

Intuitions, Social Intuitionism, and Moral Judgment

Robert Audi, University of Notre Dame

I. The Nature and Varieties of Intuitions

- A. Five notions to be explicated: intuitions *that p*—*cognitive intuitions*; *p*'s appearing *intuitive*—evoking what might be called *the sense of non-inferential credibility*; propositions taken to be *intuitively known*—*propositional intuitions*; *property intuitions*, roughly direct apprehensions of properties or relations; and intuition as a rational capacity—*facultative intuition*, a kind of apprehensional capacity, roughly a non-inferential capacity by which we know what we intuitively do know
- B. The perceptual analogy: compare kinds of seeing with 1. apprehension simpliciter; 2. apprehension *as*; 3. apprehension *that*

II. The Role of Intuitions in Prima Facie Justification

- A. Intuitive seemings as non-doxastic apprehensional counterparts of sensory experiences
- B. Intuitive seemings as, like perceptions, non-inferential responses to experience
- C. Experiential grounds for prima facie justification of belief—intuitional or perceptual—in both cases

III. Intuition and Emotion

- A. Neither implies the other; cf. felt moral disapproval and indignation
- B. Even when moral in character, neither implies moral judgment
- C. Emotion is one source of moral intuition, but so is moral perception

IV. Rationalism vs. Intellectualism in Moral Psychology

- A. Rationalism (in philosophical parlance) is epistemological (or at least conceptual)
 - 1. One (generic) implication: there is moral knowledge and some is based on an exercise of “intuitive” reason
 - 2. Not all moral knowledge is of the self-evident
- B. Intellectualism in ethics: the psychological view that moral judgment and any moral knowledge there is are *inferential*: roughly, premise-based, however “implicitly”
- C. Intellectualism seems false (as Haidt argues, targeting “rationalism”); it is not implicit in moral concepts

V. Developmental Speculations

- A. A developmental epistemology for moral belief: discrimination; conceptualization; propositionalization
 - 1. Entailment as an example for each stage
 - 2. Unfairness as a moral case: from the sense of disparity, to the conception of different treatment... to the belief that an action is unfair
- B. Ground-dependence vs. premise-dependence
- C. Inference (in the episodic sense): a kind of passage of thought from one or more propositions to another in part on the basis of a sense of some support relation between the former and the latter
- D. Inferential (non-reasoned) belief as structurally similar to belief based on episodic inference

Conclusion