

1: Truth - Wikipedia

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Three tests for determining truth Brent Cunningham blog 2 Comments Every religion, philosophy, or worldview makes truth-claims. Whether you turn to a Buddhist, a Muslim, a Hindu, a Christian, a pagan, or even a secular humanist atheist, he or she will attempt to offer truth-claims or explanations for our experience of the world and our experience of ourselves. And while there certainly is some common ground of belief shared by all worldviews, there are also some pretty significant disagreements on what is claimed to be true. And these worldview disagreements are usually about weighty matters as well—matters such as the existence and nature of God, the human soul, the nature of right living, the explanation of evil, the goal of human life, life after death, and so on. With so many truth-claims being made on so many issues of such magnitude, we might feel overwhelmed. How do we judge between these worldview truth-claims? How can we test whether or not something is worthy of belief? Can feelings be mistaken? We can never determine objective truth simply by what we want to be true. Can they be mistaken? What if one came from a Nazi background? Nevertheless, I think there are three criterion for testing truth-claims which, when used together, offer us the best chances of determining true beliefs. Internal Coherence— This is a test for rational consistency. This asks if a belief makes sense? Some beliefs are known to be self-referentially inconsistent, or self-defeating. This is obviously self-defeating because the belief itself is not a scientific statement. Therefore, the belief dies by its own standard for knowledge. Another way a belief can fail this test is when two beliefs are in contradiction with each other, meaning that at least one of the beliefs must be false. So, we must ask if the beliefs hold together? For example, if a person is a Naturalist believing that human life is accidental, random, and without ultimate purpose, he cannot then introduce the belief that we have an objective moral obligation to treat another person justly or with kindness. Now, while the internal coherence test is essential for determining if something is true, it is not sufficient. That is, consistency alone does not determine truth. Hillary Clinton is President. Therefore Bill Clinton is the First Man. This argument is completely coherent and consistent. So, we need to add other criterion to the internal coherence test. External Correspondence— This test asks if a belief fits the facts of reality. Does it correspond to the real world? Proposed truth-claims must have explanatory power, or the ability to give account for our experience of the world whether it be history, science, psychology, human nature, etc. For instance, a worldview can be tested by its ability to explain cosmological questions like the origin of the universe; anthropological questions like the existence of minds and free will; moral questions like the existence of evil and our experience with guilt. Further, the explanatory power of truth-claims should a be comprehensive in scope—able to explain more or better than alternative theories; b have predictive power—suggesting new evidence and problems; c have precision—accounting for more details; d be illuminating—integrating otherwise unrelated data; e avoid ad hoc hypotheses—functioning only to explain away counter-evidence; f be simple—not needlessly multiplying the basic concepts, assumptions, and principles of an explanation. Functional Adequacy— This tests the livability of a truth-claim as a belief. Does it work in real life? Some views sound good on paper, but are proven false in the laboratory of life. Consider an eastern guru who asserts that the physical world is an illusion, yet he still looks both ways before crossing the street. It must incorporate and meet the deepest human needs. For a belief to be true it must be meaningful, it must line up with the real world, and it must not only help us survive in daily life, but allow us to flourish. Consequently, these are also the three areas in which our thinking can and does go wrong:

2: Coherence And Verification In Ethics | Download eBook PDF/EPUB

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Scientific method Correspondence is quite simply when a claim corresponds with its object. For example, the claim that the White House is in Washington, D. Correspondence is held by many philosophers to be the most valid of the criteria of truth. An idea that corresponds to its object is indeed true, but determining if the correspondence is perfect requires additional tests of truth. This indicates that correspondence is a perfectly valid definition of truth, but is not of itself a valid criterion of truth. An additional test beyond this "definition" is required to determine the precise degree of similarity between what is posited and what exists in objective reality. It is particularly applied in the determination of moral truth and reflected in the statement "when in Rome, do as the Romans do". People stick closely to the principle of custom when they use common vernacular, wear common fashions and so forth; essentially, when they do what is popular. Custom is not considered a serious, or valid, test of truth. For example, public opinion polls do not determine truth. They are implicitly accepting emotions as a criterion of truth. Most people will admit that feelings are not an adequate test for truth. For example, a seasoned businessman will put aside his emotions and search for the best available facts when making an investment. Similarly, scholars are trained to put aside such subjective judgments when evaluating knowledge. Instinct[edit] The existence of distinct instincts has long been debated. Proponents of instinct argue that we eat because of hunger, drink because of thirst, and so forth. Some have even argued for the existence of God based on this criterion, arguing that the object of every instinct has a referent in reality. The counterpoint of hunger is food; for thirst it is liquid; for the sex drive it is a mate. Instincts are not accepted as a reliable test because they are most often indistinct, variant and difficult to define. Additionally, universal instincts are so few that they offer little to the greater body of philosophy as a criterion. It is a judgment that is not dependent on a rational examination of the facts. Many persons experience intuitive epiphanies which later prove to be true. Scholars have sometimes come upon valid theories and proofs while daydreaming or otherwise mentally occupied with something bearing no apparent relationship to the truth they seek to reveal. Intuition is at best a source for truths, rather than a criterion with which to evaluate them. Intuitive knowledge requires testing by means of other criteria of truth in order to confirm its accuracy. In democratic systems , majority rule is used to determine group decisions, particularly those relating to personal morality and social behavior. Some systems divided into several oppositional factions may depend on mere plurality. While majority rule may make for a good democratic system, it is a poor determinant of truth, subject to the criticisms of the broad version of consensus gentium. First-hand observation determines the truth or falsity of a given statement. A host of natural phenomena are demonstrably true, but not observable by the unaided sense. Similarly, there are a number of sense experiments which show a disconnect between the perceived sensation and the reality of its cause.

3: Quiz: Theories of Truth

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This Handbook encapsulates the intellectual history of mass media ethics over the past twenty-five years. Chapters serve as a summary of existing research and thinking in the field, as well as setting agenda items for future research. It will be an essential reference on media ethics theory and research for scholars, graduate students, and researchers in media, mass communication, and journalism. Does objectivity in the news media exist? In *The Invention of Journalism Ethics* Stephen Ward argues that, given the current emphasis on interpretation, analysis, and perspective, journalists and the public need a new theory of objectivity. He explores the varied ethical assertions of journalists over the past few centuries, focusing on the changing relationship between journalist and audience. This historical analysis leads to an innovative theory of pragmatic objectivity that enables journalists and the public to recognize and avoid biased and unbalanced reporting. Ward convincingly demonstrates that journalistic objectivity is not a set of absolute standards but the same fallible but reasonable objectivity used for making decisions in other professions and public institutions. Does objectivity exist in the news media? In *The Invention of Journalism Ethics*, Stephen Ward argues that given the current emphasis on interpretation, analysis, and perspective, journalists and the public need a new theory of objectivity. Considered a classic in the field since its first publication in , this second edition includes new chapters that bring the book up to speed with journalism ethics in the twenty-first century by focusing on the growing dominance of online journalism and calling for a radical approach to journalism ethics reform. Ward also addresses important developments that have occurred in the last decade, including the emergence of digital journalism ethics and global journalism ethics. Stephen J A Ward *Language: Disrupting Journalism Ethics* sets out to disrupt and change how we think about journalism and its ethics. The book contends that long-established ways of thinking, which have come down to us from the history of journalism, need radical conceptual reform, with alternate conceptions of the role of journalism and fresh principles to evaluate practice. Through a series of disruptions, the book undermines the traditional principles of journalistic neutrality and "just the facts" reporting. It proposes an alternate philosophy of journalism as engagement for democracy. The aim is a journalism ethic better suited to an age of digital and global media. As a philosophical pragmatist, Stephen J. Ward critiques traditional conceptions of accuracy, neutrality, detachment and patriotism, evaluating their capacity to respond to ethical dilemmas for journalists in the 21st century. The book proposes a holistic mindset for doing journalism ethics, a theory of journalism as advocacy for egalitarian democracy, and a global redefinition of basic journalistic norms. The book concludes by outlining the shape of a future journalism ethics, employing these alternative notions. *Disrupting Journalism Ethics* is an important intervention into the role of journalism today. And what new mind-set, new aims, and new standards ought journalists to embrace? The book aims to persuade—and provoke—ethicists, journalists, students, and members of the public to disrupt and invent. Cambridge University Press Format Available: Pushing back against the potential trivialization of moral psychology that would reduce it to emotional preferences, this book takes an enactivist, self-organizational, and hermeneutic approach to internal conflict between a basic exploratory drive motivating the search for actual truth, and opposing incentives to confabulate in the interest of conformity, authoritarianism, and cognitive dissonance, which often can lead to harmful worldviews. The result is a new possibility that ethical beliefs can have truth value and are not merely a result of ephemeral altruistic or cooperative feelings. It will interest moral and political psychologists, philosophers, social scientists, and all who are concerned with inner emotional conflicts driving ethical thinking beyond mere emotivism, and toward moral realism, albeit a fallibilist one requiring continual rethinking and self-reflection. Panksepp with hermeneutic depth psychology. The result is a realist approach to moral thinking emphasizing coherence rather than foundationalist theory of knowledge.

4: A Coherence Theory In Ethics | Download eBook PDF/EPUB

Coherence and Verification in Ethics by Ralph D. Ellis This book is an attempt to come to grips with problems of the epistemological basis of ethical beliefs by building on criticisms of approaches to this problem which have been attempted in the recent past.

Constructivist epistemology Social constructivism holds that truth is constructed by social processes, is historically and culturally specific, and that it is in part shaped through the power struggles within a community. Constructivism views all of our knowledge as "constructed," because it does not reflect any external "transcendent" realities as a pure correspondence theory might hold. Rather, perceptions of truth are viewed as contingent on convention, human perception, and social experience. It is believed by constructivists that representations of physical and biological reality, including race, sexuality, and gender, are socially constructed. Giambattista Vico was among the first to claim that history and culture were man-made. Hegel and Marx were among the other early proponents of the premise that truth is, or can be, socially constructed. Marx, like many critical theorists who followed, did not reject the existence of objective truth but rather distinguished between true knowledge and knowledge that has been distorted through power or ideology. For Marx, scientific and true knowledge is "in accordance with the dialectical understanding of history" and ideological knowledge is "an epiphenomenal expression of the relation of material forces in a given economic arrangement".

Consensus theory of truth Consensus theory holds that truth is whatever is agreed upon, or in some versions, might come to be agreed upon, by some specified group. Such a group might include all human beings, or a subset thereof consisting of more than one person.

Pragmatic theory of truth The three most influential forms of the pragmatic theory of truth were introduced around the turn of the 20th century by Charles Sanders Peirce, William James, and John Dewey. Although Peirce uses words like concordance and correspondence to describe one aspect of the pragmatic sign relation, he is also quite explicit in saying that definitions of truth based on mere correspondence are no more than nominal definitions, which he accords a lower status than real definitions. Defined and named by William Ernest Hocking, this variation is known as "negative pragmatism". Essentially, what works may or may not be true, but what fails cannot be true because the truth always works. For Peirce, the idea of "As Feynman noted, an idea or theory" Pragmatism and negative pragmatism are also closely aligned with the coherence theory of truth in that any testing should not be isolated but rather incorporate knowledge from all human endeavors and experience. The universe is a whole and integrated system, and testing should acknowledge and account for its diversity. As Feynman said, "Deflationary theory of truth Modern developments in the field of philosophy, starting with the relatively modern notion that a theory being old does not necessarily imply that it is completely flawless, have resulted in the rise of a new thesis: This thesis is in part a response to the common use of truth predicates. In common parlance, truth predicates are not commonly heard, and it would be interpreted as an unusual occurrence were someone to utilise a truth predicate in an everyday conversation when asserting that something is true. Newer perspectives that take this discrepancy into account and work with sentence structures that are actually employed in common discourse can be broadly described: Among the theoretical concerns of these views is to explain away those special cases where it does appear that the concept of truth has peculiar and interesting properties. In addition to highlighting such formal aspects of the predicate "is true", some deflationists point out that the concept enables us to express things that might otherwise require infinitely long sentences. This assertion can also be succinctly expressed by saying: What Michael says is true. The idea that some statements are more actions than communicative statements is not as odd as it may seem. Consider, for example, that when the bride says "I do" at the appropriate time in a wedding, she is performing the act of taking this man to be her lawful wedded husband. She is not describing herself as taking this man, but actually doing so perhaps the most thorough analysis of such "illocutionary acts" is J. Strawson holds that a similar analysis is applicable to all speech acts, not just illocutionary ones: Redundancy theory of truth According to the redundancy theory of truth, asserting that a statement is true is completely equivalent to asserting the statement itself. Redundancy theorists infer from this premise that truth is a redundant concept; that is, it is merely a word that

is traditionally used in conversation or writing, generally for emphasis, but not a word that actually equates to anything in reality. This theory is commonly attributed to Frank P. Ramsey, who held that the use of words like fact and truth was nothing but a roundabout way of asserting a proposition, and that treating these words as separate problems in isolation from judgment was merely a "linguistic muddle". A version of this theory was defended by C. Williams in his book *What is Truth?*. Consider the analogy between the sentence "Snow is white" and the character named Snow White, both of which can be true in some sense. To a minimalist, saying "Snow is white is true" is the same as saying "Snow is white," but to say "Snow White is true" is not the same as saying "Snow White. Philosophical skepticism and Certainty Philosophical skepticism is generally any questioning attitude or doubt towards one or more items of knowledge or belief which ascribe truth to their assertions and propositions. Philosophical skepticism comes in various forms. Radical forms of skepticism deny that knowledge or rational belief is possible and urge us to suspend judgment regarding ascription of truth on many or all controversial matters. More moderate forms of skepticism claim only that nothing can be known with certainty, or that we can know little or nothing about the "big questions" in life, such as whether God exists or whether there is an afterlife. Religious skepticism is "doubt concerning basic religious principles such as immortality, providence, and revelation ". Pluralist theories of truth Several of the major theories of truth hold that there is a particular property the having of which makes a belief or proposition true. Pluralist theories of truth assert that there may be more than one property that makes propositions true: Propositions about the physical world might be true by corresponding to the objects and properties they are about. Some of the pragmatic theories, such as those by Charles Peirce and William James, included aspects of correspondence, coherence and constructivist theories. In some discourses, Wright argued, the role of the truth predicate might be played by the notion of superassertibility.

5: Three Different Theories of Truth

Coherence and Verification in Ethics by Ralph D. Ellis, , available at Book Depository with free delivery worldwide.

Versions of the Coherence Theory of Truth The coherence theory of truth has several versions. These versions differ on two major issues. Different versions of the theory give different accounts of the coherence relation. Different varieties of the theory also give various accounts of the set or sets of propositions with which true propositions cohere. Such a set will be called a specified set. According to some early versions of the coherence theory, the coherence relation is simply consistency. On this view, to say that a proposition coheres with a specified set of propositions is to say that the proposition is consistent with the set. This account of coherence is unsatisfactory for the following reason. Consider two propositions which do not belong to a specified set. These propositions could both be consistent with a specified set and yet be inconsistent with each other. If coherence is consistency, the coherence theorist would have to claim that both propositions are true, but this is impossible. A more plausible version of the coherence theory states that the coherence relation is some form of entailment. Entailment can be understood here as strict logical entailment, or entailment in some looser sense. According to this version, a proposition coheres with a set of propositions if and only if it is entailed by members of the set. Another more plausible version of the theory, held for example in Bradley , is that coherence is mutual explanatory support between propositions. The second point on which coherence theorists coherentists, for short differ is the constitution of the specified set of propositions. Coherentists generally agree that the specified set consists of propositions believed or held to be true. They differ on the questions of who believes the propositions and when. At one extreme, coherence theorists can hold that the specified set of propositions is the largest consistent set of propositions currently believed by actual people. For such a version of the theory, see Young According to a moderate position, the specified set consists of those propositions which will be believed when people like us with finite cognitive capacities have reached some limit of inquiry. For such a coherence theory, see Putnam At the other extreme, coherence theorists can maintain that the specified set contains the propositions which would be believed by an omniscient being. Some idealists seem to accept this account of the specified set. If the specified set is a set actually believed, or even a set which would be believed by people like us at some limit of inquiry, coherentism involves the rejection of realism about truth. Realism about truth involves acceptance of the principle of bivalence according to which every proposition is either true or false and the principle of transcendence which says that a proposition may be true even though it cannot be known to be true. Coherentists who do not believe that the specified set is the set of propositions believed by an omniscient being are committed to rejection of the principle of bivalence since it is not the case that for every proposition either it or a contrary proposition coheres with the specified set. They reject the principle of transcendence since, if a proposition coheres with a set of beliefs, it can be known to cohere with the set. Two principal lines of argument have led philosophers to adopt a coherence theory of truth. Early advocates of coherence theories were persuaded by reflection on metaphysical questions. More recently, epistemological and semantic considerations have been the basis for coherence theories. Walker attributes coherentism to Spinoza, Kant, Fichte and Hegel. Certainly a coherence theory was adopted by a number of British Idealists in the last years of the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth. See, for example, Bradley Idealists are led to a coherence theory of truth by their metaphysical position. Advocates of the correspondence theory believe that a belief is at least most of the time ontologically distinct from the objective conditions which make the belief true. Idealists do not believe that there is an ontological distinction between beliefs and what makes beliefs true. Consequently, a belief cannot be true because it corresponds to something which is not a belief. Instead, the truth of a belief can only consist in its coherence with other beliefs. A coherence theory of truth which results from idealism usually leads to the view that truth comes in degrees. A belief is true to the degree that it coheres with other beliefs. Since idealists do not recognize an ontological distinction between beliefs and what makes them true, distinguishing between versions of the coherence theory of truth adopted by idealists and an identity theory of truth can be difficult. The article on Bradley in this Encyclopedia Candlish argues that Bradley had an identity theory, not a

coherence theory. In recent years metaphysical arguments for coherentism have found few advocates. This is due to the fact that idealism is not widely held. XXVI argues that a coherence theory of justification leads to a coherence theory of truth. His argument runs as follows. Someone might hold that coherence with a set of beliefs is the test of truth but that truth consists in correspondence to objective facts. If, however, truth consists in correspondence to objective facts, coherence with a set of beliefs will not be a test of truth. This is the case since there is no guarantee that a perfectly coherent set of beliefs matches objective reality. Since coherence with a set of beliefs is a test of truth, truth cannot consist in correspondence. Understood in one sense, this claim is plausible enough. Blanshard, however, has to understand this claim in a very strong sense: If coherence with a set of beliefs is simply a good but fallible test of truth, as Rescher suggests, the argument fails. A version of this argument was advanced by some logical positivists including Hempel and Neurath. The argument infers from such a theory that we can only know that a proposition coheres with a set of beliefs. We can never know that a proposition corresponds to reality. This argument is subject to at least two criticisms. For a start, it depends on a coherence theory of justification, and is vulnerable to any objections to this theory. More importantly, a coherence theory of truth does not follow from the premisses. We cannot infer from the fact that a proposition cannot be known to correspond to reality that it does not correspond to reality. Even if correspondence theorists admit that we can only know which propositions cohere with our beliefs, they can still hold that truth consists in correspondence. If correspondence theorists adopt this position, they accept that there may be truths which cannot be known. Alternatively, they can argue, as does Davidson, that the coherence of a proposition with a set of beliefs is a good indication that the proposition corresponds to objective facts and that we can know that propositions correspond. Coherence theorists need to argue that propositions cannot correspond to objective facts, not merely that they cannot be known to correspond. In order to do this, the foregoing argument for coherentism must be supplemented. One way to supplement the argument would be to argue as follows. As noted above, the correspondence and coherence theories have differing views about the nature of truth conditions. One way to decide which account of truth conditions is correct is to pay attention to the process by which propositions are assigned truth conditions. Coherence theorists can argue that the truth conditions of a proposition are the conditions under which speakers make a practice of asserting it. Coherentists can then maintain that speakers can only make a practice of asserting a proposition under conditions the speakers are able to recognise as justifying the proposition. Coherentists can argue that the only conditions speakers can recognise as justifying a proposition are the conditions under which it coheres with their beliefs. For an argument of this sort see Young. Any coherence theory of truth faces two principal challenges. The first may be called the specification objection. The second is the transcendence objection. This objection originates in Russell. Opponents of the coherence theory can argue as follows. No one supposes that the first of these propositions is true, in spite of the fact that it coheres with a set of propositions. The specification objection charges that coherence theorists have no grounds for saying that 1 is false and 2 true. Some responses to the specification problem are unsuccessful. One could say that we have grounds for saying that 1 is false and 2 is true because the latter coheres with propositions which correspond to the facts. Coherentists cannot, however, adopt this response without contradicting their position. Sometimes coherence theorists maintain that the specified system is the most comprehensive system, but this is not the basis of a successful response to the specification problem. Coherentists can only, unless they are to compromise their position, define comprehensiveness in terms of the size of a system. Coherentists cannot, for example, talk about the most comprehensive system composed of propositions which correspond to reality. There is no reason, however, why two or more systems cannot be equally large. Other criteria of the specified system, to which coherentists frequently appeal, are similarly unable to solve the specification problem. These criteria include simplicity, empirical adequacy and others. Again, there seems to be no reason why two or more systems cannot equally meet these criteria. Coherentists do not believe that the truth of a proposition consists in coherence with any arbitrarily chosen set of propositions. Rather, they hold that truth consists in coherence with a set of beliefs, or with a set of propositions held to be true. No one actually believes the set of propositions with which 1 coheres. Coherence theorists conclude that they can hold that 1 is false without contradicting themselves. A more sophisticated version of the specification objection has been advanced by

Walker ; for a discussion, see Wright Walker argues as follows. If they give this answer, they are apparently off on an infinite regress, and they will never say what it is for a proposition to be true. Their plight is worsened by the fact that arbitrarily chosen sets of propositions can include propositions about what is believed. The only way to stop the regress seems to be to say that the truth conditions of 3 consist in the objective fact S is believed.

6: Three tests for determining truth | Brent Cunningham

Coherence and Verification in Ethics by Charles D Ellis + Add to Wishlist. This book is an attempt to come to grips with problems of the epistemological basis of.

It is noteworthy that this definition does not highlight the basic correspondence intuition. Although it does allude to a relation saying something of something to reality what is, the relation is not made very explicit, and there is no specification of what on the part of reality is responsible for the truth of a saying. As such, the definition offers a muted, relatively minimal version of a correspondence theory. For this reason it has also been claimed as a precursor of deflationary theories of truth. Aristotle sounds much more like a genuine correspondence theorist in the *Categories* 12b11, 14b14, where he talks of underlying things that make statements true and implies that these things *pragmata* are logically structured situations or facts *viz.* Crivelli ; Szaif The metaphysical version presented by Thomas Aquinas is the best known: Aquinas credits the Neoplatonist Isaac Israeli with this definition, but there is no such definition in Isaac. Correspondence formulations can be traced back to the Academic skeptic Carneades, 2nd century B. Similar accounts can be found in various early commentators on Plato and Aristotle *cf.* He gives the simile of the fitting shoe, the fit consisting in a relation between shoe and foot, not to be found in either one by itself. Further early correspondence formulations can be found in Avicenna *Metaphysica*, 1. Boehner ; Wolenski Their attempts to integrate this Biblical passage with more ordinary thinking involving truth gave rise to deep metaphysico-theological reflections. A mental sentence is true if and only if, as it signifies, so it is *sicut significat, ita est.* Foreshadowing a favorite approach of the 20th century, medieval semanticists like Ockham *Summa Logicae*, II and Buridan *Sophismata*, II give exhaustive lists of different truth-conditional clauses for sentences of different grammatical categories. They refrain from associating true sentences in general with items from a single ontological category. Moody ; Adams McCord ; Perler Authors of the modern period generally convey the impression that the correspondence theory of truth is far too obvious to merit much, or any, discussion. Brief statements of some version or other can be found in almost all major writers; see e. Berkeley, who does not seem to offer any account of truth, is a potentially significant exception. Due to the influence of Thomism, metaphysical versions of the theory are much more popular with the moderns than semantic versions. Traditional versions of object-based theories assumed that the truth-bearing items usually taken to be judgments have subject-predicate structure. An object-based definition of truth might look like this: A judgment is true if and only if its predicate corresponds to its object *i.* Note that this actually involves two relations to an object: Owing to its reliance on the subject-predicate structure of truth-bearing items, the account suffers from an inherent limitation: The problem is obvious and serious; it was nevertheless simply ignored in most writings. Object-based correspondence was the norm until relatively recently. In a number of dialogues, Plato comes up against an argument, advanced by various Sophists, to the effect that false judgment is impossible—roughly: To judge falsely is to judge what is not. But one cannot judge what is not, for it is not there to be judged. To judge something that is not is to judge nothing, hence, not to judge at all. Therefore, false judgment is impossible. *Euthydemus ea; Cratylus c-e; Republic a-c; Theaetetus de.* Plato has no good answer to this patent absurdity until the *Sophist db*, where he finally confronts the issue at length. The key step in his solution is the analysis of truthbearers as structured complexes. By weaving together verbs with names the speaker does not just name a number of things, but accomplishes something: The simple sentence is true when *Theaetetus*, the person named by the name, is in the state of sitting, ascribed to him through the verb, and false, when *Theaetetus* is not in that state but in another one *cf.* Only things that are show up in this account: He emphasizes that truth and falsehood have to do with combination and separation *cf.* Unlike Plato, Aristotle feels the need to characterize simple affirmative and negative statements predications separately—translating rather more literally than is usual: This characterization reappears early in the *Prior Analytics* 24a. Fact-based correspondence theories became prominent only in the 20th century, though one can find remarks in Aristotle that fit this approach see Section 1—somewhat surprisingly in light of his repeated emphasis on subject-predicate structure wherever truth and falsehood are concerned. Fact-based theories do

not presuppose that the truth-bearing items have subject-predicate structure; indeed, they can be stated without any explicit reference to the structure of truth-bearing items. The approach thus embodies an alternative response to the problem of falsehood, a response that may claim to extricate the theory of truth from the limitations imposed on it through the presupposition of subject-predicate structure inherited from the response to the problem of falsehood favored by Plato, Aristotle, and the medieval and modern tradition. The now classical formulation of a fact-based correspondence theory was foreshadowed by Hume Treatise, 3. It appears in its canonical form early in the 20th century in Moore, chap. The self-conscious emphasis on facts as the corresponding portions of reality—and a more serious concern with problems raised by falsehood—distinguishes this version from its foreshadowings. Somewhat ironically, their formulations are indebted to their idealist opponents, F. Joachim, the latter was an early advocate of the competing coherence theory, who had set up a correspondence-to-fact account of truth as the main target of his attack on realism. Field, Popper It has become customary to talk of truthbearers whenever one wants to stay neutral between these choices. Five points should be kept in mind: It is intended to refer to bearers of truth or falsehood truth-value-bearers, or alternatively, to things of which it makes sense to ask whether they are true or false, thus allowing for the possibility that some of them might be neither. One distinguishes between secondary and primary truthbearers. Secondary truthbearers are those whose truth-values truth or falsehood are derived from the truth-values of primary truthbearers, whose truth-values are not derived from any other truthbearers. This is, however, not a brute ambiguity, since the secondary meanings are supposed to be derived, i. For example, one might hold that propositions are true or false in the primary sense, whereas sentences are true or false in a secondary sense, insofar as they express propositions that are true or false in the primary sense. It is often unproblematic to advocate one theory of truth for bearers of one kind and another theory for bearers of a different kind e. Different theories of truth applied to bearers of different kinds do not automatically compete. The standard segregation of truth theories into competing camps found in textbooks, handbooks, and dictionaries proceeds under the assumption—really a pretense—that they are intended for primary truthbearers of the same kind. Confusingly, there is little agreement as to which entities are properly taken to be primary truthbearers. Nowadays, the main contenders are public language sentences, sentences of the language of thought sentential mental representations, and propositions. Popular earlier contenders—beliefs, judgments, statements, and assertions—have fallen out of favor, mainly for two reasons: The problem of logically complex truthbearers. A subject, S, may hold a disjunctive belief the baby will be a boy or the baby will be a girl, while believing only one, or neither, of the disjuncts. Also, S may hold a conditional belief if whales are fish, then some fish are mammals without believing the antecedent or the consequent. Also, S will usually hold a negative belief not everyone is lucky without believing what is negated. This means that a view according to which beliefs are primary truthbearers seems unable to account for how the truth-values of complex beliefs are connected to the truth-values of their simpler constituents—to do this one needs to be able to apply truth and falsehood to belief-constituents even when they are not believed. This point, which is equally fundamental for a proper understanding of logic, was made by all early advocates of propositions cf. The problem arises in much the same form for views that would take judgments, statements, or assertions as primary truthbearers. The problem is not easily evaded. Talk of unbelieved beliefs unjudged judgments, unstated statements, unasserted assertions is either absurd or simply amounts to talk of unbelieved unjudged, unstated, unasserted propositions or sentences. It is noteworthy, incidentally, that quite a few philosophical proposals concerning truth as well as other matters run afoul of the simple observation that there are unasserted and unbelieved truthbearers cf. If the former, the state of believing, can be said to be true or false at all, which is highly questionable, then only insofar as the latter, what is believed, is true or false. Mental sentences were the preferred primary truthbearers throughout the medieval period. They were neglected in the first half of the 20th century, but made a comeback in the second half through the revival of the representational theory of the mind especially in the form of the language-of-thought hypothesis, cf. Some time after that, e. A truthmaker is anything that makes some truthbearer true. Different versions of the correspondence theory will have different, and often competing, views about what sort of items true truthbearers correspond to facts, states of affairs, events, things, tropes, properties. It is convenient to talk of

truthmakers whenever one wants to stay neutral between these choices. Four points should be kept in mind: The notion of a truthmaker is tightly connected with, and dependent on, the relational notion of truthmaking: For illustration, consider a classical correspondence theory on which x is true if and only if x corresponds to some fact. One can say that x is made true by a fact, namely the fact or a fact that x corresponds to. But they are importantly different and must be distinguished. Note that anyone proposing a definition or account of truth can avail themselves of the notion of truthmaking in the b -sense; e. Talk of truthmaking and truthmakers goes well with the basic idea underlying the correspondence theory; hence, it might seem natural to describe a traditional fact-based correspondence theory as maintaining that the truthmakers are facts and that the correspondence relation is the truthmaking relation. However, the assumption that the correspondence relation can be regarded as a species of the truthmaking relation is dubious. Correspondence appears to be a symmetric relation if x corresponds to y , then y corresponds to x , whereas it is usually taken for granted that truthmaking is an asymmetric relation, or at least not a symmetric one. It is hard to see how a symmetric relation could be a species of an asymmetric or non-symmetric relation cf. Talk of truthmaking and truthmakers is frequently employed during informal discussions involving truth but tends to be dropped when a more formal or official formulation of a theory of truth is produced one reason being that it seems circular to define or explain truth in terms of truthmakers or truthmaking. However, in recent years, the informal talk has been turned into an official doctrine: This theory should be distinguished from informal truthmaker talk: Moreover, truthmaker theory should not simply be assumed to be a version of the correspondence theory; indeed, some advocates present it as a competitor to the correspondence theory see below, Section 8. Some authors do not distinguish between concept and property; others do, or should: Simple Versions of the Correspondence Theory The traditional centerpiece of any correspondence theory is a definition of truth. It should be noted that this terminology is not standardized:

7: Clark Atlanta University

ETHICAL COHERENCE. Paul Thagard. Philosophy Department. University of Waterloo. Waterloo, Ontario, N2L 3G1. pthagard@www.enganchecubano.com Abstract. This paper explores the ethical relevance of a precise new characterization of coherence as maximization of satisfaction of positive and negative constraints.

To cite this article: Paul Thagard Ethical coherence, Philosophical Psychology, The accuracy of the Content should not be relied upon and should be independently verified with primary sources of information. Taylor and Francis shall not be liable for any losses, actions, claims, proceedings, demands, costs, expenses, damages, and other liabilities whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with, in relation to or arising out of the use of the Content. This article may be used for research, teaching, and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, redistribution, reselling, loan, sub-licensing, systematic supply, or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden. A coherence problem can be stated by specifying a set of elements to be accepted or rejected along with sets of positive and negative constraints that incline pairs of elements to be accepted together or rejected together. Computationally tractable and psychologically plausible algorithms are available for determining the acceptance and rejection of elements in a way that reliably approximates coherence maximization. This paper shows how justification of ethical principles and particular judgments can be accomplished by taking into account deductive, explanatory, analogical, and deliberative coherence. Introduction In Toronto in , Paul Bernardo was convicted of the prolonged sexual torture and murder of two young women. Since Canadian law does not admit capital punishment, he was sentenced to life in prison. How should such people overcome the incoherence in their ethical views? Many ethical theorists have taken coherence to be central to the justification of judgments of right and wrong[1]. For example, Rawls writes "A conception of justice cannot be deduced from self-evident premises or conditions on principles; instead, its justification is a matter of the mutual support of many considerations, of everything fitting together into one coherent view" Rawls, , p. Unfortunately, ethical theory has remained vague about the nature of coherence and about how ethical principles and judgments can be evaluated with respect to coherence. The term "wide reflective equilibrium" is used to describe a state in which a thinker has achieved a mutually coherent set of ethical principles, particular moral judgments, and background beliefs. But how people do and should reach reflective equilibrium has remained poorly specified. THAGARD set of elements to be accepted or rejected along with sets of positive and negative constraints that incline pairs of elements to be accepted together or rejected together. This paper shows how justification of ethical principles such as that capital punishment is wrong and particular judgments such as that Paul Bernardo should be executed can be accomplished by taking into account a wide range of coherence considerations. The next section of this paper briefly describes the new characterization of coherence as multiple constraint satisfaction. To show that ethical decision is a coherence problem, it is necessary to define the elements, the positive constraints, and the negative constraints that operate in ethical thinking. Ethical conclusions require a complex interplay of four different kinds of coherence: Each of these kinds of coherence involves different kinds of elements and constraints that contribute to an overall conclusion of what ethical principles and judgments to accept. Reflective equilibrium requires integrated assessment of deductive coherence fit between principles and judgments , explanatory coherence fit of principles and judgments with empirical hypotheses , deliberative coherence fit of judgments with goals , and analogical coherence fit of judgments with other judgments in similar cases. I take naturalism to be the view that philosophy overlaps substantially with the empirical sciences, so that philosophical theories and analyses should be closely tied to the results of scientific research. In particular, cognitive naturalism holds that many philosophical issues are intimately connected with the cognitive sciences, including psychology, linguistics, neuroscience, and artificial intelligence. Cognitive naturalism is currently the dominant position in the philosophy of mind, and it has made substantial contributions to epistemology and the philosophy of science. Coherence as constraint satisfaction Assessment of ethical coherence requires balancing the mutual support and mutual incompatibility of an interconnected set of principles, judgments, and

other beliefs. When two of these mutually support each other, their coherence will tend to make them be accepted or rejected together. If an ethical principle entails a particular judgment, we will tend in the absence of any other considerations to accept them together or reject them together. For example, the principle that capital punishment is wrong entails the judgment that Paul Bernardo should not be executed. There is thus a positive constraint between the principle and judgment that establishes a tendency either 1 to accept both that capital punishment is wrong and that Paul Bernardo should not be executed or 2 to reject both. Negative constraints between two elements are such that if we accept one of the elements, we will tend to reject the other. For example, if we believe that capital punishment is right under certain circumstances, we will reject the belief that capital punishment is wrong. All these reasons establish positive constraints on my thinking that cannot be simultaneously satisfied along with the negative constraints that enforce some degree of consistency in my judgments. To reach reflective equilibrium, I need somehow to figure out how best to accept some beliefs and reject others in a way that maximizes satisfaction of the constraints. Coherence relations include explanation, deduction, facilitation, association, and so on. Incoherence relations include inconsistency, incompatibility, and negative association. If two elements incohere, there is a negative constraint between them. More precisely, consider a set E of elements which may be propositions or other representations. We need to understand how to make E into as coherent a whole as possible by taking into account the coherence and incoherence relations that hold between pairs of members of E . To do this, we can partition E into two disjoint subsets, A and R , where A contains the accepted elements of E , and R contains the rejected elements of E . We want to perform this partition in a way that takes into account the local coherence and incoherence relations. The relations of explanation and inconsistency provide constraints on how we decide what can be accepted and rejected. Different constraints can be of different strengths, represented by a number w which is the weight of a constraint. THAGARD This informal characterization of coherence as maximization of constraint satisfaction can be made mathematically precise, and algorithms are available for computing coherence: Connectionist neural network models that are commonly used in cognitive science provide a powerful way of maximizing constraint satisfaction. In such models, each element is represented by a neuron-like unit, positive constraints are represented by excitatory links between units, and negative constraints are represented by inhibitory links between units. The Appendix outlines in more detail how connectionist networks can be used to compute solutions to coherence problems. Ethical judgment is a complex coherence problem, because it involves at least four different kinds of coherence: To show the relevance of each of these to ethics, we need to describe the kinds of elements and constraints that are relevant to reaching ethical conclusions. Deductive coherence For deductive coherence as applied to ethics, the elements are propositions, including both general principles and particular moral judgments. The main positive constraint is established by the relation of entailment: Coherence judgments do not have the kind of step-by-step linear reasoning found in formal logic. Rather, they require fitting everything together using constraints that are typically soft rather than hard. A soft constraint produces a tendency to accept two positively constrained elements together, but this constraint can be overruled if overall coherence maximization suggests that one of the elements be accepted and the other rejected. In ethics, positive constraints arise because principles entail judgments, as when the principle that capital punishment is wrong entails that Paul Bernardo should not be executed. Alternatively, the principle that capital punishment is justified for heinous murders implies that Bernardo should be executed. Negative constraints arise because of contradictions between propositions, for example between the two principles just stated and between the two judgments just stated. Figure 1 shows a simple constraint network that shows the relations among these four propositions. Obviously, the constraint network shown in Figure 1 does not offer a solution to the coherence problem, since there are two equally coherent solutions: Figure 1 should be expanded to include higher-level principles such as that killing people is wrong which entails that capital punishment is wrong, as well as additional judgments about particular cases of capital punishment. Evaluation of ethical coherence based solely on fit of principles and judgments will generally be dominated by [Colorado College] at 15: Constraint network for the Bernardo case. Thin lines indicate positive constraints while thick lines indicate negative constraints. We will see, however, that broadening ethical coherence to incorporate judgments of

explanatory and deliberative coherence can help to overcome this problem by introducing empirical information. Deductive coherence is important outside ethics also, for example in axiom selection in mathematics. Rarely are axioms selected because they are self-evident. Rather, axioms are selected because they entail the desired theorems, which are in turn accepted because they follow from the axioms. Mathematicians do not proceed from axioms to theorems, nor backwards from desired theorems to axioms, but rather attempt to come up with deductively coherent packages of axioms and theorems Russell , p. Similarly, ethical principles are not self-evident, but must be selected on the basis of deductive coherence with particular judgments, taking into account additional kinds of coherence. Explanatory coherence For much reasoning in science and ordinary life, the most important kind of coherence is explanatory rather than deductive. Scientists accept a theory if it provides the best explanation of the evidence, where "best explanation" is evaluated based on an overall coherence judgment Thagard, , For explanatory coherence, the elements are propositions, including hypotheses and evidence state- ments. If one proposition explains another, then there is a positive constraint between them, as when a hypothesis explains a piece of evidence. Contradictory hypotheses, and ones that compete to explain the same data, have negative con- straints between them. Ethics requires attention to explanatory coherence whenever as frequently occurs ethical decisions depend in part on evaluation of empirical hypotheses. Particular judgments, such as that Paul Bernardo should be punished, depend on factual claims, such as that he actually committed the crimes of which he was accused. General principles, such as adoption of capital punishment, can also be D ow nl oa de d by [C ol or ad o C ol le ge] at 1 5: Deductive coherence depending on an empirical hypothesis. Evaluation of this hypothesis depends on a very complex evaluation of evidence, such as comparison of countries or states with and without the death penalty. The hypothesis that capital punishment is a deterrent must mesh with a variety of sociological and psychological evidence if it is to be put to ethical use. How can deductive and explanatory coherence interconnect? The principle that preventing serious crimes is good, and the empirical hypothesis that capital punish- ment helps to prevent crimes, together entail that capital punishment is good. These three propositions form a mutually constraining package shown in Figure 2 [3], Unlike a pure deductive principle or moral judgment, however, the empirical hypothesis is subject to a kind of coherence in which empirical evidence is given priority. Priority does not mean that the results of observations must be accepted, only that there is a soft constraint that tends to make them accepted [4]. Now we begin to see how coherence judgments might discriminate objectively between competing sets of principles and judgments: An opponent of capital punishment might argue that killing innocent people is wrong, and that capital punishment sometimes kills innocent people, so that capital punishment is wrong. This entailment depends on the empirical hypothesis that sometimes innocent people are executed in countries and states that have capital punishment. People who are convinced on the basis of explanatory coherence that the empirical hypothesis that capital punishment leads to execution of innocent people, and convinced on the basis of explanatory coherence that the hypothesis that capital punishment serves as a deterrent is false, will tend to find more coherent the conclusion that capital punishment is wrong. Thus, evaluation of ethical principles requires considerations of explanatory coherence as well as deductive coherence, striving for wide rather than narrow reflective equilibrium. But deductive and explanatory coherence are quite similar, in that both involve propositional elements with positive and negative constraints that can be maximized. The interpenetration of deductive and explanatory coherence gives us some hope that ethical deliberation can be affected substantially by empiri- D ow nl oa de d by [C ol or ad o C ol le ge] at 1 5: Adding deliberative coherence shows another way of broadening ethical coherence. Deliberative coherence Standard decision theory says that rationality consists in maximizing the satisfaction of preferences or utilities, but says nothing about why people have their preferences and utilities. According to this theory, the elements in deliberative coherence are actions and goals, and the primary positive constraint is facilitation: For example, the action of executing Paul Bernardo or the action of life imprisonment will facilitate the goal that Paul Bernardo not murder again. Negative constraints arise because some actions are incompatible, since, for example, we cannot both execute Bernardo and imprison him for 50 years. Just as explanatory coherence gives some priority to propositions that state empirical evidence, so deliberative coherence gives some priority to intrinsic goals, ones that an agent has for basic biological or social reasons rather than because they

facilitate other higher goals.

8: Will verification kill fact-checking? | Poynter

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Law and morality are not coextensive. Not all laws are good or moral. Laws differ from place to place, time to time. Many laws are vague--the law suffers from "open texture. The traditional theories of truth: A statement is thought to be true insofar as it works or satisfies or fulfills its function. Working or satisfying or functioning is described differently by different people. One attends to the practical consequences of ideas. Peirce wrote, "In order to ascertain the meaning of an intellectual conception, one should consider what practical consequences might conceivably result by necessity from the truth of that conception; and the sum of these consequences will constitute the entire meaning of the expression. The pragmatists reduced the notion of being truth to that of being accepted as true or even to that of being tested for truth. What are the defects for using this criterion for establishing the truth of morality? Correspondence Theory of Truth: In other words, a statement is true, if it expresses what is the case. To say that something is true is to say that there is a correspondence between it and a fact. For example, "It is raining here, now" is true if it is the case that it is raining here now; otherwise it is false. The nature of the relation of correspondence between a fact and a true proposition is described differently by different writers. The controversial features are due mainly to the different interoperations of the key words, "fact" and "statement. One main difficulty is finding what corresponds to a false statement or a nonreferring statement such as "The present king of France is bald. Coherence theory of truth: A criterion used by Leibniz and Spinoza, and Bradley. To say that what is said is true or false is to say that what is said is consistent with or is not consistent with a system of other things which are said. A statement is true if it is a part of a system of statements each of which are related to each other by logical implication e. Hence a statement is true insofar as it is a necessary part of a systematically coherent set of statements. Thus, truth is a property of an extensive body of consistent propositions. An unusual feature is the doctrine of the degrees of truth:

9: Criteria of truth - Wikipedia

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The Correspondence Theory of Truth is probably the most common and widespread way of understanding the nature of truth and falsehood. An idea which corresponds with reality is true while an idea which does not correspond with reality is false. A fact is some set of circumstances in the world while a belief is an opinion about those what those facts are. A fact cannot be either true or false, it simply is because that is the way the world is. A belief, however, is capable of being true or false because it may or may not accurately describe the world. Along with beliefs, we can count statements, propositions, sentences, etc. The idea that truth consists in whatever matches reality can be traced back at least as far as Plato and was picked up in the philosophy of Aristotle. However, it was not long before critics found a problem, perhaps best expressed in the paradox formulated by Eubulides, a student of the Megara school of philosophy which was regularly at odds with Platonic and Aristotelian ideas. However, if they are true because they correspond with reality, then they are false and if they are false because they fail to correspond with reality, then they must be true. Thus, no matter what we say about the truth or falsehood of these statements, we immediately contradict ourselves. This does not mean that the Correspondence Theory of Truth is wrong or useless and, to be perfectly honest, it is difficult to give up such an intuitively obvious idea that truth must match reality. The Coherence Theory of Truth: The Coherence Theory of truth is probably second in popularity to the Correspondence Theory even though it often seems to be an accurate description of how our conception of truth actually works. Sometimes this seems like an odd way to actually describe truth. Does that really make any sense? Whenever you test an idea, you are also actually testing a whole set of ideas at the same time. Because of this, the Coherence Theory does manage to capture something important about the way we actually conceive of truth in our daily lives. Granted, maybe the system we assume to be true is quite a way off the mark, but so long as it continues to be successful and is capable of slight adjustments in the light of new data, our confidence is reasonable. The Pragmatic Theory of Truth: The Pragmatic Theory of truth determines whether or not a belief is true or not based on whether it has a useful pragmatic application in the world. If it does not, then it is not true. As a result pragmatic truths can only be learnt through interaction with the world: There are, of course, a number of obvious objections that can be raised against the Pragmatic Theory of Truth. What happens when a belief works in one sense, but fails in another? For example, a belief that one will succeed may give a person the psychological strength needed to accomplish a great deal but in the end, they may fail in their ultimate goal. As Nietzsche argued, sometimes untruth may be more useful than truth. Now, pragmatism may be a handy means for distinguishing truth from untruth. After all, that which is true should produce predictable consequences for us in our lives. In order to determine what is real and what is unreal, it would not be unreasonable to focus primarily upon that which works. This, however, is not quite the same as the Pragmatic Theory of Truth. Adapted from articles by Austin Cline [http:](http://)

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