

The Origins and Legacy of Quine's Naturalism

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ABSTRACTS

Jansenn-Lauret and Macbride: W.V. Quine and David Lewis: Structural (Epistemological) Humility.

In this paper we argue that W.V. Quine and D.K. Lewis, despite their differences and their different receptions, came to a common intellectual destination: epistemological structuralism. We begin by providing an account of Quine's epistemological structuralism as it came to its mature development in his final works, *Pursuit of Truth* (1990) and *From Stimulus to Science* (1995), and we show how this doctrine developed out of his earlier views on explication and the inscrutability of reference. We then turn to the correspondence between Quine and Lewis which sets the scene for Lewis's adoption of structuralism vis-a-vis set theory in the Appendix to his *Parts of Classes* (1990). We conclude, drawing further from Lewis's correspondence, by arguing that Lewis proceeded from there to embrace in one of his own final papers, 'Ramseyan Humility' (2001), an encompassing form of epistemological structuralism, whilst discharging the doctrine of reference magnetism that had hitherto set Lewis apart from Quine.

Rogério Severo: A change in Quine's reasons for holophrastic indeterminacy of translation

Up until the early 1970s Quine argued that the underdetermination of theories by observations is a reason for holophrastic indeterminacy of translation. This is still today thought of as Quine's main reason for the thesis. Yet, his 1975 formulation of underdetermination renders that argument invalid. This paper explains why. It also indicates Quine's reasons for holophrastic indeterminacy after 1975, and offers an additional reason for it.

James Levine: Assessing Quine's Philosophy in Light of his Philosophical Development: The Legacy of Quine's early views in his later philosophy

As Sander Verhaegh details in *Working from Within*, Quine came to accept his characteristic form of naturalism only by the mid-1950s (and did not so label his position until the 1968). Moreover, Quine's acceptance of that form of naturalism is intertwined with his rejection of views he formerly held, including nominalism and a view of "immediate experience" as "subjective" and epistemically prior to our knowledge of physical objects. Hence, issues arise regarding the relation between Quine's views before and after he fully embraced the naturalism that characterizes his mature philosophy. I argue that a number of positions Quine defends well after he embraces naturalism—including the sharp distinction he makes between first- and second-order logic, his view that a change in logic amounts to a "change in subject", and his view in *Word and Object* that "the essentially dramatic idiom

of propositional attitudes will find no place” in the “canonical notation we use in “limning the true and ultimate structure of reality”—reflect the legacy of his early “pre-naturalist” views in his later philosophy. I suggest that fully accepting Quine’s naturalism calls these views into question.

Andrew Lugg: Two kinds of naturalism (and two kinds of conceptual analysis)

I distinguish two forms of naturalism and show the version I attribute to Quine is deeper and longer in place than usually supposed. Both versions were, I maintain, prompted by the perceived demise of speculative (metaphysical) philosophical thinking, the one after a period dominated by conceptual analysis, the other – Quine’s – without any interregnum. The difference between the two sorts of naturalism is that on the one science is rolled into philosophy as understood at the time, on the other philosophy is rolled into science. And correspondingly, I note, on the first version conceptual analysis is supplemented by science, on the second version subsumed within it.

Nathan Kirkwood: The Extent of Quine's Naturalism

In *Working from Within*, Verhaegh shows the development of Quine’s naturalism to be more complex than it’s often thought to be. An especially important and complex aspect of this development is Quine’s relationship to phenomenism. Verhaegh argues that it’s not until around 1952 that Quine has gained sufficient clarity about an intractable problem at the heart of traditional forms of phenomenism. The root of the worry is that the phenomenist’s yearning for epistemological priority, manifested in the positing of things like sense data, is unsatisfiable. Sense data, just like electrons and the Higgs boson, are internal posits of our ever-evolving scientific theory. The phenomenist’s posits are not prior to science.

This attitude, of rejecting what is scientifically prior and acquiescing in the internal findings of science, typifies Quine’s naturalistic approach. Naturalism, at least for Quine, involves rejecting the intelligibility of a perspective external to science; a rejection of first philosophy. For Verhaegh, this landmark in Quine’s development reveals 1952 to be a crucial year in the development of Quine’s naturalism.

In this paper, I argue that Verhaegh’s findings, combined with an appreciation of the prohibitive strength of Quine’s naturalism, shows this development to be even more important for understanding Quine’s development than Verhaegh takes it to be. Quine’s naturalism is deeply restrictive. It tells us that theorising from a first philosophical perspective is an inherently confused position to think that one can be in. Before 1952, Quine himself has such delusions. This goes against the orthodox idea that Quine’s earlier work, before the term ‘naturalism’ is used explicitly, is either implicitly naturalistic or less naturalistic; Verhaegh appears to hold the latter view. Naturalism is constituted by a strong methodological constraint that is missing in Quine’s early work as shown, for example, by his openness to an epistemologically prior sense data language. This undermines the idea that Quine’s early work is implicitly naturalistic. Naturalism is also something that doesn’t admit of degrees: it consists of a strong methodological prohibition on first philosophy. This undermines the idea that his early work is merely less naturalistic than his later work.

Sander Verhaegh: Carnap and Quine: First Encounters (1932-1936)

Carnap and Quine first met in the 1932-33 academic year, when the latter, fresh out of graduate school, visited the key centers of mathematical logic in Central Europe. The philosophical friendship that emerged during these meetings had an impact on the course of analytic philosophy that can hardly be overestimated. Still, little is known about Carnap's and Quine's first encounters, except for the fact that they discussed the former's *Logische Syntax der Sprache* "as it issued from his wife's typewriter". In 2018, however, Quine's literary estate donated a large amount of private manuscripts, correspondence, and date books to the W. V. Quine Papers at Houghton Library—documents that shed new light on Quine's trip to Europe. In this paper, I examine these documents and reconstruct the first years of Carnap's and Quine's philosophical and personal relationship.