THE REASONER

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EDITORIAL

Over the last decades, the relations between psychology, logic and philosophy on the topic of reasoning have been somewhat strained. Once the Piagetian idea that classical, traditional logic provided a good descriptive model of human reasoning was thought to have foundered on Wason's critique in the 1960s, psychologists were increasingly convinced that logic had noth-

ing to offer for their investigations. Logicians, in turn, were developing increasingly sophisticated and varied logical systems, but paying little attention to how (and whether) these systems were in fact connected to human reasoning *au naturel*. Philosophers, at the other end, held on to the idea that philosophy is about what *ought* to be the case, not about what *is* the case, and thus for the most part viewed the results in the psychology of reasoning as philosophically irrelevant.

The absence of contact between these different disciplines is still essentially the current situation, but with a few notable and very exciting exceptions. The work of Keith Stenning in particular boldly breaks down the borders between these disciplines, and thereby offers a much more encompassing and nuanced account of human reasoning than what can be found elsewhere.

Keith is an honorary professor at the University of Edinburgh, where for years (1990–2000) he led the Hu-

there to be practical or pragmatic reasons for believing.

John Brunero
Eric Wiland
Philosophy, UM-St. Louis
Charlie Kurth
Philosophy, Washington University

Experts and Consensus in Economics and the Social Sciences, 25–26 May

Carlo Martini, Marcel Boumans and Niels Gottschalk-Mazouz, with the support of a 'Deutsche Forschungs Gemeinschaft' (DFG) grant, organized a two-day workshop on 'Experts and Consensus in Economics and the Social Sciences' at the Center for Philosophy & Economics at Bayreuth University (Germany). From the 25th till the 26th of May several speakers presented their recent findings in the field and contemplated on future routes of research. A total of 12 talks were given, and the second day ended with a roundtable conversation, which allowed the participants to elaborate on future opportunities for continuing research and collaboration on the topics of the workshop.

On Friday morning Marcel Boumans kicked off the workshop by tackling the problem of rational consensus in economics: the focus was on the "Cooke method", a mathematical aggregation method of weighing the opinion of each expert on the basis of his or her knowledge and ability to judge relevant uncertainties. The method was compared with other consensus models (e.g., the Delphi method).

Filip Buekens argued why the notion of accuracy is important to keep in mind when talking about truth and expertise. In particular, he attacked Goldman's reliabilist view of knowledge, as merely focusing on reliability and truth, by urging for a third dimension, i.e., accurate beliefs, to be included.

Maria Jimenez Buedo addressed the issue of how to attribute expertise in uncertain times. She highlighted a dilemma with some objectivist notions of expertise: on the one hand, underplaying the relational aspect of expertise leads to a concept that is indistinguishable from knowledge; on the other hand, underplaying the objective sense of expertise leads to the stretching of the expert status.

Merel Lefevere presented joint work with Eric Schliesser, where they defend the thesis that the character of scientific communities can be evaluated morally and found wanting in terms of moral responsibility.

By way of critical discussion of a recent proposal by Heather Douglas, they argued that even an epistemically successful scientific community can be held morally responsible for consequences (also unforeseen ones) that follow from policy advice given by its members.

Rafal Wierzchoslawski described the role of experts in the condominium model of republican (re-)solution of social, economic and political problems, drawing on insights from Turner's book 'Liberal Democracy 3.0'.

Frank den Butter ended the first day of talks by describing the institutional economics of stakeholder consultation, and arguing for a reduction in implementation costs through 'matching zones', which focus on bringing all relevant stakeholders together in an institutional setting. His arguments allowed him to emphasize the often overlooked difference between compromise and consensus.

Robert Evans opened the second day of the workshop, presenting the analogy of 'emperors, mavericks and children' as a way of analyzing problems of expertise in science and society. He stressed the necessity (and difference) of two phases in the decision making process: a technical phase (related to questions of fact) and a political phase (related to questions of preference).

Amir Konigsberg talked about disagreement: he provided an account of the difference between first-order (subjective) and second-order (objective) evidence, and explained how the current literature on disagreement fails when dealing with what he thinks is the real problem of disagreement.

Aviezer Tucker showed us how applying the Neyman-Rubin model of causal inference to the explanation of expert consensus can point out certain obscurities.

Carlo Martini presented an analysis of some normative principles of expertise with the case study of the Monetary Policy Committee. He suggested that formulating a number of principles to be followed when employing experts in a committee can go a long way towards optimal institutional design in committees dealing with economic issues.

Laszlo Kosolosky, in work together with Jeroen van Bouwel, tried to explicate ways of consensus making in science and society, and more importantly at its interface, by introducing a procedural account of consensus as to deal with the tension between consensus and plurality, resulting in a social account of consensus formation.

J.D. Trout excelled at the difficult task of closing a round of very interesting talks. His talk highlighted the difficulties intrinsic to the pretense of democratizing science and employing expertise in society, and opened some avenues to possible alternatives.

To conclude, we would like to thank all the participants in the workshop for the many interesting debates that took place during every Q&A session, as well as for the extremely friendly and jovial atmosphere during the workshop.

Laszlo Kosolosky
Philosophy, Ghent
Carlo Martini
Philosophy and Economics, Bayreuth
TiLPS, Tilburg University

A Priori Justification, 16–17 June

The conference was organised as the second and last major international conference of the AHRC-funded project on Basic Knowledge (2007–2012), led by C. Wright and hosted by the Northern Institute of Philosophy at the University of Aberdeen. Long-time participants and collaborators of the project (M. Gerken, P. Ebert, E. Zardini, A. McGlynn, S. Roca, D. Dodd and M. Smith) gave responses to the invited speakers and delegates from all over Europe, North America and Australia were in attendance. The event took place in a very enjoyable intellectual and social atmosphere. As detailed below, the conference registered exciting convergences in lines of research and overall provided a state-of-the-art showcase of research on apriority conducted by some of the leading figures in the field.

A. Casullo ("Challenging the A Priori/A Posteriori Distinction") offered a taxonomy of the attacks against the a priori/a posteriori distinction. As an instance of the kind of attack contending that the notion of apriority contains elements that are in tension with certain other features usually associated with it, he argued in favour of analysing a priori justification as justification based on a non-experiential source, and added that, on this analysis, the "default justification" variously postulated by some theorists (H. Field and C. Wright) would turn out to be neither a posteriori nor a priori.

P. Boghossian ("Intuition and the A Priori") discussed some problems with the understanding-based account of a priori justification. He then turned to the alternative intuition-based account, arguing that, in order to make sense of justification for inference, this requires the existence of non-propositional intuitions. He conjectured that some such intuitions (more specifically, intuitions of identity) should independently be postulated in order to make sense of the transparency of mental content.

B. Jarvis and J. Jenkins Ichikawa ("Apriority and the Objectivity of Rational Inquiry") defended a view according to which, in one sense of 'justification', everyone always has justification for a priori propositions, independently of whether one enjoys certain intuitions about them, and argued that it is this kind of justification that sets the standards for rationality.

M. Balcerak Jackson ("Imagination and the A Priori/A Posteriori Distinction") contended that imagination can be a source of a priori justification in the sense that, although its general workings are shaped by some very general features of our experiences, it does not serve to record specific facts about our surroundings.

I. Rumfitt ("Is Logic Empirical?") criticised H. Putnam's earlier views about the logic of quantum mechanics. He then offered a general anti-realist semantics that treats disjunction as a closure operation. Applying such semantics to the language of quantum mechanics, he showed that it invalidates the law of distribution.

C. Ichikawa Jenkins ("Justification Magnets") explored views according to which, although certain incompatible propositions are equally supported by the evidence, the tie is broken by a "justification magnet". In particular, she considered the proposals that justification gets attached to the alternative that is more natural, or to the alternative that is in fact true, discussing the pros and cons of both options.

D. Chalmers ("The Non-Modal Conception of Propositional Apriority") focussed on whether apriority for a proposition should be analysed in terms of the proposition's a priori knowability. He argued that such an analysis is committed to denying the necessary factivity of propositional apriority and that it is committed to rejecting the apriority of some instances of 'P iff actually P'. He developed an alternative analysis according to which propositional apriority consists in the existence of a certain kind of a priori propositional justification that is subject-independent.

L. BonJour ("In Defence of Rational Insight") argued that rational insight is grounded in non-propositional abilities of grasping properties, and offered a metaphysical sketch of how such abilities are possible. He also compared his theory with C. Ichikawa Jenkins' theory of concept examination, criticising her grounding requirement.