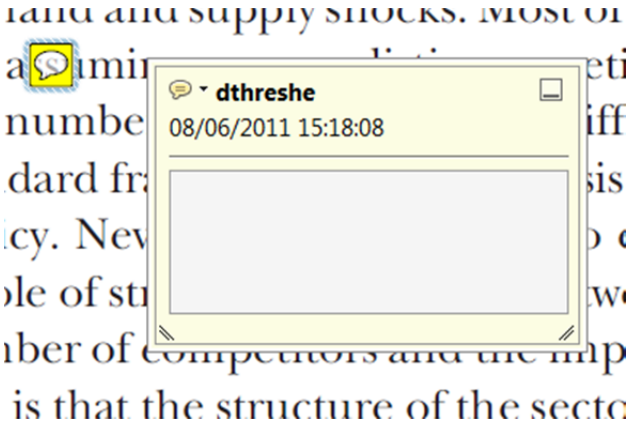


4. Add sticky note Tool – for making notes at specific points in the text.

Marks a point in the proof where a comment needs to be highlighted.

How to use it

- Click on the Add sticky note icon in the Annotations section.
- Click at the point in the proof where the comment should be inserted.
- Type the comment into the yellow box that appears.



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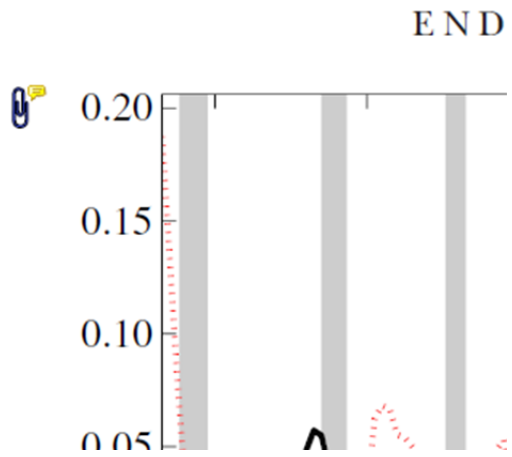
5. Attach File Tool – for inserting large amounts of text or replacement figures.

Inserts an icon linking to the attached file in the appropriate pace in the text.

How to use it

- Click on the Attach File icon in the Annotations section.
- Click on the proof to where you'd like the attached file to be linked.
- Select the file to be attached from your computer or network.
- Select the colour and type of icon that will appear in the proof. Click OK.

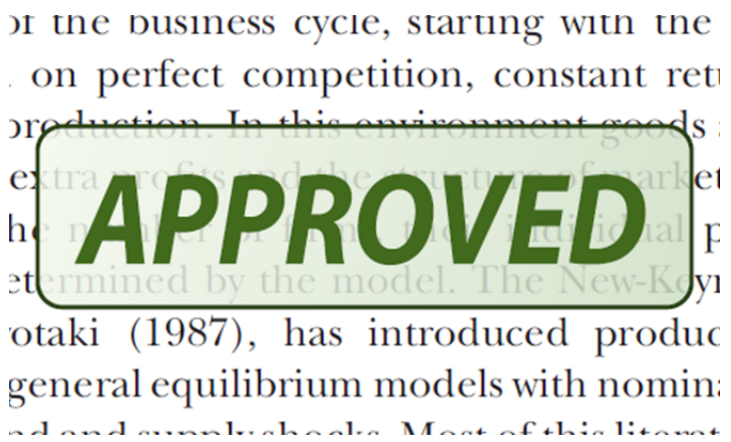


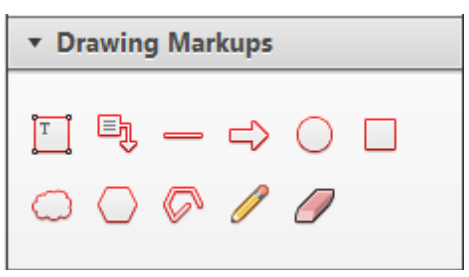
6. Add stamp Tool – for approving a proof if no corrections are required.

Inserts a selected stamp onto an appropriate place in the proof.

How to use it

- Click on the Add stamp icon in the Annotations section.
- Select the stamp you want to use. (The Approved stamp is usually available directly in the menu that appears).
- Click on the proof where you'd like the stamp to appear. (Where a proof is to be approved as it is, this would normally be on the first page).



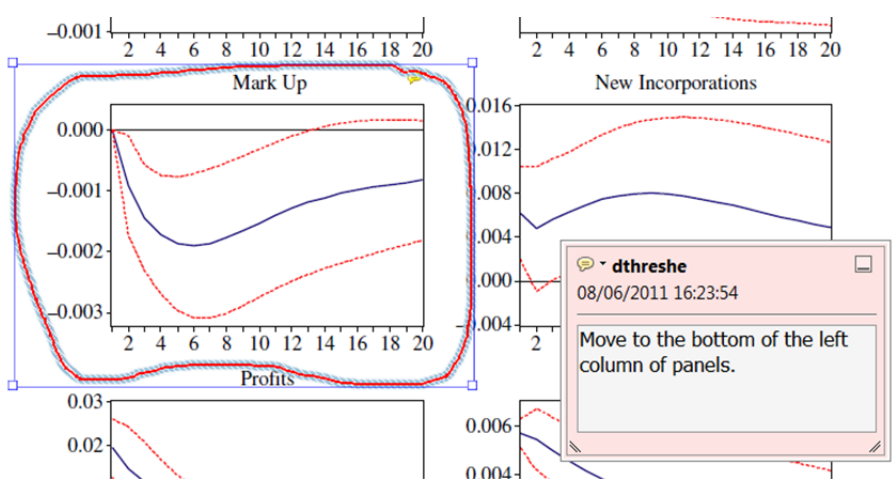


7. Drawing Markups Tools – for drawing shapes, lines and freeform annotations on proofs and commenting on these marks.

Allows shapes, lines and freeform annotations to be drawn on proofs and for comment to be made on these marks..

How to use it

- Click on one of the shapes in the Drawing Markups section.
- Click on the proof at the relevant point and draw the selected shape with the cursor.
- To add a comment to the drawn shape, move the cursor over the shape until an arrowhead appears.
- Double click on the shape and type any text in the red box that appears.



For further information on how to annotate proofs, click on the Help menu to reveal a list of further options: