

TRUTH & WARRANT

The Fallibilism Principle caused the problems.

Thought for the lecture: solve them by connecting truth- and ideality-conditions.

4.1 A plethora of internal realisms

Putnam's internal realism shifted around, but had four main ingredients:

- The model-theoretic arguments and the JMT manoeuvre.
- Conceptual relativity.
- An irrevocable link between truth and ideality.
- A more general fact/value entanglement.

Canonical statement: 'truth is an *idealization* of rational acceptability' (RTH, p. 55)

But what does that mean?

4.2 From Warranted to Warrantable Conditionals

Let ' $w\varphi$ ' abbreviate 'some person at some time has a never-overtaken warrant to believe that φ '. Consider all

The Warranted Conditionals. If φ , then $w\varphi$.

Unfortunately, this schema is utterly implausible: subject to a number of 'what if' objections (Rescher 2002, p. 67). We'll have to idealise and consider

The Warrantable Conditionals. If φ then it is *possible* that $w\varphi$.

4.3 Fitch's Paradox

Consider further schemes:

w-factivity: If $w\varphi$, then φ

w-distribution: If $w(\varphi \wedge \psi)$, then $(w\varphi \wedge w\psi)$

Fitch Unwarrantables: $\neg\Diamond w(\varphi \wedge \neg w\varphi)$

Lemma. w-factivity and w-distribution together entail Fitch Unwarrantables. □

Fitch's Paradox (Theorem). In the presence of w-factivity and w-distribution, Warrantable Conditionals entails Warranted Conditionals. □

One line of response: adopt intuitionistic logic.

Dummettian antirealists are only willing to assert sentences for which she has a *warrant*.

They thus reject the idea that unrestricted excluded middle is a law of logic.

The proof of Fitch's Paradox requires classical logic.

Another response: on the present understanding of 'w', w-factivity is false.

4.4 Problem of unwarrantable conjunctions

Suppose that there are two true propositions such that we can verify either of them individually, but cannot verify their conjunction.

- Kunne's fresco scenario (Künne 2002, p. 151).
- Maybe quantum mechanics (Putnam 1990, p. viii)?

Moving to intuitionistic *logic* will not help.

And indeed, it just *is* part of our best overall empirical theory that truth is independent of warrant in this kind of a way (compare: the number of hairs on my head is odd or even).

General problem: for all we can know *a priori*, our best theory might countenance unwarrantable conjunctions.

Observation: Dummettian antirealism seeks to reform our practices, whereas Putnam's internal realism seeks to embrace them.

4.5 Provisional Biconditionals

The Provisional Biconditionals. If it were the case that c_φ , then: it would be the case that φ iff $w\varphi$. (where ' c_φ ' is some suitable provision which depends, topic-specifically, upon ' φ '; see Wright 2000).

This avoids Fitch's Paradox.

And it avoids the problem with unwarrantable conjunctions, indeed, it yields:

$$c_{r \wedge s} \Box \rightarrow \neg(r \wedge s)$$

That is, the actualisation of $c_{r \wedge s}$ would disrupt the fact that $r \wedge s$; as we would hope.

But there is some difficulty here: Wright wants a guarantee that there could be a situation where warrant *entails* truth (and vice versa); Putnam believes no such thing.

Deliberately, Putnam's mundane notion of warrant is infinitely regressive; so Putnam cannot be trying to reduce truth or warrant. (1988, p. 115)

But Wright's Provisional Biconditionals are afflicted by the same problem: perhaps I am warranted in believing that the provision obtains; but how do I guarantee that it *does*?

This regress seems to apply to *any* account of truth in terms of superassertibility. Consider an early formulation by Wright (1993, pp. 414–5):

- (a) S has adequate grounds for regarding each of $\{b_1, \dots, b_n\}$ as an item of knowledge.
- (b) The status of each of $\{b_1, \dots, b_n\}$ as an item of S's knowledge will survive arbitrarily close and extensive investigation.
- (c) The state of information constituted by $\{b_1, \dots, b_n\}$ warrants the assertion of s .
- (d) The case provided by $\{b_1, \dots, b_n\}$ for s is not, *in fact*, defeasible; i.e. no $\{b_1, \dots, b_n, \dots, b_z\}$ containing $\{b_1, \dots, b_n\}$ and satisfying (a) and (b) for some S, yet *failing* to warrant s , can be achieved in this world, no matter how favourable the circumstances for the attempt.

Both (b) and (d): they reach beyond mere warrant to the facts.

4.6 The metaphor of the ideal inquirer

Our *own* notions of warrant blocked various a priori things we might want to say.

General moral: an internal realist must only reason *internally* (how else?) about the link between truth and our ability to discover the truth.

The link between truth and ideal inquiry should itself be guided by her best inquiries.

Still, we might at some points invoke the metaphor of an ideal inquirer:

- We start with the idea that there are better and worse epistemic situations to be in concerning φ .
- Idealise once: move from a sequence of better-informed possible inquirers, to a single person who is ideally informed about φ .
- Idealise again: a quantifier-shift fallacy, where we imagine someone (the ideal inquirer) who is maximally well informed with respect to *all* φ .

But this is highly metaphorical: taken too strictly, the metaphor will lead us astray.

Worry: what is the value of the metaphor?

Worry: can this holistic reasoning avoid facile relativism?