



Introspection and Consciousness: Wrap-Up Talk

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Introspection for Great Apes

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Four Issues

1. The Power of Introspection
 2. Doubts about Introspection
 3. Mechanisms of Introspection
 4. Introspection and Consciousness
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The Power of Introspection

Say M is the proposition expressed by “I am in m ”,
where m is a mental state.

BM: S believes M .

KM: S knows M .

Infallibility Thesis: $BM \rightarrow M$

Self-Intimation Theses: $M \rightarrow BM$, $M \rightarrow KM$

Introspective Power Theses

- $M [\text{and } C] \rightarrow RM$
 - M may be restricted to certain mental states
 - C may be a further condition
 - The entailment may be *ceteris paribus*
 - R may be various epistemic or doxastic relations

Who's Who

- Sydney, Declan, Terry
 - Advocate power theses
 - Daniel, [Eric]
 - Question power theses
 - Jakob, Lisa
 - Respond to doubts about power theses
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Power Theses

- Sydney: Restrict M to beliefs, R = second-order belief, require rationality?
 - If rational, $Bp \leftrightarrow BBp$
 - Declan: Restrict M to states available to consciousness, R=justification to believe
 - $M \rightarrow JM$
 - Terry: Restrict M to certain [aspects of] phenomenal states
 - $BM \rightarrow M$
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Occurrent and Conscious States

- Lisa: Introspective power (via reason-giving) is better for occurrent states than dispositional states
 - If M is an occurrent state about which one forms a belief through reason-giving, $BM \rightarrow M$?
 - So a bit of convergence on: power theses most plausible more promising for states that are occurrent, conscious, available to consciousness.
 - Q1: Does this apply to Sydney's view too?
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Which Power Theses Are Correct?

- Q2: Which power theses are correct?
 - They're consistent, so it could be that all are...

Which Power Theses Are Fundamental?

- Q3: Which power theses are the most fundamental?
 - My guess: justification theses are more fundamental (and more plausible) than belief or knowledge theses.
 - Justification theses might entail certain versions of belief and knowledge theses.
 - Then: Which justification theses are the most fundamental?
 - Justification of phenomenal beliefs?
 - Justification of direct phenomenal beliefs?
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Doubts about Introspection

- 1. Lisa: Social psychology doubts
 - 2. Eric: Empirical and introspective doubts
 - 3. Daniel: Conceptual/epistemological doubts
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Social Psychology Doubts

- Lisa: social psychology doubts about knowing-why, knowledge of dispositions [for introspective beliefs produced by reason-giving]
 - But knowledge of occurrent states OK.
- Q4: Might these doubts also yield worries about knowledge of occurrent states?

Introspective Doubts

- Eric: Introspective/empirical doubts about reliability of beliefs about conscious states.
- Q5: How to reconcile optimistic introspective power theses with Eric's quasi-empirical doubts?

Reconciliation Strategies

- Declan: We still have justification, we just don't use it properly
 - Justification less useful than one might have thought!
 - Jakob: Phenomenology itself is variable
 - More plausible in some cases than others
 - Terry: Reliable about simple phenomenal matters, not about complicated matters.
 - What's the principled distinction?
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Conceptual/Epistemological Doubts

- Daniel:

- If we require awareness of M, power theses are useless or trivial
- If we don't require awareness of M, power theses are false

- Q6: How to escape the dilemma?

- appeal to acquaintance?
 - to something special about consciousness?
 - to something special about the mental?
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Explanation of Introspection

- Q: How do we explain introspective power?
- Two main classes of explanation:
 - Rationality-based explanations
 - Consciousness-based explanations

Rationality-Based Explanations

- Sydney: Introspective power ensured by conceptual connections between first-order and second-order beliefs in rational subjects.
 - Lisa: Introspection through reason-giving.
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Consciousness-Based Explanations

- Declan: Epistemic features of phenomenology
 - Eric: Attention to consciousness.
 - Terry: Self-presentingness of consciousness
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Other Explanations

- Jakob: Computational explanation
 - Internal models and prediction
- Daniel: Conceptual explanation
 - Minimal model of introspection

Competition Among Explanations

- Q7: Might multiple explanations be correct?
 - If we're broad enough about what counts as introspection [Eric], there are presumably many mechanisms and explanations
 - But even about core introspection, there could be a division of labor
 - E.g. rationality-based explanation for introspection of belief, consciousness-based explanation for introspection of consciousness
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Which is Most Fundamental?

- Q8: Is one explanation the most fundamental?
 - One might hold that one explanation is fundamental, others build on it or affect it around the edges.
 - E.g. consciousness-based introspection of phenomenal states, grounding introspection of belief?
 - Q9: Can the rationality-based model explain knowledge of consciousness?
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Consciousness and Introspection

- Various support for the thesis that introspection of consciousness is special. But why?
 - Eric: Attention
 - Declan: Epistemic features
 - Terry: Self-presenting
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Explanations or Explananda?

- Q10: Are these explanations or explananda?
 - Why can we attend to consciousness?
 - Why does it have these epistemic features?
 - Why is it self-presenting?
 - Maybe something here must be taken as primitive?
 - If so, what?
 - If not, what's the further explanation?
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Epistemic Primitives

- Q11: If something must be taken as epistemically primitive here, then what?
 - One hypothesis: the acquaintance relation
 - A primitive relation built into the structure of consciousness
 - To have a conscious state is to be acquainted with it
 - Acquaintance grounds attention, concept-formation, justification
 - Self-representational or self-relational view of consciousness
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Further Explanations

- Q12: If we're to have a further explanation of these epistemic features of consciousness, then what?
 - Functional analysis of consciousness (by its nature available to belief)?
 - Computational explanation (Jakob)?
 - Analysis of epistemic concepts?
 - Fundamental structure of consciousness?
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Residual Puzzles

- Residual puzzles for anyone:
 - Q13: How can we reconcile knowledge of consciousness with the apparent transparency of consciousness?
 - Q14: What distinguishes easy from hard cases of introspecting consciousness?
 - Q15: What's the upshot for the science of consciousness?
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