Abstract

Invited Session: Metaphilosophy

Intuition and Replication

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Why do philosophers mark some of their claims as intuitive? According to critics of the idea that philosophy relies on intuitions as evidence, “intuitive” and its cognates are relatively meaningless labels that can be applied to any judgment at all, or markers we use to switch the focus away from first-order subject matter and onto the author’s psychology. However, textual analysis of a broad spectrum of recent philosophical works shows that words like “intuitively” function as discourse markers: to mark a claim as intuitive is not to shift the focus onto one’s own private psychological history but to invite the reader to attempt a replication of the author’s way of judging that claim. Where our intuitions are not shared, we have a problem of failure of replication. Looking at the recent data on epistemic intuitions, I defend intuition-driven epistemology against the charge that its replication failure rate is especially problematic.