

*Lecture Handout Epistemology of the Mind Lecture 1 out of 4*

Pablo Hubacher Haerle  
ph539@cam.ac.uk

- Week 1 Knowledge of one's own mind: first-person thought**  
Week 2 Knowledge of one's own mind: first-person authority #1  
Week 3 Knowledge of one's own mind: first-person authority #2  
Week 4 Knowledge of other minds
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Why care?

- Historico-epistemological reason
  - Personal-ethical reason
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Two statements:

- (A) "I am in pain"  
(B) "Lindiwe is in pain"

**Datum 1:** (A) is immune to error through misidentification, (B) isn't.

'*a* is F' is IEM iff it doesn't make sense to ask "Someone is F, but is it *a* that is F?" (Evans 1982)

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Some knowledge-claims:

- (C) Scrooge McDuck knows „I am a millionaire“.  
(C') Scrooge McDuck knows that he himself is a millionaire.  
(D) Scrooge McDuck knows „Scrooge McDuck is a millionaire“.  
(E) Pablo knows that the morning star is beautiful.  
(F) Pablo knows that the evening star is beautiful.  
(1) The Editor of Soul knows that he\* is a millionaire.  
(2) The Editor of Soul knows that the Editor of Soul is a millionaire.

**Datum 2:** There is no expression—neither name, nor description—with which "I" could be substituted in (C) while retaining the same belief and knowledge states.

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## What follows from this?

Frege (1918), Castañeda (1966): Everyone is presented to themselves in a unique way!

Perry (1979): We need a new theory of belief!

Lewis: (1979): We need to allow for non-propositional knowledge!

**Explanans for Data:** Sometimes when we use ‘I’, we do not need identification to know who we’re talking about. We know immediately, directly that it’s us who’s the subject of our talk.

**Idea 1:** Wittgenstein (1958) / Anscombe (1975): “I” doesn’t refer at all.

Problems with inferences, genealogy and self-deception.

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**Idea 2:** We just have a basic capacity to refer to ourselves without identification

Why? Heal (2017): It is advantageous for us to have such a capacity.

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## Lecture Handout Epistemology of the Mind Lecture 2 out of 4

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Two statements:

- (A) "I am in pain"
- (B) "Lindiwe is in pain"
- (C) "I believe it will rain"
- (D) "Alex believes that it will rain"
- (E) "I resent X"
- (F) "X resents me"

(A) and (C) are authoritative in a way that (B) and (D) aren't.

What about (E) and (F)?

What about Köhler Phenomena (cf., Hacking 2009)?

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*Privileged access:* I am in an epistemically superior position to know my own mental states, compared to other people.

*Peculiar access:* I can access my own mental states in way that is open to no one else (Byrne 2018).

**Datum 3:** It seems that I can access (some) of my mental states directly, without inference, without observation.

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**Cartesianism:** Explains datum by invocation of immaterial soul and infallible inner sense.

Attempts to explain the datum without Cartesianism:

- Gilbert Ryle: *The Concept of Mind* (1949)
  - Does it hold for pain, belief, etc.?
- David Armstrong: *A Materialist Theory of the Mind* (1968)
  - Does it hold for "I am angry"? (Shoemaker 1996)
- Can we go subpersonal? -> Metacognition

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ph539@cam.ac.uk

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### Shoemaker's Regress Argument

Assume a subject that is kicking, screaming, shouting -> behaving in *angry* ways.

*Thesis* I can perceive this *behavioral data* and infer from it that "I am angry"

*Problem* Only if I know that this subject is myself! -> Shoemaker (1986), impossible to build up to knowledge claims involving the "I" from knowledge claims which only use descriptions.

*Idea 1* What if I also can observe the subject's beliefs and desires, then I know that *it must be me* because only I can come to know my mental states.

*Reply 1* No, I can come to know someone else's mental states (if they tell me about them).

*Idea 2* OK, but I know about my mental states in a way that's different from how I know someone else's mind, I know about them *introspectively*.

*Reply 2* But the whole point was to explain introspection by analogy to perception!

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Does it threaten Armstrong's (1994 [1968]) view? Ways out:

- Thin notion of perception: "simply the getting of beliefs" (Armstrong 1994: 112).
  - Preserves the similarly but implausibly weak conception of perception.
- Concede that the knowledge we have that it is us is non-observational, but claim that the focus now is knowledge of *mental states*.
  - Gives up on explaining *all* aspects of self-knowledge via observation.
- Argue that this story works on the subpersonal / computational level (Carruthers 2009).
  - Problem: Gives up on explaining the personal level features of self-knowledge.

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**Rationalism:** Richard Moran: *Authority and Estrangement* (2001).

- Kant's idea of the true self as the rational self.
  - Sartre's idea of radical freedom in consciousness.
  - Wittgenstein's denial of the perception model of introspection.
- } Moran's view.

Gareth Evans (1982: 202): “If someone asks me ‘Do you think there is going to be a third world war?’, I must attend, in answering him, to precisely the same outward phenomena as I would attend to if I were answering the question ‘Will there be a third world war?’”

Theoretical question (“What *do* I believe?”) is transparent to deliberative question (“What *should* I believe?”).

**Claim:** I can come to know what I believe, by asking myself what, given the evidence, I ought to believe.

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### Objections to Rationalism

- Brie Gertler (2011): Only applies to new beliefs, not pre-existing ones!
- Lucy O’Brien (2003): Doesn’t apply to mental states other than beliefs.
- Empirical Evidence (Nisbett and Wilson 1977; Johansson et al. 2006)

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## Lecture Handout Epistemology of the Mind Lecture 4 out of 4

Pablo Hubacher Haerle  
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### Skepticism about Other Minds

- Does *anyone* else have a mind? (Descartes' Automata)
- Even if other people have a mind, can I *know* anything about them?

*Main Question:* How are we so good in predicting other people's behavior?

**Theory Theory:** we attribute mental states to others by applying an implicit theory of how the mind works.

Folk Psychology, like Folk Physics: a set of laws

- *Law of pain:* If S is suffering from clear bodily damage, then S will, if not under a neurological impairment or extreme adrenaline or something similar, feel pain.
- *Law of sight:* If S is in front of object O, S directs her eye-gaze to O, S's visual system is properly functioning, and the environmental conditions are optimal, then *ceteris paribus* S will see O.
- *Law of the practical syllogism:* If S desires a certain outcome G and S believes that by performing a certain action A she will obtain G, then *ceteris paribus* S will (intend to) do A.

Relation to Functionalism.

Objections to Theory Theory:

- Why is it tacit? (Goldman 1989; reply Stich and Nichols 1993)
- The amount of knowledge we need is enormous! (Heal 1996; reply Gopnik and Wellman 1993)
- Theory Theory cannot account for normativity. (Heal 1986, 1998) -> Erklären vs. Verstehen.

**Simulation Theory:** we figure out others' mental states not by drawing on a body of theoretical knowledge, but by exploiting our own minds and psychological mechanisms to simulate the mental states and situations of other people.

Airplane analogy.

Use imagination to arrive at pretend-beliefs and pretend-desires. Then run our decision-making system offline on these imagined inputs -> attributions and predictions.

Objections to Simulation Theory:

- Not consistent with empirical evidence (Stitch and Nichols 1993) .

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### False Belief Task

Children under 4 years old fail to attribute false beliefs to other people (Wimmer and Perner 1983, see Suilin Lavine 2019: Ch. 1).

- Does this confirm Simulation Theory?
  - Gordon (1986): yes!
  - Gopnik and Wellman (1993) & Stich and Nichols (1993): no!

=> Some combination of the two.

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